

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE

Special Edition



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*Winter 2020*

**A spotlight on children  
waiting for permanent  
and loving families**

Welcome to the Winter 2020 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 waiting to have 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](http://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 an older 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, April 25

### 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, April 25, 2020, 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 and a red carpet where many youth will walk and get their pictures taken. 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.

#### **Cody's likes:**

- Tigers and sharks
- Science class
- Swimming
- Playing football
- Going to trampoline parks

#### **Cody's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a zoologist

#### **Forever family qualities:**

- A mom and dad or two female parents
- Able to provide one-on-one attention
- Only child in the family
- Patient as Cody builds a bond and adapts to his new home



*Photo by  
Beth and Mike  
Severn*

## Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Adopting a child from foster care is often referred to as “special needs” adoption. Common traits of children waiting to be adopted from foster care include:

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

Many of these 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 percent of children in Michigan’s foster care system are adopted by their current foster family or a relative (someone with whom the child has an established relationship). The remaining children available for adoption, like those in this periodical and on the MARE website, don’t have an identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive family is, therefore, necessary.

Typically, more than 98 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. Typically, more than 75 percent 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 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 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.

### Kenadee’s likes:

- Playing volleyball
- Math class

### Creative interests:

- Singing and dancing
- Drawing and writing in her journal

### Forever family qualities:

- Experienced, patient and understanding parent or parents
- Able to make sure she receives the services that will help her



**Kenadee C09851**

*Photo by  
Corinne Toussaint*

“Rebecca is very detail-oriented, inquisitive and creative.”

**Rebecca’s likes:**

- Solving riddles
- Playing with dolls
- Playing the board game Amazed
- Munching on burgers

**Intangible assets:**

- Caring, friendly and down-to-earth

**Rebecca’s crystal ball:**

- Becoming a teacher

**Creative interests:**

- Drawing and coloring

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad who are experienced
- Youngest or only child
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Rebecca
- Pets preferred

“I love being with people who love and care about me.”

*Photo by  
Into The Woods  
Photography*

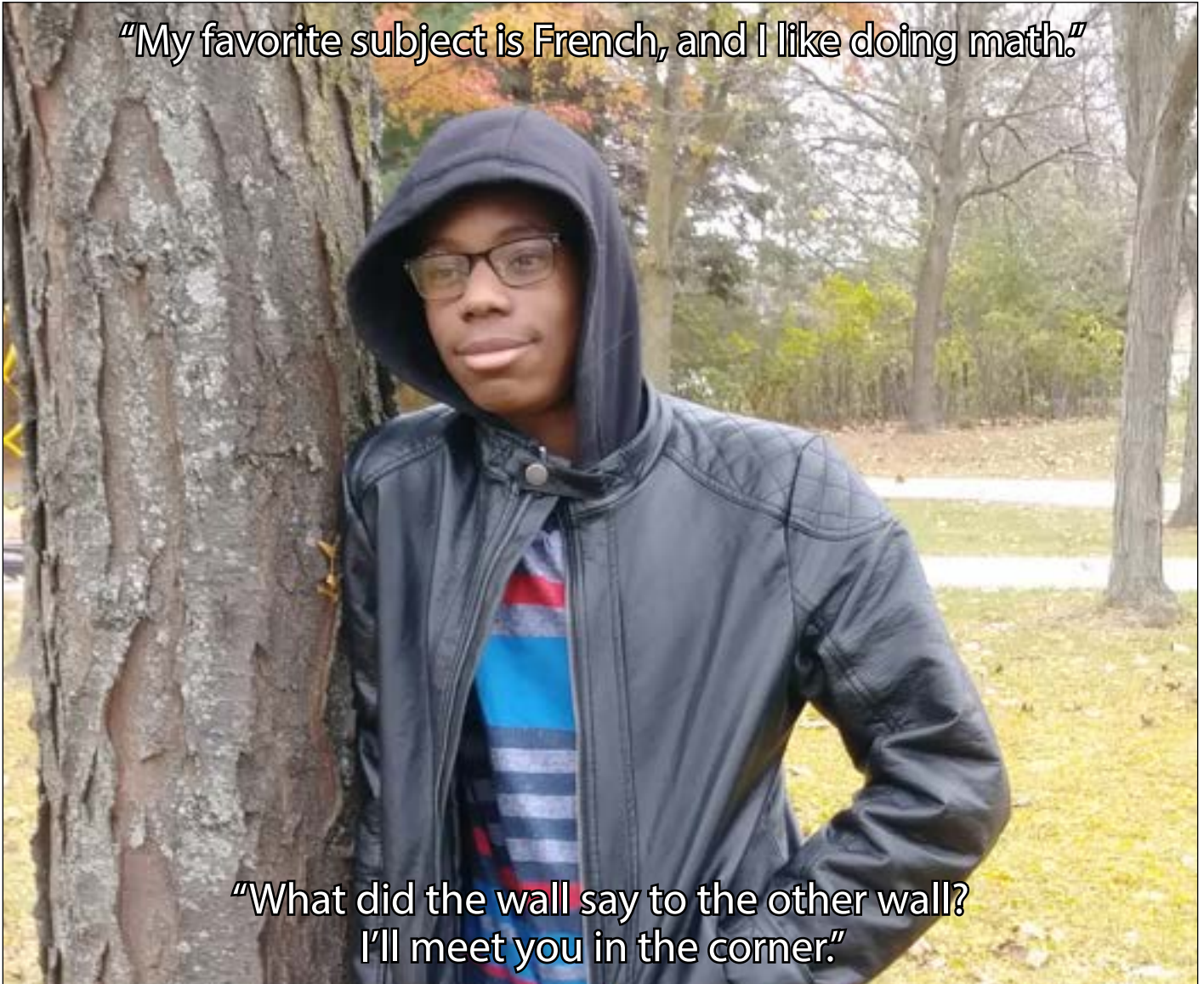


**Did you know?**

MARE offers online resources for people who are new to the adoption process. Subjects covered include the first step in the process, costs, type of home needed by an adoptive family and the different types of adoption. Check it out at [Mare.org](http://Mare.org) and click on For Families > New to Adoption.



"My favorite subject is French, and I like doing math."



"What did the wall say to the other wall?  
I'll meet you in the corner."

**Andrew's likes:**

- Playing volleyball and basketball and participating in track
- Playing Beyblades and video games such as Final Fantasy Explorers
- Celebrating the holidays by playing games
- Making superhero capes

**Andrew's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of living in Japan because he wants to learn the language and learn about the culture
- Becoming a storm chaser as an adult

**Creative interests:**

- Interested in anime

**Intangible assets:**

- An open, engaging and honest young man who's very funny
- Able to incorporate things he learns into conversations

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Willing to advocate for the services that will help Andrew thrive
- Positive male and female role models

"Joslyn's personality is caring and sweet. She is very affectionate."

Photo by  
Chris Schafer



**Joslyn's likes:**

- Spending time with others
- Learning new things
- Playing with Barbie dolls
- Having movie nights
- Going to the library
- Painting her nails and doing her own makeup
- Participating in track
- Dressing up and looking her best

**Intangible assets:**

- Very friendly and fun-loving

**Creative interests:**

- Playing in the school band

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and a dad or a single-female parent
- Patient and supportive
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Joslyn



**Jayden's likes:**

- Playing basketball
- Participating in organized sports
- Macaroni and cheese
- Studying math

**Jayden's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of having animals with his future forever family, preferably a farm with cows, chickens and horses

**Creative interests:**

- Coloring and drawing pictures

**Intangible assets:**

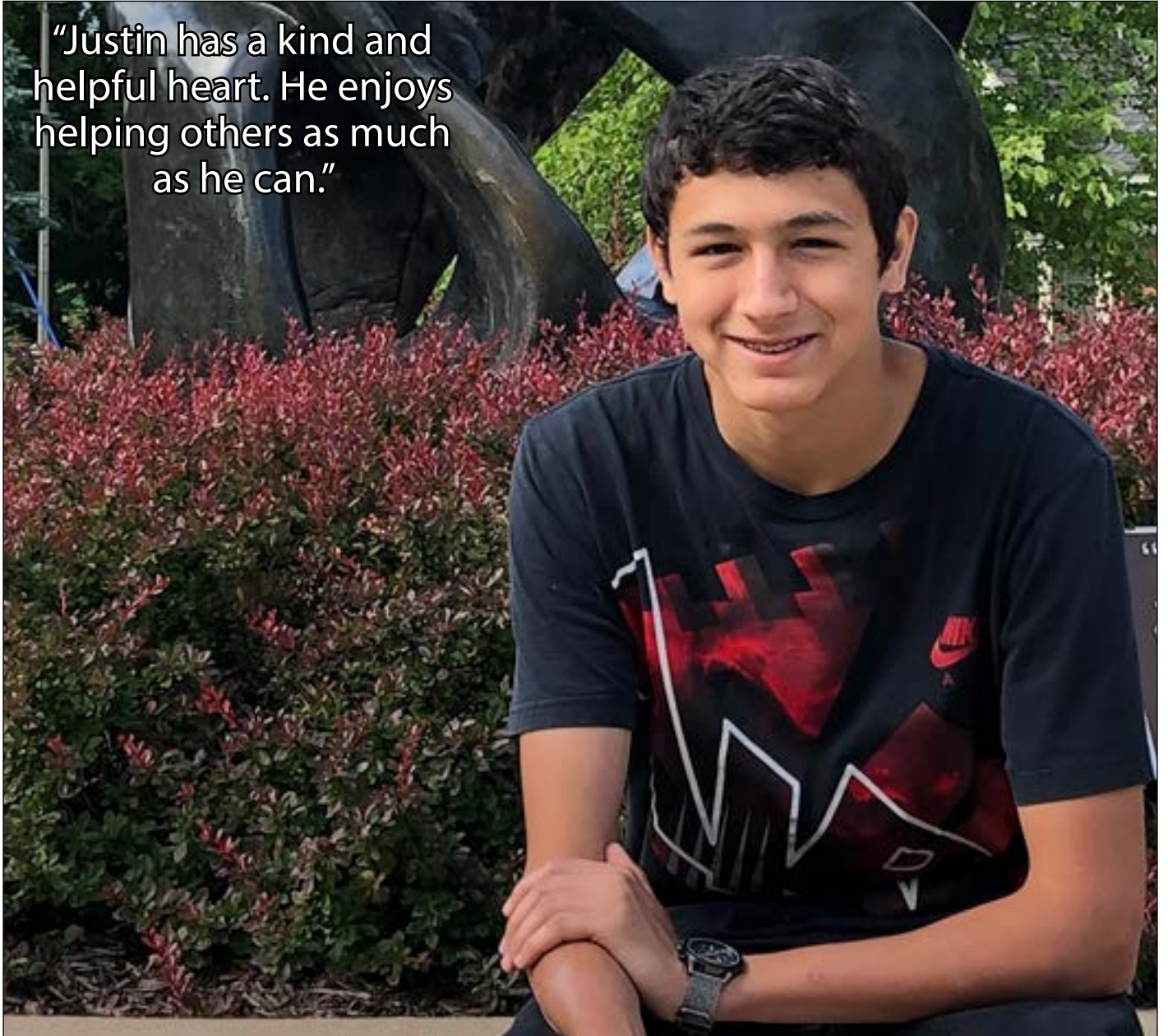
- A helpful young boy who elicits smiles from others

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents who are patient and understanding
- Able to provide structure and consistency
- Open to letting Jayden continue the appropriate relationships that are important to him
- Youngest child in his new forever family

“Jayden has a great personality and enjoys making other people laugh.”

“Justin has a kind and helpful heart. He enjoys helping others as much as he can.”



**Justin’s likes:**

- Spending time with friends and playing video games
- Attending history class
- Eating lake perch
- Playing Rummy

**Intangible assets:**

- Funny, friendly and outgoing

**Justin’s wish list:**

- To fly, to become rich and to own a dirt bike

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single male parent, a single female parent or a mom and dad who are experienced
- Willing to make sure Justin receives the services that will help him
- Pets preferred
- Open to letting Justin maintain his sibling relationships



“I’m funny, I’m smart and I make everybody around me laugh.”



**Dayjah’s likes:**

- Listening to music
- Playing board games

**Intangible assets:**

- Affectionate, nurturing, strong and resilient
- A model student and loves to learn

**Dayjah’s crystal ball:**

- Plans to finish high school and go to college
- Hopes to attend Central Michigan University and become a pediatrician

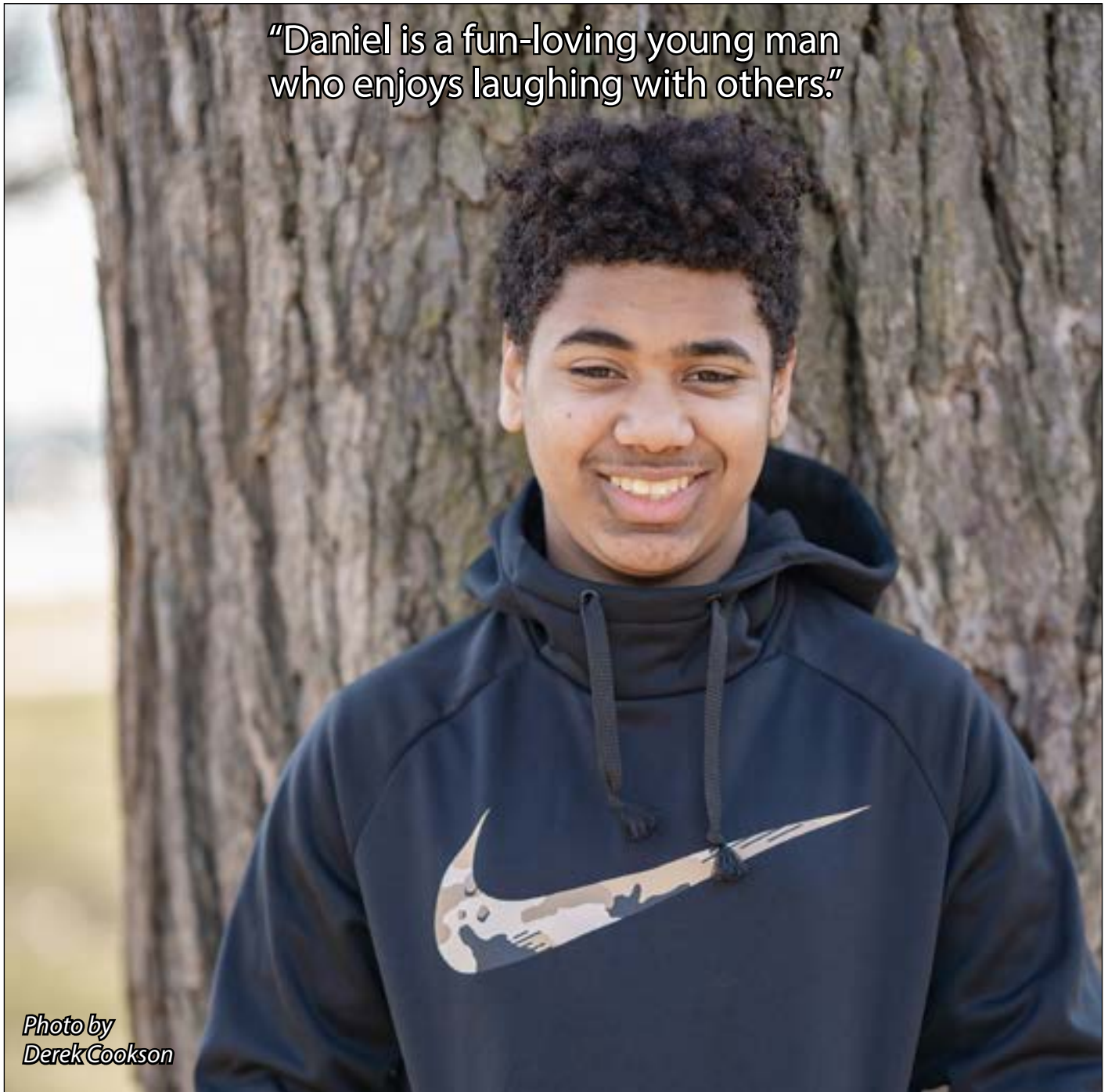
**Creative interests:**

- Drawing and doing arts and crafts
- Dancing

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Strong advocates for the services that Dayjah needs
- Open to letting her maintain contact with her siblings
- A mom and dad, a single female or two female parents

“Daniel is a fun-loving young man who enjoys laughing with others.”



*Photo by  
Derek Cookson*

**Daniel’s likes:**

- Riding his bike and playing outside
- Working on electronics
- Spending time with friends playing video games
- Pizza and tacos

**Daniel’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to visit Disney World

- Hopes to attend sporting events such as basketball and football games with his new family

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Patient and understanding as he develops a relationship with them
- Willing to advocate for the services that will help Daniel thrive
- One or two parents

“Jenna would benefit from a family who enjoys spending time with each other.”



Photo by  
Corinne Toussaint

**Jenna’s likes:**

- Playing board games, especially Monopoly
- Going to the movies or the ice cream shop
- Reading

**Creative interests:**

- Photography, coloring and writing

**Intangible assets:**

- Friendly, polite and respectful of others
- A positive attitude

- Does well academically

**Jenna’s crystal ball:**

- Looks forward to a forever family who likes cooking and going to the movies
- Wants to be a photographer

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two parents
- Would benefit from being the oldest child
- Open to letting Jenna maintain her relationship with her sister

**“Brianna does well academically and sets high goals for herself.”**

*Photo by  
Lillian Scull*



**Brianna’s likes:**

- Playing basketball and participating in gymnastics
- Reading
- Playing games
- Watching movies
- Shopping
- Listening to music

**Brianna’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a pediatric nurse

**Creative interests:**

- Knows how to play piano
- Dancing
- Writing songs and stories

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Experienced and patient parent or parents
- Willing advocate for the services that will help Brianna

“Kaleb is incredibly loving and thoughtful.”

Photo by  
Sarah Boyd



### **Kaleb's likes:**

- Running, which he says is his favorite game, favorite after-school activity and favorite thing to do on the weekend
- Playing games
- Noshing on onion and pepperoni pizza
- Learning new things

### **Kaleb's crystal ball:**

- Plans to become a cross country coach, which he wants to pair with teaching science

- Hopes to go running and play sports and games with his new family

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Caring, loving and thoughtful
- Experienced parent or parents who are understanding and patient
- Would do best as the only child
- A country setting preferred
- Pets

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Winter 2020 Periodical.

**Visit [www.mare.org](http://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](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Iron Mountain, 906-774-3323, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-227-9119, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Child & Family Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-228-4050, [www.cfsup.org](http://www.cfsup.org)  
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, [www.saulttribe.com](http://www.saulttribe.com)  
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, [www.upfs.org](http://www.upfs.org)  
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, [www.upkids.com](http://www.upkids.com)

#### **Northern & Central Lower Michigan**

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989-839-0534, [www.adoptionoptioninc.org](http://www.adoptionoptioninc.org)  
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, [www.bethany.org/traversecity](http://www.bethany.org/traversecity)  
Child & Family Services of Northeast MI, Alpena, 989-356-4567, [www.cfsnemi.org](http://www.cfsnemi.org)  
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Traverse City, 231-946-8975, [www.cfsnwmi.org](http://www.cfsnwmi.org)  
Eagle Village, Hersey, 231-832-2234, [www.eaglevillage.org](http://www.eaglevillage.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Clare, 989-386-2101, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
New Light Child & Family Institute, Millington, 989-871-6695, [www.newlightonline.net](http://www.newlightonline.net)

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

Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, [www.bethany.org/madisonheights](http://www.bethany.org/madisonheights)  
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, [www.ccsem.org](http://www.ccsem.org)  
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-883-2100, [www.csswayne.org](http://www.csswayne.org)  
Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248-353-0921, [www.childsafemichigan.org](http://www.childsafemichigan.org)  
The Children's Center of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-831-5535, [www.thechildrenscenter.com](http://www.thechildrenscenter.com)  
Ennis Center for Children, Detroit, 313-342-2699, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Ennis Center for Children, Pontiac, 248-334-2715, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Family & Community Services, Inc., Utica, 586-726-2988, [www.facadopt.org](http://www.facadopt.org)  
Forever Families, Livonia, 734-762-0909, [www.forever-families.org](http://www.forever-families.org)  
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313-961-4777  
Judson Center, Redford, 313-794-5653, [www.judsoncenter.org](http://www.judsoncenter.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 313-531-4060, [www.mchsmi.org](http://www.mchsmi.org)  
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248-858-7766, [www.oaklandfamilyservices.org](http://www.oaklandfamilyservices.org)  
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248-258-0440, [www.orchards.org](http://www.orchards.org)  
Spaulding for Children, Southfield, 248-443-0300, [www.spaulding.org](http://www.spaulding.org)  
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248-552-8020, [www.spectrumhuman.org](http://www.spectrumhuman.org)  
Vista Maria, Dearborn Heights, 313-271-3050, [www.vistamaria.org](http://www.vistamaria.org)  
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888-625-8669, [www.wolverinehs.org](http://www.wolverinehs.org)

## Southern Central Michigan

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

## Southwest Michigan

Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, 616-224-7550, [www.bethany.org/grandrapids](http://www.bethany.org/grandrapids)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Holland, 616-396-0623, [www.bethany.org/holland](http://www.bethany.org/holland)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Kalamazoo, 269-372-8800, [www.bethany.org/kalamazoo](http://www.bethany.org/kalamazoo)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Muskegon, 231-733-1618, [www.bethany.org/muskegon](http://www.bethany.org/muskegon)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 D.A. Blodgett Services, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, [www.dabsj.org](http://www.dabsj.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, [www.fcsource.org](http://www.fcsource.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, [www.fcsource.org](http://www.fcsource.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, [www.pathwaysmi.org](http://www.pathwaysmi.org)  
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, [www.cityinc.org](http://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**  
**Ann Arbor, MI 48108**



**MICHIGAN  
ADOPTION  
RESOURCE  
EXCHANGE**

**HOMES**  
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273  
[www.mare.org](http://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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