

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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Winter 2024

A spotlight on children waiting for permanent and loving families

Welcome to the Winter 2024 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.



Quandre C010529

Quandre's likes:

- Being active and outside
- Playing sports such as football and basketball, especially after school, on weekends and when spending time with friends
- Taking a break from his active lifestyle by watching TV and playing action-packed video games

Quandre's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a professional football player

Qualities of a forever family:

- Attentive, patient and active
- An experienced parent or parents
- Fierce advocates for any support services he needs
- The only or youngest child in the home



Adoption Navigator Team

Adoption Navigators are experienced adoptive parents who offer guidance and personal knowledge to potential adoptive families. For more information, visit Mare.org/For-Families/Adoption-Navigators



Front row, Amber Tiemeyer, Judy McNaughton, Kim Wolowski (navigator supervisor), Aimee Loudon; back row, Kimberly Grover, Kelli Ostrosky, Kim Ross, Jessica Franks.

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.



River C010623

*Photo by
Jennifer Brooks*

River's likes:

- English language arts class because "I'm weirdly good at it"
- Reading, writing and poetry
- Singing, dancing and re-enacting movies and cartoon shows

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient, understanding and supportive
- Strong advocates for River

Deshawn's likes:

- Celebrating summer as a holiday by taking part in pool parties
- Spending time with friends
- Anime
- Playing video games
- Going to English language arts class

Deshawn's crystal ball:

- Wishes to have money, happiness and a car
- Traveling to Los Angeles because "it looks like a nice place to live"

Qualities of a forever family:

- A family with pets and other children
- Advocates for whatever services Deshawn needs to thrive
- Open to letting Deshawn maintain her sibling relationships

"Deshawn is creative and uses her gifts and talents to show appreciation and bring out the beauty in herself and others through cosmetology."



*Photo by
Paul Rains*

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.



“Andrew is a happy, fun, outgoing and personable young man.”

Andrew’s likes:

- Building things with Legos
- Playing video games
- Playing soccer and basketball
- Participating in gymnastics
- Swimming
- Going to the park
- Jumping on the trampoline
- Attending science class

Andrew’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a police officer

Qualities of a forever family:

- Pets preferred
- Open to letting Andrew maintain his sibling relationships
- Does well with other children regardless of age

Photo by
Carmen Clouthier



“Isaiah is a sweet and caring young man who sees the best in people and loves deeply.”

Isaiah’s likes:

- Building things with Legos
- Taking things apart to see how they work
- Playing video games
- Playing with his dog, Coco, after school and on the weekends

Isaiah’s crystal ball:

- Traveling to Florida
- Becoming a robot builder

Isaiah’s wishes:

- Bringing Mr. Potato Head and stuffed animals to life
- Having a birthday celebration every day

Qualities of a forever family:

- A family who’ll play games, play outside and have fun together
- One or two parents
- Strong advocates for Isaiah

Photo by
Christopher Lucas
Photography



“Destiny has an affectionate smile and a deep laugh. Destiny is very talkative and engaging when she is familiar with you.”

Destiny’s likes:

- Coloring and drawing animals and landscapes
- Building things with Legos
- Reading with friends
- Making sock animals
- Dressing as a bumble bee for Halloween
- Reading books that have animals in them

Destiny’s crystal ball:

- Having a family who has pets and who’ll enjoy going outside with her

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two experienced, patient and understanding parents
- The only child



*Photo by
Paul Rains*

“Asia cares deeply about those who are important to them.”

Asia’s likes:

- Bumble bees, horses and dogs
- Singing and dancing
- Cooking
- Attending English language arts class
- Reading books
- Writing – especially music
- Eating vegetarian cuisine
- Napping after school
- Listening to music on weekends
- Dressing in costume at Halloween

Asia’s crystal ball:

- Going on adventures with a new family
- Becoming a model or an equine therapist

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who can provide the guidance, supervision and attention Asia needs to excel
- Strong advocates for Asia
- Only child in the home
- Pets preferred

Photo by
Aly Darin
Johnson-Hill



“Kauron has a lot of room in his heart for others.
He is witty, creative and empathetic.
Kauron also is fun, outgoing, honest and loving.”

Kauron’s likes:

- Everything about football but also likes playing basketball
- Playing Uno, chess and Monopoly
- Sleeping in on weekends
- Playing video games
- Noshing on mac ‘n cheese and buffalo wings

Kauron’s crystal ball:

- Having an active forever family who likes spending time together

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single male parent, two male parents or a mom and dad
- A home with or without other children as well as pets but no snakes
- Able to spend quality time with him and who’ll be patient with him
- Strong advocates for the support services that will help Kauron thrive
- Does well in a home with pets and other children

Photo by
Emily Goudy



“Josh is a great kid with a big heart!
He is sweet, likeable and silly and has a good imagination.”

Joshua’s likes:

- Exploring nature
- Whittling wood
- Building things with Legos
- Being outside, especially after school
- Throwing a football around and playing catch
- Hot dogs on the grill

- Sleeping in on weekends

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents
- Fierce advocates for Josh
- Understanding and patient with his transition into the home
- Oldest or only child in the home

Photo by
Paul Rains



“Renee is very outgoing, talkative, funny and personable.”

Renee’s likes:

- Running with the track team
- Going roller skating
- Learning about a new sport
- Walking the dog and helping around the house
- Riding bikes
- Singing, especially rapping and would like to do it as a profession
- Spending time in the freedom of the outdoors
- Napping after school
- Celebrating Halloween and Christmas by being with family

Renee’s crystal ball:

- A career in criminology and a side job in cosmetology

Qualities of a forever family:

- Willing to maintain frequent contact between Renee and her sister
- One or two patient, experienced parents

**IN-DEPTH
PROFILES**

**Check out Renee’s In-Depth Profile at
<https://mare.indepthprofiles.org/profiles/>**

*Photo by
Paul Rains*



“Christina is very protective of people who are close to her and always tries to ensure that their needs are being met.”

Christina’s likes:

- Turning to friends for comfort
- Getting her nails done
- Riding bikes and scooters
- Splashing in the pool
- Celebrating Christmas, Easter and birthdays
- Munching on Takis
- Going to the mall
- Buying makeup
- Doing good deeds
- Attending social studies class
- Playing board games

Christina’s crystal ball:

- Going to Florida to lounge on the beaches

Tremendous traits:

- Takes the most pride in her maturity, her grades and her coping skills

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide guidance, consistency, structure and one-on-one attention
- The youngest child
- Two experienced parents who will be fierce advocates for any needed support services



“Jeremy is a high-energy and curious little man who can be sweet and loving to those he knows well.”

Jeremy’s likes:

- Being outside
- Jumping on the trampoline
- Collecting eggs from the chickens
- Anything with a motor and using his imagination while being in vehicles
- Riding bikes
- Eating pancakes for breakfast
- Swimming
- Going out to recess at school
- Playing with toy cars
- Going to the movies
- Playing outside after school

Jeremy’s crystal ball:

- Having a car and a family
- Wants to be “a good father”

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single mom who has a good support network or two parents
- A parent or parents who are experienced, patient and understanding
- Can be placed in a home with or without other children
- Willing to make sure Jeremy receives any services that would benefit him

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 and 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
Ennis Center for Children, Saginaw, 989-558-0020, www.enniscenter.org
Holy Cross Services, Saginaw, 989-577-5814, www.holycrossservices.org
Legacy Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, www.lasadoption.org
Legacy 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
Legacy 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
 Legacy Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy 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

Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 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
 Legacy Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.cityinc.org

MICHIGAN
ADOPTION
RESOURCE
EXCHANGE

Adoption
Navigators

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
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