

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.

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*

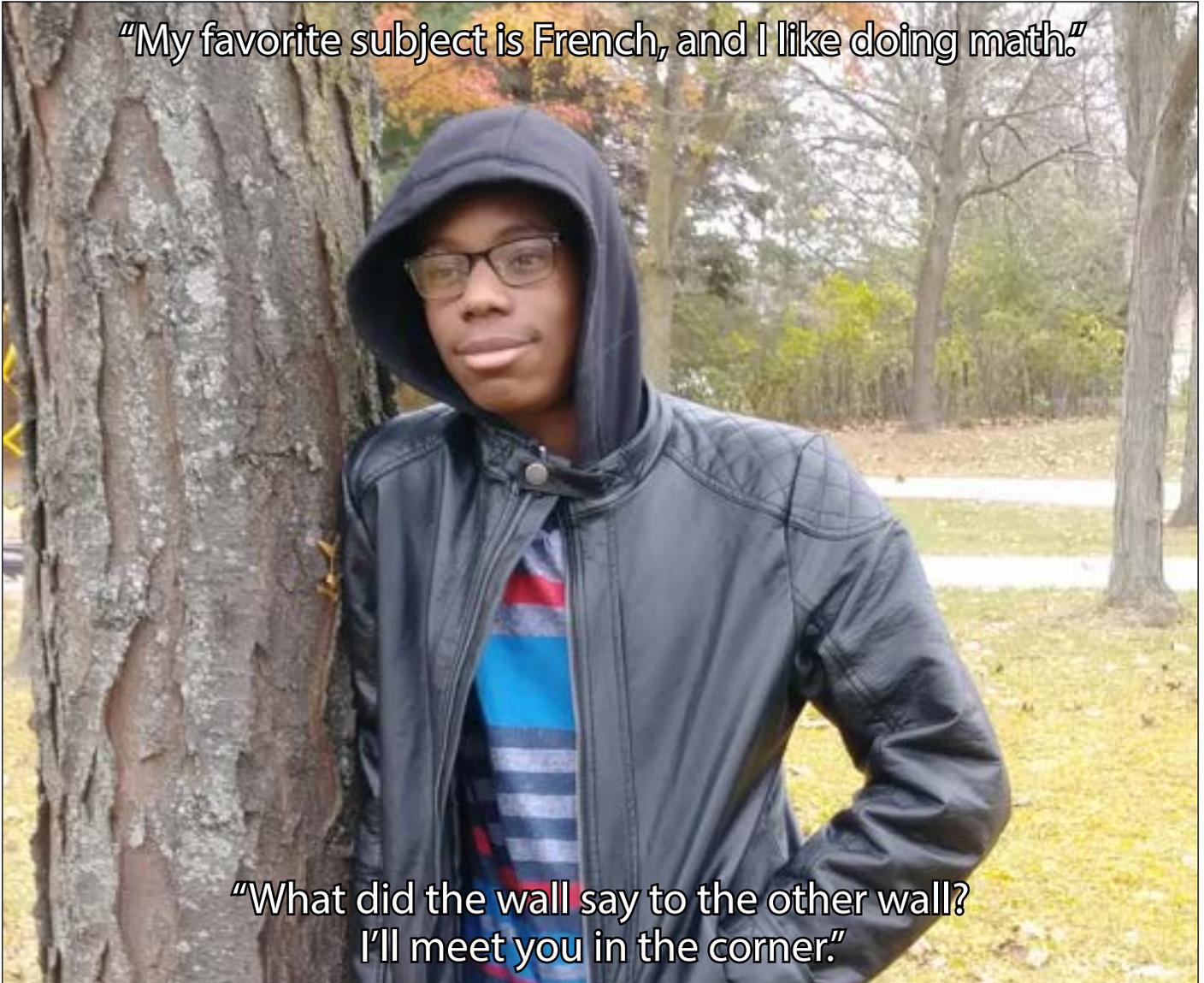


Did you know?

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 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:

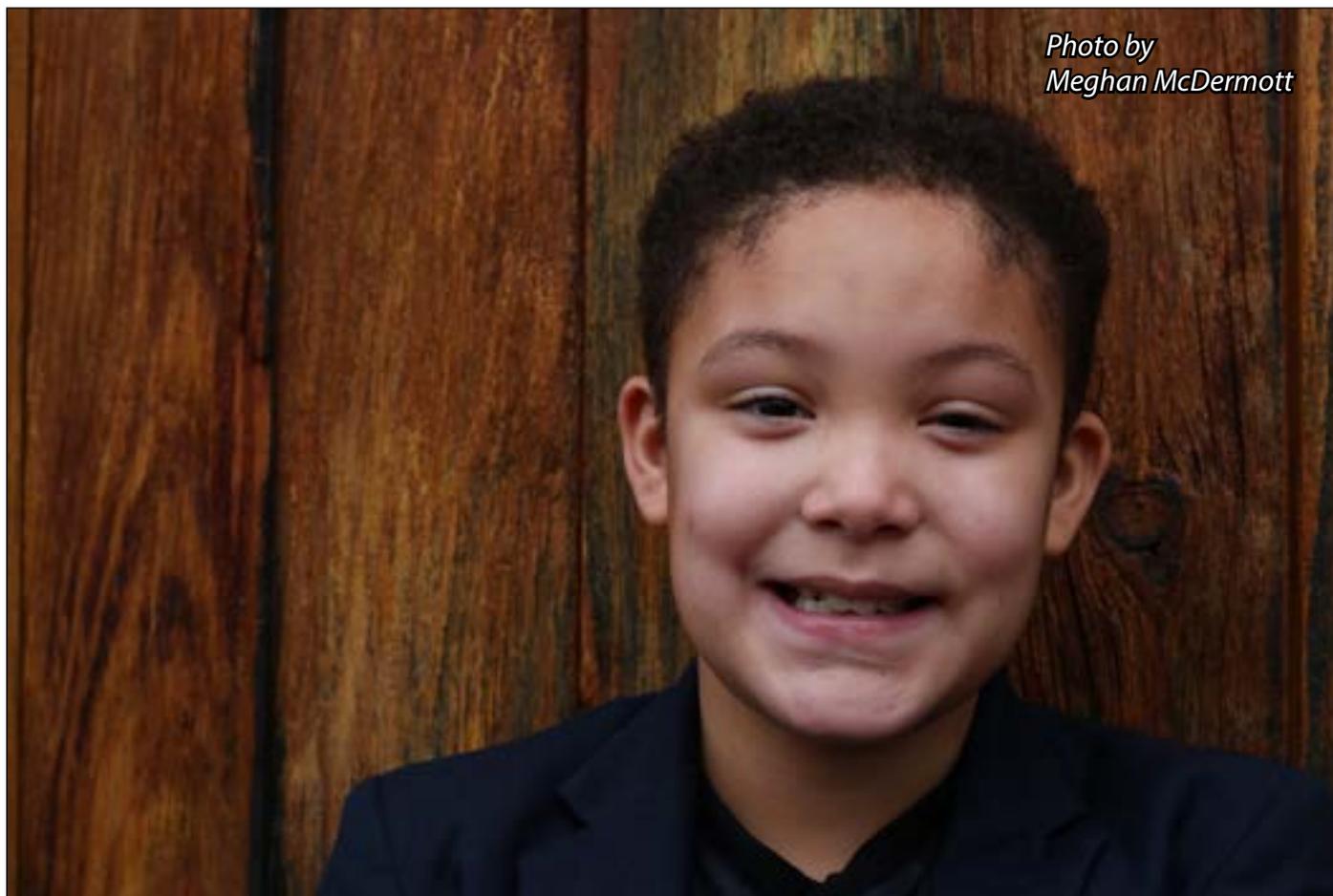
- Very friendly and fun-loving

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:

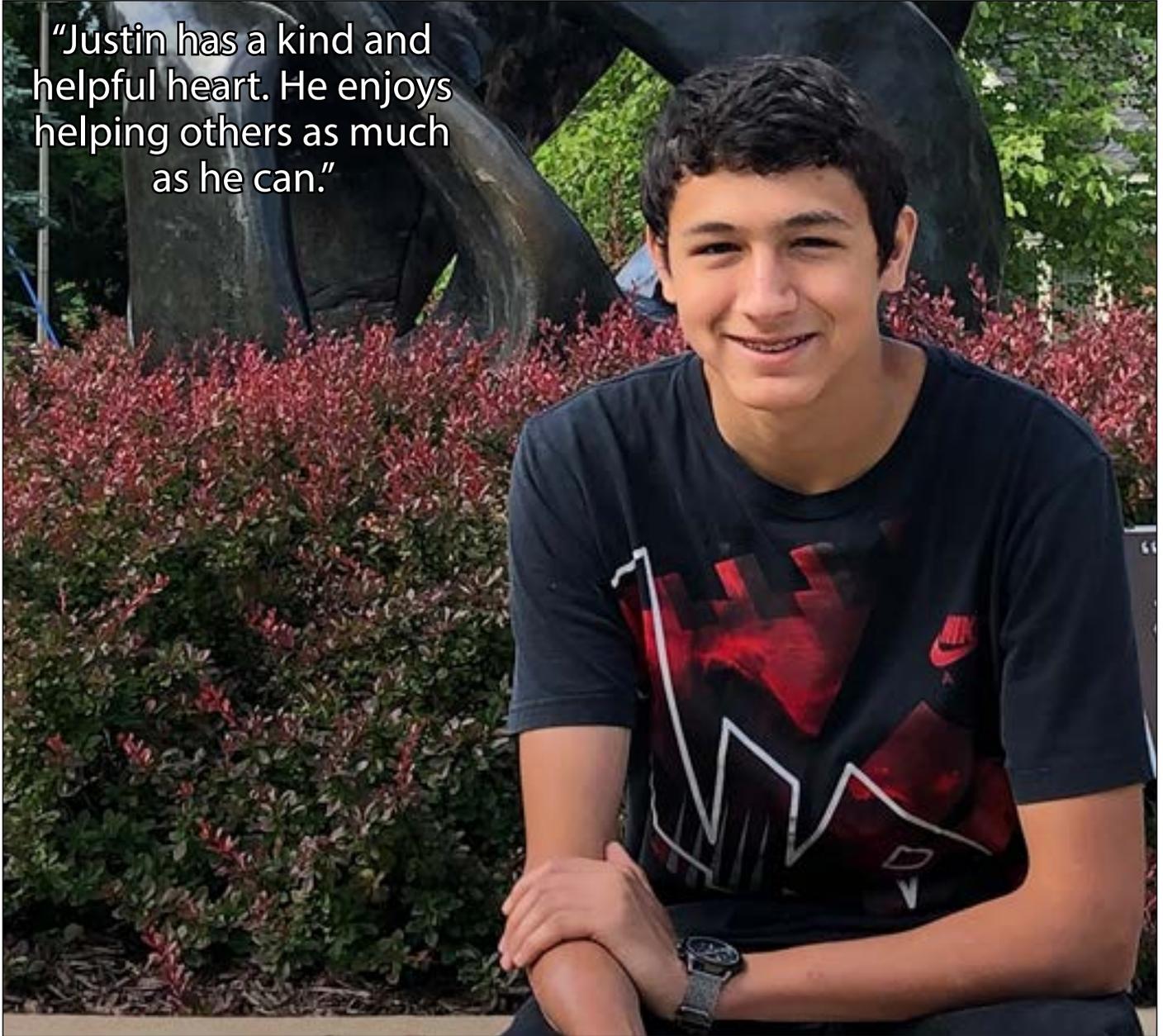
- A helpful young boy who elicits smiles from others

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

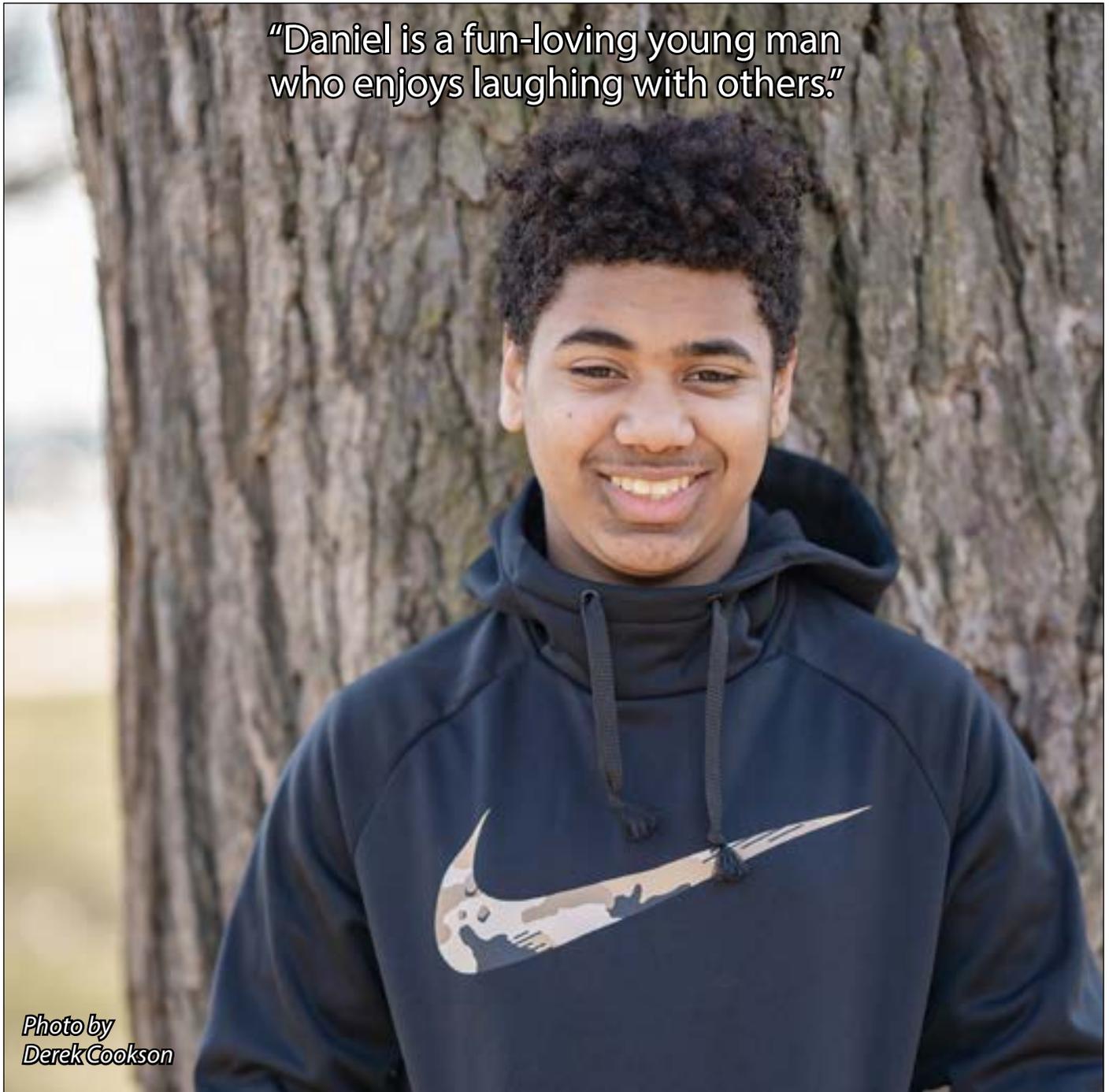
Creative interests:

- 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 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, 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
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, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.org
Community 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 & 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, 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, 248-443-0300, 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, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.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.fcsource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsource.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.citylinc.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



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HOMES
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273
www.mare.org



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