

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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Summer 2022

A spotlight on children waiting for permanent and loving families

Welcome to the Summer 2022 Recruitment Periodical, published by the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE). Over the next several pages, you will be introduced to some of the youth in Michigan who are awaiting a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption. The youth featured here represent hundreds of other youth in Michigan's foster care system who are waiting to become part of a loving family through adoption. To learn more about these children and adoption, visit www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of youth waiting to be adopted, as well as a wealth of information about adoption, including links to adoption-related resources.

If you have been thinking about adoption, we invite you to consider bringing a youth or sibling group into your life. If you have questions about adoption or are ready to begin the adoption process, simply call one of the agencies listed in the back of this periodical or contact an adoption navigator at 800-589-6273. MARE is available to answer your adoption-related questions, and we will do our best to get you headed in the right direction.

Save the date: Saturday, Sept. 10

Join us at the Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

The Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening is a great event that you won't want to miss.

It is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 10, 2022, at the Emagine Theater in Royal Oak. The show features the unveiling of this year's Michigan Heart Gallery, a traveling photographic exhibit featuring photos of youth currently in the foster care system waiting for their forever family through adoption.

The festivities also include food and refreshments. This year's Michigan Heart Gallery



Grand Opening includes a special feature film that we're sure you'll love.

So, mark your calendars, and come join us for this truly remarkable event. Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

Can't join us in person? Be sure to follow us at www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange for details on how you can enjoy the grand opening virtually.

Tyler C010043

*Photo by
Jen Brooks*



Tyler's likes:

- Reading the Guinness Book of World Records
- Building things with Legos
- Munching on chocolate cookies
- Playing video games

Tyler's crystal ball:

- Wants to be a zoologist

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents
- Youngest or only child
- Wishes for a family who has a dog

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Children who have been placed in Michigan's foster care system and are awaiting adoption have some similar experiences related to trauma including:

- Physical/sexual/emotional abuse
- Severe neglect
- Alcohol/drug exposed infants

Many of these children share similar characteristics that can make their adoptions difficult or "special needs". Some special needs adoptions include some combination of the following circumstances:

- Physical/mental/developmental impairments of the child
- Children who are school aged and up
- Of the 98% of children ages 5 and up waiting for adoption, 75% are aged 11 to 17 years of age
- Children who are a part of a sibling group who must be placed together
- Youth who identify as LGBTQI+
- Children of color

Around 93 percent of children in Michigan's foster care system that are awaiting adoption are adopted by their foster parent(s) or relatives. The remaining children, like those highlighted in this newsletter or on the MARE website, don't have an identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive home for these children is therefore necessary.

Who can adopt a "waiting" child?

Many people may be surprised to learn that they do not have to be married in order to adopt a child from the foster care system. Potential adoptive parents do not have to own their own home or have a lot of money. They must have enough space in their home and adequate income to support a child. It is important to know that many children waiting for adoption are eligible to receive adoption assistance, which is intended to assist adoptive families in meeting the children's needs.

How much does it cost to adopt a child from foster care?

The only costs you should incur from adopting a child from Michigan's foster care system are court filing and birth certificate fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the Adoptive Family Assessment (also known as a Home Study); however, once you adopt a child through Michigan's foster care system, that fee is reimbursed to you.

What is the adoption process?

Families must be approved through the Adoptive Family Assessment process before a child can be placed in their home for adoption. An Adoptive Family Assessment must be completed by a licensed adoption agency (which can be found in the back of this periodical and on www.mare.org) and can take an average of six months to complete. The Adoptive Family Assessment includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Personal history.
- Health statements.
- Criminal background checks.
- Income statement.
- Personal references.

Once the Adoptive Family Assessment is complete, you may start submitting inquiries to MARE about children you may be interested in adopting. When you inquire about children through the MARE website, your information will be sent by MARE to the child's adoption worker for consideration. Your worker will also be notified that you have inquired about a specific child or children.

Sydney C09774



Sydney's likes:

- Yoga, gymnastics, swimming and ballet

Creative interests:

- Sculpting

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents
- Only or youngest child

Photo by
Aly Darin
Johnson-Hill



“Zaniya is a bubbly, friendly teenager who has a good sense of humor.”

Zaniya’s likes:

- Coloring and making crafts
- Playing Skip-Bo
- Participating in cheerleading
- Getting her hair and nails done

Zaniya’s tremendous traits:

- Enjoys helping others
- Makes friends easily

Zaniya’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become an inspirational speaker
- Dreams of traveling with with her new family and connecting with their pets

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Only or youngest child

Did you know?

The MARE web page, www.mare.org/For-Families/New-to-Adoption/Find-a-Licensed-Agency, lets adoptive families find an interactive map to locate adoption agencies near them. The web page and the map include contact information and links to the agencies’ websites. Families also can see the type of adoption services the agencies provide.



“Dylan is a very sweet boy. He is full of energy and just wants to have fun with everyone. He wants people to be happy and proud of him for all the hard work he does.”

Dylan’s likes:

- Swimming, camping and fishing
- Playing soccer
- Grabbing an ice cream cone when it’s warm and sipping hot chocolate when it’s cold
- Building things with Legos
- Playing Clue
- Puppies, kittens and elephants

Dylan’s crystal ball:

- Being a police officer, firefighter or artist

Qualities of a forever family:

- Loving, supportive, patient and experienced
- Strong advocates for Dylan
- Youngest or only child
- Enjoy spending time together

Photo by
Lillian Scull



“I got into drawing because I want to be an architect when I get older. I feel like architecture will get me to a good spot in life.”

Taevon’s likes:

- Building things with Legos
- Skateboarding
- Writing scary stories
- Camping
- Noshing on noodles
- Drawing
- Playing video games

Taevon’s crystal ball:

- Shopping and traveling together with a forever family

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide one-on-one attention
- Strong advocates for Taevon
- Patience as Taevon builds trust

Photo by
Beth and Mike Severn



“Jaelyn is very excited at the thought of getting a new family and is excited to meet them.”

Jaelyn’s likes:

- Animals of all kinds, but especially unicorns
- Reading Diary of a Wimpy Kid books
- Watching movies – “My favorite movie is ‘Where the Red Fern Grows’”
- Playing Skip-Bo
- Doing word searches

Jaelyn’s crystal ball:

- Wants to go to Disney World

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Youngest child
- Able to provide the positive reinforcement that Jaelyn thrives on

Another way for you to get to know Orlando, Taivion and other youth

MARE recently had the opportunity to interview youth who are on our website and to engage them directly in the content of their narratives. Orlando and Taivion are two of the youth who've agreed to having these enhanced narratives. We hope you enjoy these excerpts from their new narratives, which you can read in their entirety at Mare.org.

Fun Facts

- Took on a world chess champion
- Watches scary movies without covering his eyes
- Takes an interest in paleontology after watching a TV show called "Dino Dana," then "I just tried to look at rocks and pretend that they were dinosaur eggs."
- Owns about 200 Pokémon cards with a goal of acquiring "eight or nine thousand cards!"
- Says he has heart "and if you have heart, you can just walk up to somebody and challenge them in basketball."

"I like playing chess because it's fun and challenges your mind."

"One reason you'd want to adopt me is because I'm calm and collected, and I'm nice."



*Photo by
Jessica Strachan*

Photo by
Aly Darin
Johnson-Hill

Fun Facts

- Prefers Corvettes instead of Mustangs (“they look cooler”), summer over winter (“anything below 60 is too cold”) and green and white over maize and blue (“I’ve always been a Michigan State fan!”)
- Says NBA star Steph Curry is his favorite pro athlete, but he wouldn’t want to take him on one-on-one (“I would humiliate myself!”)
- Likes fishing and wants to try hunting (“I think I’d enjoy the relaxation part of it.”)
- Prefers country over city (“it’s more relaxed; there aren’t as many noisy distractions.”)
- Hopes for a family who shares his zest for life

“I hope we can do things that we both love, and I hope they love fishing and playing sports.”



“Kat is a bold, outspoken, independent teenager who is kindhearted and caring. She often puts others’ needs above her own.”

Kat’s likes:

- Roller-skating, which she likes doing with her friends
- Cooking
- Creating art on the weekends
- Doing makeup
- Playing softball
- Eating pizza and Chinese food
- Playing Uno, her favorite game

Kat’s crystal ball:

- Wants to go to Paris
- Being a member of an active family

Qualities of a forever family:

- Only or youngest child
- Able to make sure Kat gets any services that will benefit her
- Open and accepting

*Photo by
Jen Brooks*



“Shiann is a very loving and social girl who really opens up once you get to know her. She really just wants to be loved by a family who is dedicated to her.”

Shiann’s likes:

- Attending art class
- Doing arts and crafts
- Using fun colors to express herself
- Painting her nails and doing her makeup and hair
- Dancing and cooking

Tremendous traits:

- Her artistry and creativity

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient and understanding
- Would do best as the only child
- Strong advocates to help Shiann flourish



“Jayla likes to go on special outings and enjoys getting lunch with a trusted friend or caregiver.”

Jayla’s likes:

- Pandas, sloths, red pandas, foxes and wolves
- Playing with the realistic Reborn Baby Dolls
- Reading and doing puzzles and word searches
- Napping after school and on weekends
- Playing games and watching movies with friends

Jayla’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a teacher, police officer or veterinarian
- Dreams of visiting Disney World

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced mom and dad
- Only child
- Pets preferred
- Fierce advocates for Jayla

Photo by
Jen Brooks



“Michael would like a family who enjoys having fun and spending time together.”

Michael’s likes:

- The Harry Potter books and movies
- Playing football, basketball, baseball and bowling
- Playing in the snow
- Eating fried chicken washed down with a blueberry Faygo

- Munching on Sour Patch Kids candy

Qualities of a forever family:

- A patient, understanding and caring parent or parents
- Only or youngest child
- Pets preferred

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Summer 2022 Periodical.

Visit www.mare.org for a complete listing of agencies who license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your Michigan Department of Health and Human Services county office.

Adoption Agencies in Michigan

The following is a list of adoption agencies whose primary focus is facilitating the adoption of children from the foster care system. Many of these agencies may also provide foster care services. This agency list is organized by regions of the state. Please contact an agency in your area if you are interested in beginning the adoption process. For an interactive map of statewide licensed agencies, visit: <http://www.mare.org/For-Families/New-to-Adoption/Find-a-Licensed-Agency>

Upper Peninsula

Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Escanaba, 906-786-7212, www.cssup.org
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Iron Mountain, 906-774-3323, www.cssup.org
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-227-9119, www.cssup.org
Child & Family Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-228-4050, www.cfsup.org
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, www.upfs.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, www.upkids.com

Northern & Central Lower Michigan

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989-839-0534, www.adoptionoptioninc.org
Bethany Christian Services, Fremont, 231-924-3390, www.bethany.org/fremont
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, www.bethany.org/traversecity
Child & Family Services of Northeast MI, Alpena, 989-356-4567, www.cfsnemi.org
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Traverse City, 231-946-8975, www.cfsnwmi.org
Eagle Village, Hersey, 231-832-2234, www.eaglevillage.org
Ennis Center for Children, Saginaw, 989-558-0020, www.enniscenter.org
Holy Cross Services, Saginaw, 989-781-2780, www.holycrossservices.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, www.lasadoption.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Clare, 989-386-2101, www.lasadoption.org
New Light Child & Family Institute, Millington, 989-871-6695, www.newlightonline.net

Tri-County Area (Wayne, Oakland & Macomb Counties)

Bethany Christian Services, Southfield, 248-414-4080, bethany.org/locations/us/michigan/southeast-michigan
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.org
The Children's Center of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-831-5535, www.thechildrenscenter.com
Ennis Center for Children, Detroit, 313-342-2699, www.enniscenter.org
Ennis Center for Children, Pontiac, 248-334-2715, www.enniscenter.org
Family & Community Services, Inc., Utica, 586-726-2988, www.facadopt.org
Forever Families, Livonia, 734-762-0909, www.forever-families.org
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313-961-4777
Judson Center, Dearborn, 313-794-5653, www.judsoncenter.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, www.lasadoption.org
Methodist Children's Home, Dearborn, 313-531-4060, www.mchsmi.org
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248-858-7766, www.oaklandfamilyservices.org
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248-258-0440, www.orchards.org
Spaulding for Children, Southfield, 248-443-0300, www.spaulding.org
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248-552-8020, www.spectrumhuman.org
Vista Maria, Dearborn Heights, 313-271-3050, www.vistamaria.org
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888-625-8669, www.wolverinehs.org

Southern Central Michigan

Adoption and Foster Care Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810-660-7590, www.adoption-specialists.org
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517-336-0191, www.bethany.org/eastlansing
 Catholic Charities of Jackson, Lenawee and Hillsdale counties, Adrian, 517-263-2191, www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org
 Catholic Charities of Shiawassee & Genesee, Flint, 810-232-9950, www.catholiccharitiesflint.org
 Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw, Ann Arbor, 734-971-9781, www.csswashtenaw.org
 Child & Family Charities – Capital Area, Lansing, 517-882-4000, www.childandfamily.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Flint, 810-233-4031, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Howell, 517-881-0723, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Monroe, 734-349-6546, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Howell, 517-615-1275, www.facadopt.org
 Family Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517-787-7920, www.strong-families.org
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734-481-8999, www.fostering-futures.com
 Fostering Solutions, Adrian, 517-263-0020, www.fosteringsolutions.org
 Growing Hope Through Love, Howell, 517-798-4020
 Hands Across the Water, Ann Arbor, 734-477-0135, www.hatw.org
 Livingston County Catholic Charities, Howell, 517-545-5944, www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Lansing, 517-886-1380, www.lasadoption.org
 Open Door Adoption Services, Jackson, 517-936-7713, www.opendooradoptionsservices.org
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, 517-323-4734, www.stvcc.org

Southwest Michigan

Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, 616-224-7550, www.bethany.org/grandrapids
 Bethany Christian Services, Holland, 616-396-0623, www.bethany.org/holland
 Bethany Christian Services, Kalamazoo, 269-372-8800, www.bethany.org/kalamazoo
 Bethany Christian Services, Muskegon, 231-733-1618, www.bethany.org/muskegon
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, www.ccwestmi.org
 D.A. Blodgett Services, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, www.dabsj.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, www.fcsources.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsources.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.cityinc.org



MARE is proud to offer the Adoption Navigator Program. Adoption navigators are experienced adoptive parents who offer guidance and personal knowledge to potential adoptive families. The adoption navigators have many years of parenting experience, adopted a number of children, and have knowledge of foster care, infant and older, and domestic and international adoption procedures.

Families who contact MARE for initial adoption information will be given the option to work with a Navigator to help guide them through the process. Having an Adoption Navigator is a free and voluntary service.

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
3840 Packard Rd., Suite 170
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