

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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***He's got plenty of  
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***Fall 2021***

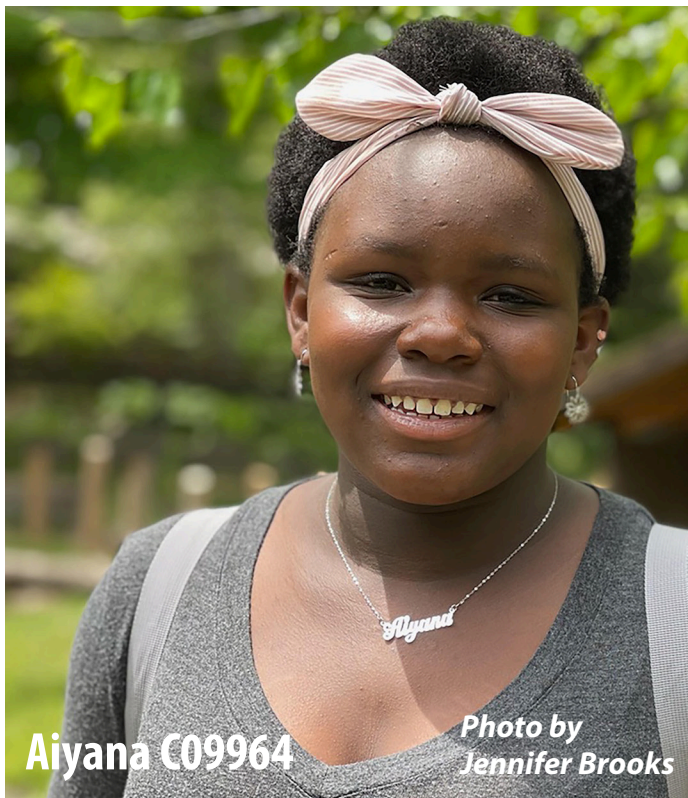
**A spotlight on children  
waiting for permanent  
and loving families**



Welcome to the Fall 2021 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](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 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.



Aiyana C09964

Photo by  
Jennifer Brooks

### **Aiyana's likes:**

- Playing soccer and volleyball
- Munching on cheeseburgers and fries
- Playing Uno
- Going to the movies
- Getting her nails done
- Going shopping with friends
- Sharing her sense of humor

### **Aiyana's crystal ball:**

- Becoming a therapist

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

- Experienced single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Strong advocates for Aiyana

## You won't want to miss the 2021 Heart Gallery video

Talk about a must-see film!

This year's Michigan Heart Gallery video is four stars and then some. The video is now available for viewing, and it's titled "Through Their Eyes," a tribute to the youth who appear on Mare.org.

As MARE Program Manager Michelle Parra puts it, "The driving force behind the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is the kids themselves. And that's what makes their stories so inspiring. Their

stories are in their words, through their eyes.

"For this year's Michigan Heart Gallery, we focused on the voices of Michigan youth. They have their own thoughts, their own ideas and their own dreams that really matter, and they are their own best advocates."

If you'd like to watch the 2021 Michigan Heart Gallery video, visit:  
[www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare](http://www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare)

## 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.



### Caleb's likes:

- Playing Pokemon and Yu-Gi-Oh
- Noshing on pizza and hot dogs
- Church and long naps on weekends

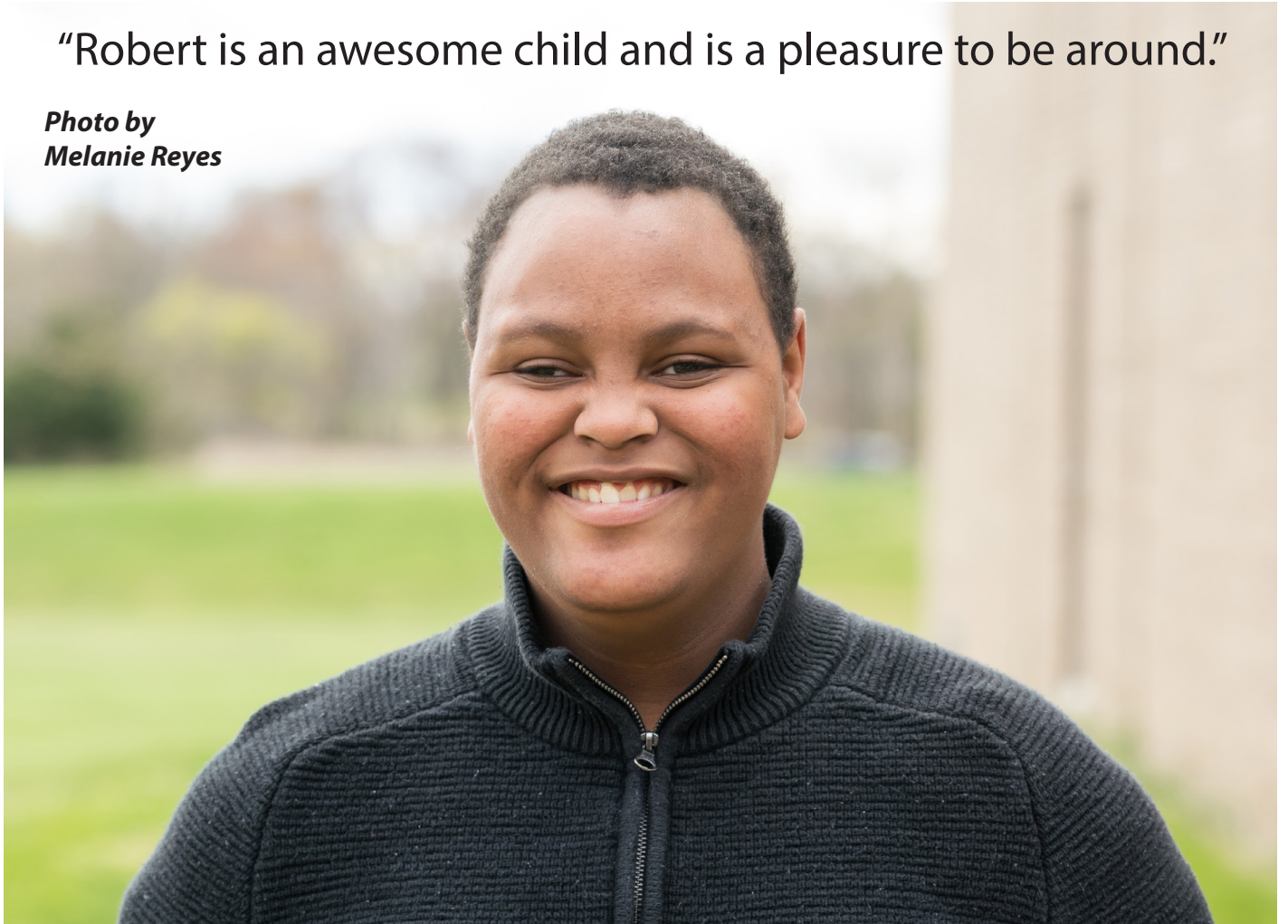
### Forever family qualities:

- Patient, understanding parent(s)
- Only child or youngest child



“Robert is an awesome child and is a pleasure to be around.”

*Photo by  
Melanie Reyes*



**Robert’s likes:**

- Being outside
- Watching and playing sports, especially football and basketball
- Riding his bike
- Learning new things

**Robert’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a police officer and a professional football player

**Great traits:**

- Respectful and an excellent communicator.
- Outgoing, determined, energetic and friendly

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Would do best as the only child

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**Did you know?**

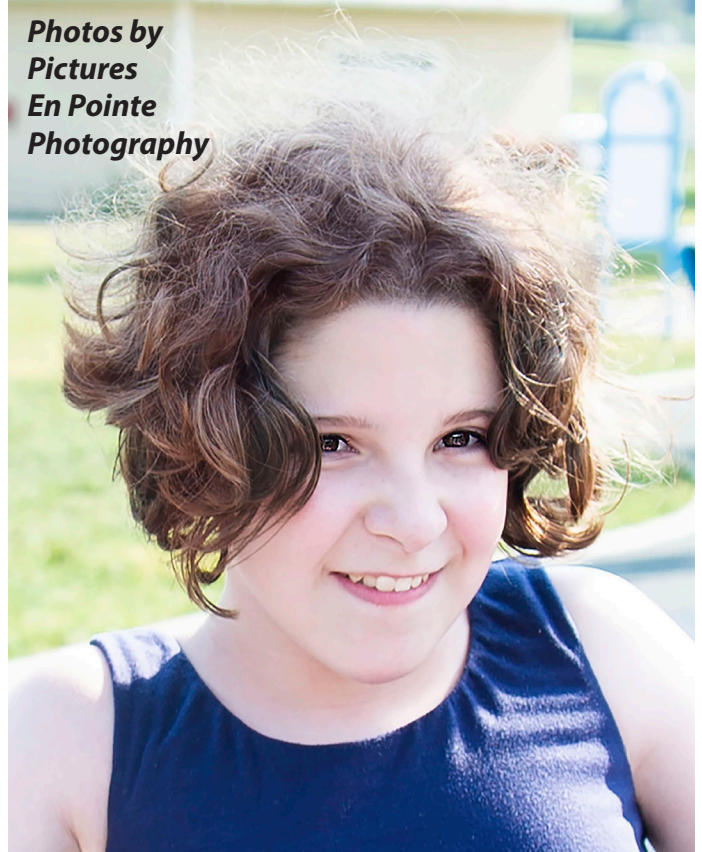
If you’re new to adoption, we have a wealth of information for you, starting with [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) > For Families > New to Adoption. This web page offers guidance to get you started and advice to keep you on track in the adoption process. Of course, you always can contact MARE’s adoption navigators who have personal experience in going through the process. Contact MARE at 800-589-6273 or [mare@judsoncenter.org](mailto:mare@judsoncenter.org).



“Isyse is very fun, loving, sweet and affectionate.”



Photos by  
Pictures  
En Pointe  
Photography



“If you have a book, Ivy is very quick to snuggle up and read with you.”

### **Isyse’s likes:**

- Getting on a playset and taking to the air on the swings
- Blowing bubbles in the backyard
- Playing with Play-Doh and sand
- Singing and dancing
- Listening to music
- Playing on the iPad and computer
- Reading to herself

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

- Willing to adopt Isyse and Ivy together
- Two parents, but a single parent would be considered

### **Ivy’s likes:**

- Dancing
- Being active
- Socializing with others
- Mimicking music with her own sounds
- Coloring
- Playing on her tablet
- Being outside

- Able to make sure Isyse and Ivy get the services and attention they require
- Committed to them now and into the future



*Photo by  
Deb Hoag*

“I am very sweet  
and funny.”



### **Harmonie’s likes:**

- Relaxing
- Swimming
- Going to the movies
- Spending time with friends
- Eating seafood pasta

### **Great traits:**

- Pleasant and hardworking
- Outgoing and enjoyable

### **Harmonie’s crystal ball:**

- Traveling to Texas to be where it’s warm
- Playing games and watching movies with her new family

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

- A single mom or two parents
- Open to letting her maintain her sibling relationships
- Supportive and strong advocates



Photo by  
Sarah Boyd



### **Sleven's likes:**

- Playing basketball and football, his favorite after-school activities
- Playing video games, especially Madden NFL
- Math
- Watching how-to videos and trying to solve things himself

### **Sleven's crystal ball:**

- Playing professional football or becoming a police officer

- Would like to visit Washington, D.C., because "I want to see the president"

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

- One or two parents
- Would benefit from having "a solid male figure" in his life
- Willing to let Sleven maintain the relationships that are important to him
- Strong advocates for the services that will help him function at his best

"Sleven has the ability to walk right up to someone and relate to them in some way and immediately have a new friend."



“Tyler has a very loving personality.”

Photo by  
Pictures  
En Pointe  
Photography

### **Tyler’s likes:**

- Playing card games
- Putting puzzles together
- Watching TV – especially cartoons and movies
- Relaxing in the company of others
- Studying when it includes Bill Nye the Science Guy and when the subject is volcanos

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

- Two experienced parents
- Only or youngest child
- Active and able to provide the consistency and one-on-one attention that help Tyler excel
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Tyler

### **Join one of our Waiting Family Forums**

The process of waiting to be matched with a child can be exciting, confusing and frustrating at times. To assist you through this process, the MARE adoption navigators host quarterly Waiting Family Forums. Join us and learn exactly what happens to your

inquiries after you submit them; find out what you can do to make the most of your wait time; learn ways to strengthen your inquiries; get tips on how to effectively advocate for your family; and meet other waiting families. For more information, email [kimberly\\_wolowski@judsoncenter.org](mailto:kimberly_wolowski@judsoncenter.org)



**Mashone's likes:**

- Going shopping
- Bike riding
- Going to eat at restaurants
- Munching on pizza and chicken
- Going swimming
- Helping cook dinner

**Mashone's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of visiting Florida because "they have alligators, and I think it would be fun to see an alligator and feed it!"
- Wants to become a doctor

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents
- A forever family with or without other children
- Patient and supportive

"Mashone is resilient and one of the strongest people I know. She has a big heart and is just waiting to love a family in the same way that she deserves to be loved."





Photos by  
Jennifer Brooks



**Mandi's likes:**

- Hanging out with friends
- Playing cards
- Talking on the phone to friends
- History, social studies and science

**Tremendous traits:**

- A great, gracious and gregarious girl
- Caring, curious, social and active

**Mandi's crystal ball:**

- Hopes to join a cheerleading team one day
- Getting a forever family so they can do things together such as playing cards and going out to eat

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two patient and experienced parents
- Strong advocates for Mandi
- Patient and understanding
- Would do best as the only child





### **Jayvion's likes:**

- Munching on pizza, steak and pork chops
- Satisfying his thirst with a Faygo root beer
- Playing on the phone, tablet or computer
- Watching the Cartoon Network
- Making and eating "luxurious" banana splits
- Giant anacondas, his favorite animal

### **Tremendous traits:**

- Positive, creative, driven and kind

### **Jayvion's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of creating his own cooking show with episodes ranging from appetizers like pizza rolls and PB&J triangles, to main courses such as calzones and barbeque, to homemade cakes and pies for desserts

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

- One or two supportive parents
- Only child
- Pets preferred!

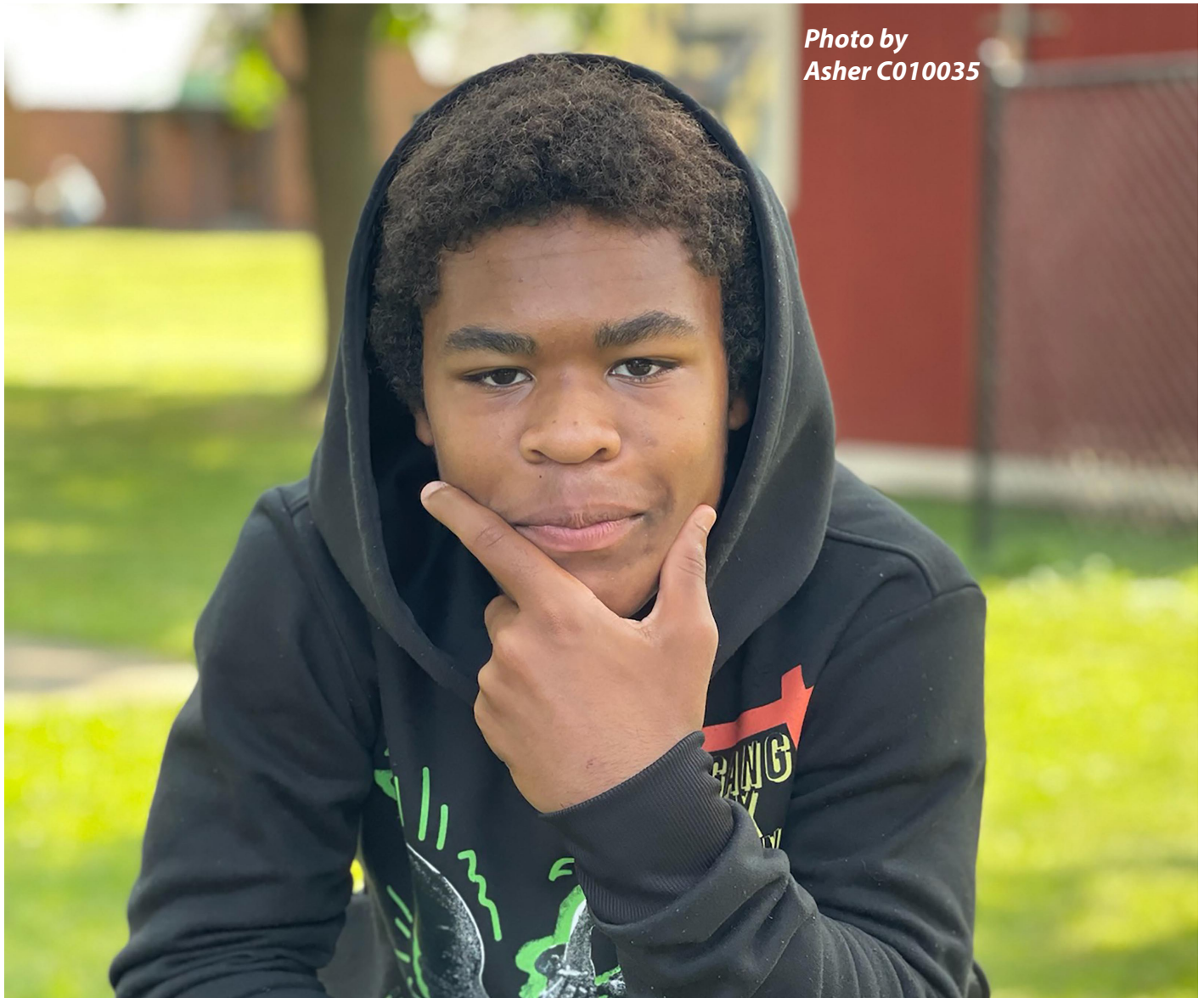


**IN-DEPTH  
PROFILES**

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



Photo by  
Asher C010035



**Avion's likes:**

- Spending time with significant others
- Playing games
- Sports and video games
- Spending time in the outdoors
- Believe it or not, going to school and does well there
- Munching on pizza, chicken and pasta

**Avion's crystal ball:**

- Becoming a police officer or social worker because, "I like to help others"
- Visiting Disney World

**Takes the most pride in:**

- "The progress I've made overall"

**Great traits:**

- Sweet, friendly, calm and unassuming

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced, patient and understanding parents
- Able make sure Avion gets services so he thrives
- Open to letting Avion maintain his sibling relationships

"Avion is very positive about his life and his future."



Photo by  
Sarah Boyd

“Matthew has  
great potential  
to do amazing  
things.”



### Matthew's likes:

- “Any place where there are a lot of Lamborghini cars”
- Playing organized sports such as football, basketball and soccer
- Listening to music
- Getting up early to watch TV
- Chicken alfredo, burgers from McDonald's or the entire menu at Taco Bell

### Great traits:

- Gets along well with others and always strives for a positive outlook on things

### Matthew's crystal ball:

- Becoming a professional football or basketball player
- A forever family who is active and loves the outdoors
- Traveling to the land of Lamborghinis, Italy

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Fierce advocates for him
- Two experienced, patient and understanding parents
- The youngest or only child
- A strong yes to pets, especially a dog



## **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, Fremont, 231-924-3390, [www.bethany.org/fremont](http://www.bethany.org/fremont)  
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)  
Holy Cross Services, 989-781-2780, [www.holycrossservices.org](http://www.holycrossservices.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.citylinc.org](http://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**



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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