

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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Fall 2014

A spotlight on children waiting for permanent & loving families



WELCOME TO THE Fall 2014 Recruitment Periodical, published by the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange. Over the next several pages, you will be introduced to some of the youth in Michigan who are waiting for their opportunity to have a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption.

The youth in the Fall periodical are representative of hundreds of other children in the Michigan foster care system who are waiting to become part of a loving family. To view these children and to learn more information about adoption, please visit our website at www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of waiting children, 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 an older child 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. MARE is available to answer your adoption-related questions and we will do our best to get you headed in the right direction.



Over the next year, the 2014 Michigan Heart Gallery will travel throughout the state to help raise awareness of children who continue to wait for their forever families. Please visit The Michigan Heart Gallery Website, www.miheart.org, for upcoming exhibit locations and events or contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at 800-589-6273.

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Adopting a “waiting child” from foster care is often referred to as special needs adoption. This term often makes people think of children with severe mental or physical impairments. In reality, special needs adoption means a child or children who may be difficult to place for adoption for a variety of reasons, including:

- Children school aged and above.
- Children with emotional, mental, learning or physical impairments.
- Children of minority heritage.
- Children who are part of a sibling group that must be placed together.

Many waiting children have had traumatic past experiences that may include physical, sexual or emotional abuse and/or severe neglect. Others may have been born drug or alcohol exposed.

Around 93% of children in Michigan’s foster care system are adopted by the child’s current foster family or a relative (someone with whom the child has an established relationship with). The remaining children available for adoption, like those in this periodical and the MARE website, have no identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive family is, therefore, necessary. Over 98% of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. Over 75% of those children are between the ages of 11 and 18.

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 support subsidies to help adoptive families meet their needs.

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

The only cost you should incur for adopting a child from the Michigan foster care system is court filing fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the 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. 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 the MARE website) and can take an average of six months to a year to complete. The Adoptive Family Assessment will include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Personal history
- Health statements
- Criminal background check
- 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.

For more information about adoption and to learn about Michigan’s waiting children, please visit our website at www.mare.org



Quotable:

"I'm happy with myself because I'm nice."

Tim's likes:

- Fishing, boating, swimming, going for walks.
- Building cars out of model kits.
- Having the opportunity to attend summer camps.
- Playing with his tablet and video games.

Intangible assets:

- Fun-loving, outdoorsy type.

Tim's crystal ball:

- He wants to become a police officer or a fireman one day.

Creative interests:

- Enjoys listening to music, especially country and rap.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced, patient parents.
- Willingness to provide one-on-one attention and be strong advocates for the services that Tim needs to thrive.
- Able to provide a great deal of structure and support.
- Would do best as the only child in the home, but a few older children would be appropriate as well.



Did you know?

MARE provides periodic Match Parties across the state. They are unique events that give prospective adoptive families the chance to interact face-to-face with many of Michigan's waiting youth. It allows them to see past the labels, diagnoses and case histories that mask the personalities of each child. They also provide the children a chance to enjoy a fun day filled with various games and activities. For more information, go to Resources on MARE.org.



Faith's likes:

- Hanging out with friends and going to the movies.
- Pizza and funny jokes.

Creative interests:

- Singing and dancing.

Faith's crystal ball:

- When she gets older, Faith wants to become a hair stylist.

Intangible assets:

- She describes herself as a leader among her peers.
- Full of energy and exuberance.

Quotable:

"I like to braid hair, color and write!"

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient, loving and understanding.
- A strong single-female parent or two parents with experience.
- Able to provide structure, close supervision and one-on-one attention.
- Willing to do whatever it takes to meet Faith's emotional and educational needs.
- Allow a period of transition into the home.



Photo by
Melissa Lapeer

Mark's likes:

- Watching TV and eating at McDonald's.
- Learning how to build things.

Intangible assets:

- Works well with and enjoys mentoring younger children.
- Wants to learn how to cook.
- Sweet, sensitive and loveable personality.

Creative interests:

- Listening to music and drawing with color-

ing pencils and learning how to play musical instruments.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Wants a family who cares about him and makes him feel involved.
- Able to provide attention, supervision and encouragement.
- Maintain patience as Mark works on his ability to express himself and his feelings.
- Willing to advocate for the services Mark needs to thrive now and into adulthood.



Photos by
Wendy Warren

Tiffany's likes:

- Has the Bieber Fever, as in Justin.
- Enjoys shopping, getting her hair done.
- Particularly likes munching on hot dogs and pepperoni pizza.
- Going to church.

Tiffany's crystal ball:

- Would like to either care for children or become a veterinarian when she gets older.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A home with a strong female role model.
- Either one or two parents.
- Youngest or only child in the home.
- Able to provide one-on-one attention.

Quotable:

"I am kind, polite, and I love to do arts and crafts"





Photo by
Stelick
Photography



Devin's likes:

- All the colors of the rainbow.
- Participating in gym and swimming.
- Volleyball, kickball and Frisbee.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One who will spend time with her, go out to eat, and who enjoys baking.
- One- or two-parent home with or without other children and pets.
- Willing to advocate for the services she needs to reach her full potential.
- Able to provide a lifelong commitment.
- Committed to one-on-one attention.
- Wants her family to know that she is a loving, sweet, kind and caring young lady.

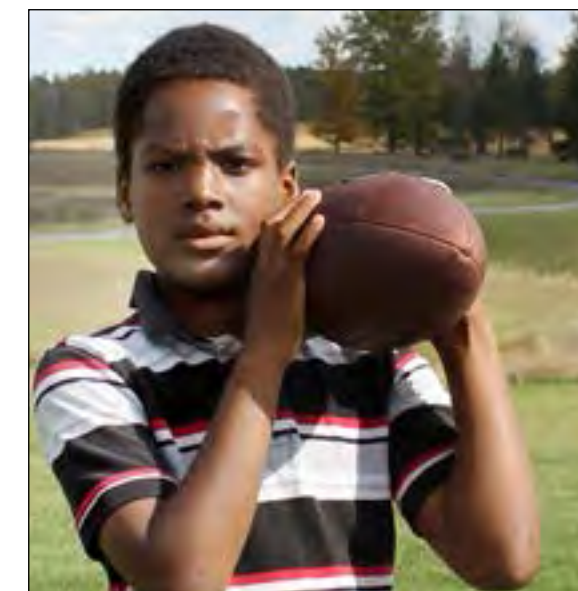
Intangible assets:

- Loving, sweet, kind and caring.
- Friendly and outgoing personality.

MARE by the numbers

- 292: the number of kids listed on the MARE website at the end of October.
- 177 to 115: the number of males to females listed at that time.
- 14: the number of children on the MARE

website matched with foster parents, relatives or recruited families in October.
 • 800-528-6237: the number you can call to inquire about Devin, above, and other children featured on MARE's website, www.mare.org.



Antonio's likes:

- Playing video games, which he loves.
- Karate, which he enjoys demonstrating.
- Participating in all sports, especially basketball and football.

Intangible assets:

- A great sense of humor and likes to joke around with friends.
- Friendly and affectionate with other children in a positive way.
- Outgoing and proud of making a new friendship with a peer.

Creative interests:

- Enjoys using his imagination.
- Listening to music, with rap being his favorite.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single- or two-parent household.
- Patient and supportive as Antonio builds new and trusting relationships.
- Ability to ensure Antonio gets needed services.
- Able to provide attention and supervision.

Quotable:

"I like to care about people."



Photos by
Sarah Boyd

**Alex's likes:**

- Outdoor activities such as searching for frogs, turtles and snakes.
- Playing Monopoly and with stuffed animals.
- Eating pizza and McChicken sandwiches.

Intangible assets:

- Being goofy and making people laugh.
- He's a giver who always gives away what he buys.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Wants a family who will share outdoor activities with him such as camping, which he loves.
- Would do best as the only child or with mature, understanding siblings.
- Must ensure Alex gets needed services.

Quotable:

"I'm not short; I'm fun size."

"My favorite food is macaroni and hot dogs mixed."

"Smart, funny ... sometimes crazy," when asked about words to describe himself.

"What does Dracula do when his shift is over at work? He takes a coffin break."



Photo by
Karen Bonadeo

Alivia's likes:

- Pets, especially horses.
- Displaying her musical talents, which she is interested in developing.

Intangible assets:

- Maintains high grades in school.
- Gets along well with her peers.
- Always willing to improve.

Marketable skills:

- Maintains high grades in school.
- A strong desire to succeed, a skill that she hopes her forever family will help her harness.
- Intelligent and engaged learner.

Alivia's crystal ball:

- Hopes to attend a university one day and eventually own her own business.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Wants a family who will help her pursue her goals as well as accept her past and help her through her grief.
- Prefers a single-female adoptive parent, but she is open to a male and female household if she can establish trust with the male.
- Youngest or only child in the household.
- Willingness to allow a period of transition to establish a lasting relationship.
- Accepting of Alivia's desire to reach out to her siblings.

**David's likes:**

- Gizzards, calzones, Bosco sticks and any food that's hot and spicy.
- Variety in his diet.
- Enjoys history because he can learn about various wars.

Intangible assets:

- Uses his imagination to make up stories on the spot.
- Upbeat and willing to talk about anything.

Marketable skills:

- Loves to cook and can easily explain step-by-step how to make his favorite meals.
- Ability to cook anything from scratch.

David's crystal ball:

- Wants to be a business owner ... perhaps restaurateur?
- Wants to visit Paris for the culture and, of

Photo by
Loren Sanders

Quotable:

"The most important things I want people to know about me is I am outgoing and have a good imagination"

- course, the food.
- Longs for "vacations in tropical places."

Qualities of a forever family:

- Prefers a family who likes hunting and other outdoor activities.
- Experienced, understanding and patient parents who can provide support, structure and supervision.
- Strong advocates for support services.
- Willingness to allow a transitional period into the new home.

Shante's likes:

- Playing outside.
- Working in the garden.
- Visiting and spending time with her siblings who are matched with another adoptive family.
- Enjoys all kinds of different foods.
- Being silly and playing with friends.
- Loves animals and would like to have a pet.
- Reading and playing games.
- Spending time alone in her room.

Intangible assets:

- Fun to be around.
- Loving and affectionate and wants the same in return from a forever family.
- Looks forward to going to school each day and relishes her time there.

Creative interests:

- Wants to learn how to cook.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient and willing to provide time for Shante to establish loving and trusting bonds.
- Committed and dedicated to Shante.
- Willing to advocate for any services Shante needs to thrive.
- Single-female parent or two parents with experience.

Quotable:

"I want someone who is nice to me and will care for me."

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Fall 2014 Periodical.



Photo by
Caroline Sullivan

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.

Upper Peninsula

Anishnabek Community & Family Services, Sault Ste. Marie, 906.632.5250, www.saulttribe.com
 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
 Good Will Farm, Inc., Houghton, 906.482.9832, www.upkids.com
 Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877.994.8344, www.lsswis.org
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency (MICWA), Baraga, 906.353.6178, www.itcmi.org
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency (MICWA), Wilson, 906.466.2070, www.itcmi.org
 Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906.249.5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
 Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906.273.1095, www.upfs.org

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
 Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989.892.2504, www.cfssite.org
 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.cfsnwm.org
 Eagle Village, Hersey, 231.832.2234, www.eaglevillage.org
 Heaven Sent Adoption, Charlevoix, 231.237.9880, www.heavensentadopt.com
 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 Consultants, Millington, 989.871.6695

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

Adoption Options Worldwide, West Bloomfield, 248.855.2813, www.adoptionoptionsworldwide.com
 Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248.414.4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
 Catholic Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313.883.2100, www.csswayne.org
 Child Safe Michigan, Madison Heights, 248.353.0921, www.childsafemichigan.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 Adoption Consultants, Utica, 586.726.2988, www.facadopt.org
 Forever Families, Novi, 248.344.9606, www.noviforeverfamilies.net
 Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313.961.4777, www.homes4blackchildren.org
 Judson Center, Redford, 313.794.5653, www.judsoncenter.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248.423.2770, www.lasadoption.org
 Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 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, 248.443.7080, www.spaulding.org
 Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248.552.1135, www.spectrumhuman.org
 St. Francis Family Center/CSS of Oakland County, Southfield, 248.552.0750, www.cssoc.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 Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810.660.7590, www.adoption-specialists.org
 Alternatives for Children & families, Burton, 810.250.3800, www.acfinc.org
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517.336.0191, www.bethany.org/eastlansing
 Catholic Charities of Lenawee County, Adrian, 517.263.2191, www.catholiccharitiesjlhc.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 Services—Capital Area, Lansing, 517.882.4000, www.childandfamily.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Flint, 810.233.4031, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810.990.1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family Counseling & Children Services of Lenawee, Adrian, 517.265.5352
 Family Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517.787.7920, www.strong-families.org
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734.481.8999, www.fostering-futures.com
 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
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency, Lansing, 517.393.3256, www.itcmi.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.dablodgett.org
 Family Adoption Consultants, Kalamazoo, 269.343.3316, www.facadopt.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
 Greater Hopes Family Services, Grand Rapids, 616.451.0245, www.greaterhopes.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616.356.1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269.345.5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency, Grand Rapids, 616.454.3142, www.itcmi.org
 Pathways, Holland, 616.396.2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269.969.9181, www.citylinc.org

Please visit www.mare.org for a complete listing of agencies who license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your local County Department of Human Services office.



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange 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, have adopted a number of children, and have knowledge of foster care, infant & older, and domestic & 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 & voluntary service.

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
3840 Packard Rd., Suite 170
Ann Arbor, MI 48108



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HOMES
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273
www.mare.org



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