

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE

A spotlight on children
waiting for permanent
& loving families



Quavon C08474

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Spring 2015



Antoinette C08298

Antoinette's creative interests:

- Photography, which she wants to turn into a career.
- Singing, dancing and drawing.

Antoinette's likes:

- Math, especially calculus.
- Listening to country music because the artists "really speak about something."

Photo by Jennifer Brooks

WELCOME TO THE Spring 2015 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 Spring 2015 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 2015 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

Rodrigo's likes:

- The outdoors, especially hunting and fishing.
- Anything to do with cars.

Rodrigo's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a customizer and car mechanic.



Rodrigo C08474

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

Photo by Moon Studios Photography



Photo by
Lion On The Beach

Rachel's likes:

- OK, she's lovin' it: McDonald's chicken nuggets.
- Shopping, attending Sunday school and helping around the house.
- Loves cats and dogs.

Intangible assets:

- Very personable and enjoys socializing.
- Affectionate and enjoys getting hugs.

Creative interests:

- Loves arts and crafts.
- Uses her imagination by playing with her stuffed animals.

Did you know?

The Adoption Subsidy Program provides financial support subsidy and/or medical subsidy for families adopting children from the foster care system. There is also financial assistance available for those who provide foster care. Support subsidy assists with the payment of expenses related to caring for and raising the child. Medical subsidy assists with the costs of necessary treatment for physical, mental, or emotional conditions that existed prior to adoption. Visit www.mare.org or call 800-589-6273 for more information.

Quotable:

"I have a little teddy bear; her name is Rachel, too."

Qualities of a forever family:

- Single-female- or two-parent household with no younger children.
- Patient, experienced parents who have an understanding of the types of services Rachel needs into adulthood.
- Children in the home should be several years older than Rachel.

Photo by
Heather Saunders



What Others Say:

From the MARE Website:
Bobby Flay better watch his back because this kid's the new chef in town!

Jesse's likes:

- Just don't make me cry: Movies, just as long as they're not scary.
- Swimming, biking and rollerblading.
- Playing basketball and soccer.

Creative interests:

- Drawing, listening to music, and, yes, watching cartoons is a creative interest.

Jesse's crystal ball:

- Looks forward to attending camps and visiting museums.

Intangible assets:

- How about the ability to whip up his own tasty grilled cheese sandwich?
- Or, being able to make his own snacks?
- Takes pride in knowing his multiplication tables as well as helping others.
- Can pump gas and loves mowing grass.
- A good helper who enjoys spending time with people, especially family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents who can provide structure and one-on-one attention.
- Ideally, only one or two other children in the house who are older than Jesse.
- Patience to allow Jesse time to transition into his new home.

Quotable:

“I really love sports and video games.”

Quavon’s likes:

- Outdoor adventures: Going snowboarding and fishing.
- Mamma Mia! Pass the pepperoni pizza!
- Playing and watching basketball and football.

Intangible assets:

- “Qua’Von is a quiet and shy kid who is a good person,” says one of his workers.

Quavon’s crystal ball:

- Wants to attend sporting events, go on vacation, go to church or simply spend quality time together with his future forever family.

Creative interests:

- Very artistic and enjoys drawing cars and states that he loves his art class at school.

Qualities of a forever family:

- An adoptive family with a mother and father and older siblings.
- Knowledge or experience in parenting children who have emotional and developmental needs.
- Patience to give him time to transition into new home.



Breanna’s likes:

- Swimming, hanging out with friends and going on short trips on the weekends.

- Athletic and participates in track and softball at school.
- Actually enjoys going to school!

Breanna’s crystal ball:

- Dreams of going to Cedar Point because it’s fun there.
- Wants to have a pet, particularly a dog.
- Don’t tell a University of Michigan fan, but she wants to travel to Ohio for a week.

Creative interests:

- Drawing.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A family who can help her slowly open up and build trusting and reliable relationships with others.
- Very patient, loving and understanding of her.
- Ability to provide stability and demonstrate structure.

Intangible assets:

- Very helpful and modest.

Quotable:

“I just want to feel like I’m loved ... like I’m welcomed into the family.”





*Photos by
Sarah Boyd*



Jacob's likes:

- Playing with robots and miniature cars, riding his bike, reading, coloring, playing games and going swimming.
- Eating marshmallows, playing checkers and playing basketball.
- Being outdoors.
- Adults who treat him respectfully and are open and honest with him.

Intangible assets:

- Described as being a big teddy bear who is very affectionate and who enjoys cuddling.
- Shares a love of animals with his older brother Jeffery.

Crystal ball:

- Wants to go to Michigan Adventure because of the waterslides.

We're your adoption information brokers!

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) is a statewide information and referral service for families interested in adopting children from foster care, and for adoption workers looking for homes for these children.

The MARE website provides a listing of waiting children in Michigan and of Michigan families interested in adopting children with special needs. To view waiting children, visit www.mare.org. For more information about adoption, call 800-589-6273.

Jeffery's likes:

- If you can't tell, it's right in front of your ... er, the horse's nose. Jeffery loves horses!
- So much so that he enjoys tending to his foster family's horses daily, and he hopes to be a farmer one day.
- Loves animals and enjoys playing outside.
- Riding his bike, playing video games, swimming and playing football.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents with experience and patience who can set clear boundaries and establish consistent expectations for Jeffery and Jacob.
- Able to provide a high level of supervision.

Quotable:

"He's such a good brother," Jeff says of Jacob, "He always wants me to go outside."

Intangible assets:

- Outgoing, eager to please, likeable.
- Enjoys keeping things neat and clean.

- Willing to advocate for the boys in the community, at home and at school to ensure all of their needs are being met.
- Having an understanding of their difficult past and willing to be patient as the boys develop a loving and trusting relationship.



Photo by
Mike Lanzetta

Sheville’s likes:

- Pen, please: Writing, creating short stories.
- Playing board games.
- Attending church.

Creative interests:

- Drawing, singing and dancing.
- Acting out plays.

Sheville’s crystal ball:

- Step aside Angelina and Scarlett because Sheville dreams of becoming a Hollywood headliner.

Intangible assets:

- Sweet personality and compassionate spirit.
- Takes pride in her ability to take care of herself.

Quotable:

“I just like candy. I can go through money quick with candy.”

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents or a single-female parent with a strong support system.
- Patient and experienced and able to provide a well-structured and nurturing environment.
- Strong advocates for the services that Sheville needs now and into the future.
- Willing to let her maintain sibling ties.

Andrew’s likes:

- Life’s simple pleasures such as sledding and playing in the snow after a busy day at school.
- Celebrating and helping to decorate the house at Christmas.
- Playing his favorite board game, “Sorry.”

Intangible assets:

- Likes helping around the house.

Andrew’s crystal ball:

- Wants to see the frothy blue ocean and bury his toes in warm white sand on a sea-side beach.
- Dreams of becoming a firefighter one day.

Quotable:

“I want a mom and a dad and a brother and sister.”

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide him with a loving and consistent home environment
- Willing to show patience and an understanding of Andrew’s traumatic past, which would help with his transition into an adoptive home.
- Youngest or only child in the home.
- Able to advocate for Andrew’s needs.



Photo by
Sarah Boyd

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2015 Periodical.

Kelsey's likes:

- Someone say "dinner"? Mac and cheese, fried chicken, Ramen Noodles, tacos, sushi, fries and veggies.
- Red (color), dolphins (animal), English (subject in school), and Apples to Apples and Monopoly (games).
- After school, hanging out with friends, watching TV, sleeping, eating and listening to music.

Most proud of:

- Being on the Honor Roll at school.

Creative interests:

- Drawing, painting and writing.

Kelsey's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a therapist to help children in foster care.
- Wants to travel and decorate her room with her future forever family.
- Dreams of going to New York (to live), to Paris ("because it's the city of love") and Mexico ("because my birthday is a Mexican holiday").

Qualities of a forever family:

- Parents who have experience raising teenagers and who can provide time, structure, patience and consistency.
- Patience with her and willingness to work together to establish the rules and expectations of the home.
- Accepting of a transitional period.

Quotable:

"When I get to know you, I'm honest. If you love me, I'll love you back."



Photo by
Moon Studios
Photography

What Others Say:

"Kelsey is a positive example for others. Kelsey is very respectful, honest and an advocate for herself and others."

"Kelsey is goal oriented and intelligent."

"She is a strong leader to younger children and is very artistic."

Brandie's likes:

- "Ahh" moments: Spending time with her friends, talking on the phone, going for walks,
- Sports, watching TV and playing video games.
- Enjoys helping others and is very caring about them.

Intangible assets:

- Determined once she makes up her mind, and she sticks to her convictions.
- "Extremely outgoing" when she feels comfortable around others.
- Has a great sense of humor.

Brandie's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a lawyer so she can help out other children like her.
- Hopes to visit Paris one day so she can see "The City of Lights."

Quotable:

Brandie's three wishes:
"I wish I could find a home, see my brothers and sisters and have my own cell phone." "

Creative interests:

- Likes to crochet.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Wants a family who will "go bowling, go for walks and have family nights."
- Able to provide consistent structure, set appropriate boundaries and have knowledge of trauma and how it can impact a child's life.
- Provide clear and outlined expectations and consequences in the home.



Photo by
Nichole Horvath

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
 U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906.487.9832, www.upkids.com
 Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877.994.8344, www.lsswis.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.cfsnwmi.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, www.newlightonline.net

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, Royal Oak, 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, 248.552.8020, 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, 810.232.3418, 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, Port Huron, 810.990.1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family Counseling & Children Services of Lenawee, Adrian, 517.265.5352, www.fccsoflenawee.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
 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
 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.fcsource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269.965.3247, www.fcsource.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
 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 Health and 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



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

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