

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

To learn about foster care adoption and view photolistsings and videos of children, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



STORY BY **JULIE MILLER AND BOBBI HINTON, MARE MATCH SUPPORT PROGRAM STAFF**

Fall and winter holidays are often filled with fun and festivities, and for youth who have experienced trauma and loss, they may trigger painful memories and feelings of grief.

Those feelings can manifest in many ways including sadness, regression, withdrawal, complaints or acting out. The following tips provide ways to manage these concerns.

### **Be present**

Youth will likely need help expressing and managing their emotions, especially when recalling positive or negative past holidays and missing people no longer in their lives. Watch for signs of distress or pending

meltdowns and let youth know you're there to listen when they're ready to talk – focusing on learning what's behind their behavior. It will also help to temper your feelings by being flexible and letting youth regroup when necessary. Memories may stir feelings of birth family loyalty that lead youth to push adoptive parents away as well. Still, your consistent support during this time is an opportunity to both grow your relationship and develop attachment.

### **Talk traditions**

Discuss your family traditions with youth and learn about theirs. Incorporate the youth's traditions into your own, if possible, and

create new ones together as a family. Food can be a big part of the holiday, so ask youth if they have a favorite dish you can make – but be prepared; they may say they don't like your version.

### **Slow down**

Limiting the number of events your family attends around the holidays will allow for much-needed downtime and help reduce overstimulation. Prepare for events you do attend by discussing in advance what often happens, who may be present and how youth can let you know if they need a break. Talk with extended family members to prepare them for children's needs

See **TLC** on page 3

# Christian: One of the sweetest guys you'll ever meet

Few things make Christian happier than being outdoors.

He likes playing outside on the weekends, and he includes skiing, snowboarding, boating, fishing and swimming among his favorite activities. Christian also enjoys playing football.

After school, Christian enjoys watching TV, especially the comedy "Ridiculousness." Christian also enjoys drawing, woodworking and doing arts and crafts. This active boy is described as intelligent, articulate, intuitive and sociable.

"Christian is a very bright young man," says one of his workers. "He is very creative, caring and likes to give gifts."

According to another worker, Christian has a good sense of humor. With his future forever family, Christian hopes to enjoy the same outdoor activities that he loves such as hunting, fishing and camping.



Christian, C09268.



Kemiya, C08921.

# Kemiya: A math maven who's a great hugger

Those who know Kemiya best describe her as a sweet, extremely honest girl with a quiet sense of humor.

"She is completely unintentional in her humor and often doesn't even realize she's being funny," says her worker. This humorous teen also has a strong sense of competition. She loves the card game Uno and is known as unbeatable. She even practices by herself to add playing strategies to her game.

Kemiya takes great care with her appearance and enjoys having her hair professionally braided. In the future, Kemiya would like to become a cosmetologist. Kemiya also loves to color, swim, play board games, go for walks and ride her bike.

Kemiya loves doing math worksheets for fun. She can practice her math skills for hours, and it is a great tool for helping her stay calm and focused.

Overall, Kemiya is a loveable teenager who will give hugs to those she knows who will accept them.



The Michigan Supreme Court marked 2018 Michigan Adoption Day with the finalization of four adoptions. This year's Michigan Adoption Day is Tuesday, November 26.

## Whoa! We're stoked about adoption month and day

**National Adoption Month**  
During the month of November, MARE will feature families through the 30 Days of Adoption Wishes celebration. Each day a special adoptive family will be spotlighted on MARE's home page as well as on our social media.

In addition to featuring families, MARE will highlight teens who deserve permanent homes. These teenaged youth need forever families who will provide

stability and permanency as well as support and guidance in their future endeavors.

We'll also have a few fun surprises on our social media.

All in all, it's certain to be an informative and entertaining month, so be sure to follow us at [mare.org](http://mare.org) and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Check out the events section of [mare.org](http://mare.org) or [mare.org/MI-Adoption-Day](http://mare.org/MI-Adoption-Day) for more information.



**MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY**  
Giving thanks for families  
NOVEMBER 2019

**TLC**, continued from page 1

and comfortable inclusion in family festivities.

### Remember basic needs

When possible, stick to normal routines for a sense of security and to reduce stress. This can also help with being sure youth are getting enough sleep and eating on a schedule. When a schedule changes or you're at long holiday events, carry snacks to avoid "hangry" meltdowns. Limiting holiday sweets also can help to reduce hyperactivity.

### Seek support

Remember to take care of yourself during this busy time, too! Talk with an understanding friend, schedule self-care (even if it's just for 10 minutes) or attend a support group if you can. MARE offers our Match Support Program to families who'd like extra support as well. Contact us at 734-528-2002 during the holidays or any time we may be of assistance.

There's no need to feel pressured to create a "perfect" holiday. Keep it simple, take things as they come, laugh when you can and be patient – with children and yourself!

Looking to meet some of the children on MARE who are available for adoption?

Attend a Meet & Greet! Contact us at 800-589-6273 or at [mare@judsoncenter.org](mailto:mare@judsoncenter.org) for more information and upcoming events.

See page 4 for upcoming Meet & Greets.

**MARE**  
**Meet & Greet**



Meet the adoption navigator team. Left to right, Kelli Ostrosky, Kim Ross, Amber Tiemeyer, Aimee Loudon, Kimberly Wolowski (supervisor), Judith McNaughton and Mac Ballantine.

## Standing by and ready to assist you

MARE adoption navigators are experienced adoptive parents who offer guidance and personal knowledge to potential adoptive families. They have years of parenting experience, resource and service finding skills and knowledge of foster care and adoption procedures.

You often will find navigators attending community coalition

meetings – sitting on both parent and professional panels – staffing Meet & Greets and participating in other statewide adoption events. Our navigators love getting out of the office and meeting the families they work with!

Navigators are also a great resource for families who need help advocating for themselves with their agency and teaching

families where to find resources around the state.

Families who contact MARE for information on adopting children through foster care are given the option to work with a navigator to help guide them through the process.

The navigator program is a free service.

**Call 800-589-6273 and ask to talk to a navigator or fill out a form at <https://www.mare.org/For-Families/General-Adoption-Information-Inquiry>**

## Calendar of Events

**January 18, 2020**

**MARE Meet & Greet**, Sterling Heights  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

**February 1, 2020**

**MARE Meet & Greet**, Plymouth  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

*For more information regarding these events contact Jessica Thompson, MARE Recruitment Specialist: [jessica\\_thompson@judsoncenter.org](mailto:jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org)*

## MARE contact info

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