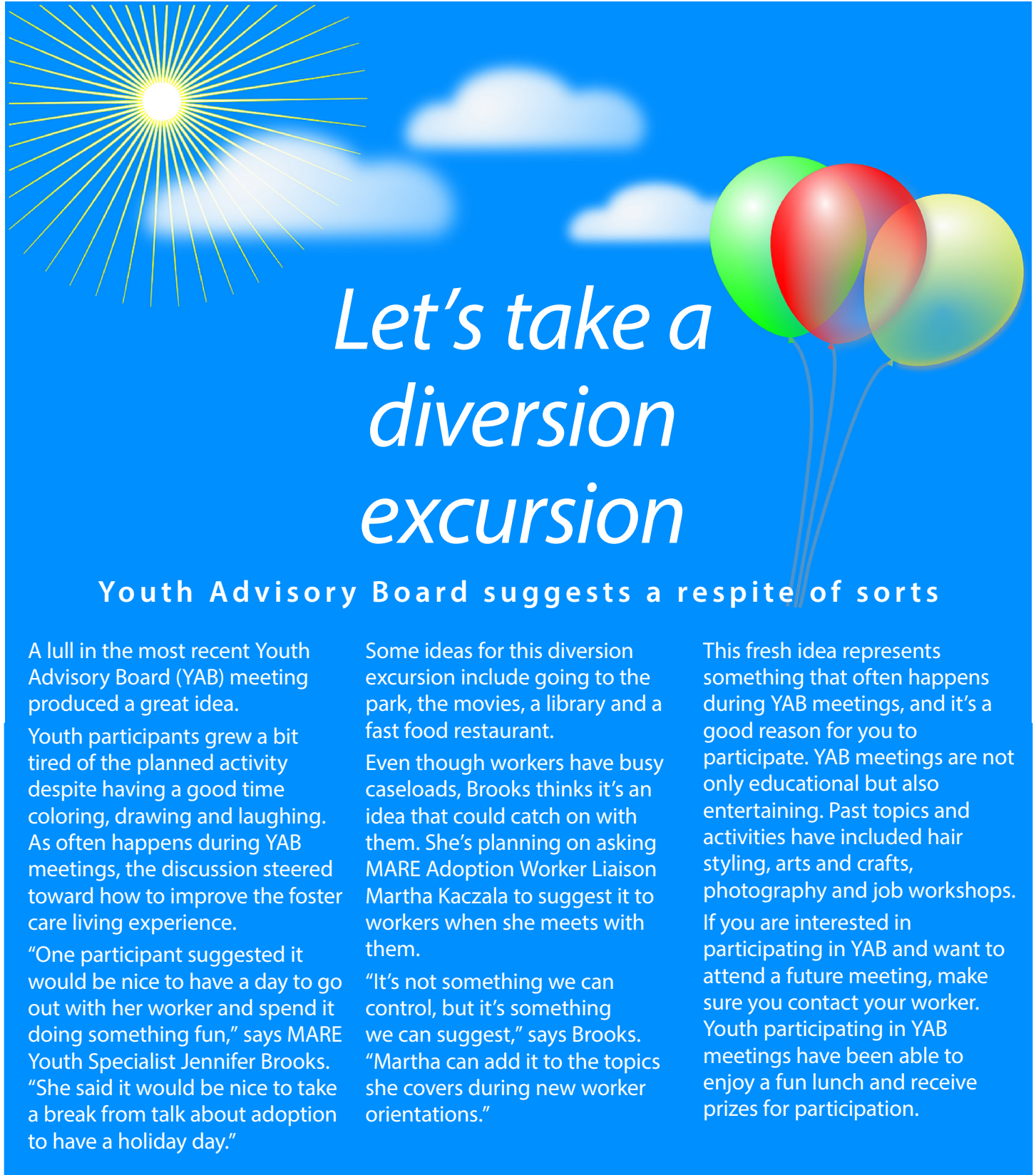


The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. To learn more about issues impacting youth, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) and click on the For Youth tab.



# *Let's take a diversion excursion*

## **Youth Advisory Board suggests a respite of sorts**

A lull in the most recent Youth Advisory Board (YAB) meeting produced a great idea.

Youth participants grew a bit tired of the planned activity despite having a good time coloring, drawing and laughing. As often happens during YAB meetings, the discussion steered toward how to improve the foster care living experience.

"One participant suggested it would be nice to have a day to go out with her worker and spend it doing something fun," says MARE Youth Specialist Jennifer Brooks. "She said it would be nice to take a break from talk about adoption to have a holiday day."

Some ideas for this diversion excursion include going to the park, the movies, a library and a fast food restaurant.

Even though workers have busy caseloads, Brooks thinks it's an idea that could catch on with them. She's planning on asking MARE Adoption Worker Liaison Martha Kaczala to suggest it to workers when she meets with them.

"It's not something we can control, but it's something we can suggest," says Brooks. "Martha can add it to the topics she covers during new worker orientations."

This fresh idea represents something that often happens during YAB meetings, and it's a good reason for you to participate. YAB meetings are not only educational but also entertaining. Past topics and activities have included hair styling, arts and crafts, photography and job workshops. If you are interested in participating in YAB and want to attend a future meeting, make sure you contact your worker. Youth participating in YAB meetings have been able to enjoy a fun lunch and receive prizes for participation.

# If your dreams include college, tap into this free resource

Dream of going to college, but not sure where to start? Education planners might help you with that process.

Education planners provide one-on-one assistance to youth in foster care and act as a liaison between the child welfare system and the education system.

Never heard of education planners and want to know more on what to expect from their services? Below are some of the services that they offer.

- Developing short and long term education goals.
- School enrollment and record transfer.
- Maintaining a youth in the school of origin.
- Figuring out transportation to school.
- Special education advocacy.
- College/vocational preparation and enrollment.

Unfortunately the education planners are not currently available in all Michigan counties, but 43 have the services available.

To find a program near you, go to

[www.michigan.gov/fyit](http://www.michigan.gov/fyit) then click on Education and Education Planners.



## Hey, can I have one of those videos, please?

One of the questions MARE gets from youth is, "How do I get a video?"

Videos are made for kids listed on the MARE website who have been waiting the longest for a family. If you've been waiting for a few months and want a video, tell your worker you want a video made and your worker can call MARE staff.

We will come meet you at your placement or somewhere fun. In addition to a short interview, we'd like to film you doing something you love – so start thinking of ideas!

Of course, you will need to have a signed consent form indicating that you're receptive to having a video shared on the MARE website.

If you need assistance with your consent, contact your worker.

### **CONFIRMATION OF CONVERSATION YOUTH ADOPTION RECRUITMENT BOOKLET** *(To be completed by youth ages 9 and up who are being featured for adoption recruitment.)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, age \_\_\_\_\_ reviewed the GUIDE TO YOUTH ADOPTION RECRUITMENT booklet with my Adoption Worker on \_\_\_\_\_. Below are my preferences regarding recruitment features:

- I PREFER TO BE FEATURED in ANY recruitment activities or
- I PREFER NOT TO BE FEATURED in any recruitment activities or
- I am only interested in being featured in the following ways:
  - Quarterly printed recruitment periodical
  - Quarterly newsletter feature (family, professional or youth newsletter)
  - Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
  - Recruitment video on MARE website
  - Host College display

# Get your work – and your name – in print!

Have your worker send us your artwork, story or poem and we'll feature it in an upcoming issue of the Youth Newsletter.

Submissions should be sent to [jennifer\\_brooks@judsoncenter.org](mailto:jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org). For questions, your worker can call Jennifer at 734-528-2061.

---

## Here's introspective and creative Mikale



“ I like doing art. I like doing portraits, coloring, drawing. ”

“ If I could visit one place on Earth, it would be Washington, D.C. I want to look around at everything. ”



“ I love nature. I've been a big nature freak forever. I went to a fishing camp once, and that was really fun. ”



# Share your success story!

Fostering Success Michigan is asking for students who are interested in being featured on its website.

This is an opportunity for students and professionals alike to read the success stories and learn about supports that helped you and others succeed. The stories will be used as a way to highlight students and their achievements. If you know of any youth or alumni of foster care between the ages of 18 and 24 who are currently enrolled in high school or college, Fostering Success Michigan would love to

hear from them.

Contact the Fostering Success Student Advisor at [fostering-info@wmich.edu](mailto:fostering-info@wmich.edu) to have the interview questions sent directly to your inbox.

*Fostering Success Michigan is a statewide initiative that aims to increase awareness, access and success in higher education and post-college careers for youth and alumni of foster care ([fosteringsuccessmichigan.com](http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com)).*

---

## YOUTH RESOURCES

---



**FosterClub** - FosterClub is a national network for young people in foster care and young foster care alumni. The site includes blogs from current foster youth, success stories from youth who were in the foster system as well as celebrities who experienced foster care. It also provides a listing by state of contact information for professionals and hotlines.  
([www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com) 503-717-1552)



**Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative** - MYOI is a partnership between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Oakland/Livingston Human Services Agency and many other local community partners. MYOI's goal is to ensure that young people in foster care have successful outcomes in housing, education, employment, community engagement and health.  
([michigan.gov/FYIT](http://michigan.gov/FYIT) > MYOI)



**Foster Youth in Transition** - MDHHS website geared towards older youth who are experiencing foster care. It's a comprehensive, youth-oriented site with advice, interactive features, a useful glossary of foster care terms, and information on a variety of issues important to current and former foster youth. The site provides links on how to develop supports, find services, get answers to important questions and just keep you posted on what's new.  
([www.michigan.gov/fyit](http://www.michigan.gov/fyit))

For more information on getting involved with these organizations, contact Jen Brooks at [jennifer\\_brooks@judsoncenter.org](mailto:jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org) or 734-528-2061.