

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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Aalarion's dreams
place him in a
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give others a boost,
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lifts everyone's
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Spring 2018

A spotlight on children
waiting for permanent
and loving families

Aalarion C09118

Aalarion's likes:

- Playing football, baseball and basketball.
- Playing on the weekends and relaxing by sleeping and watching TV.
- Munching on mushroom pizza.

Aalarion's crystal ball:

- Dreams of becoming a billionaire so he can own a private plane and a submarine.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad or a single parent.
- Trauma informed.
- Strong advocates for the services Aalarion needs.

Photo by
Beth and Mike Severn

Welcome to the Spring 2018 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 children featured here represent hundreds of other children in the Michigan 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 children 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 child 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.



The 2018 Michigan Heart Gallery will travel throughout the state to help raise awareness of children who continue to wait for their forever families. Visit www.miheart.org for upcoming exhibit locations and events or contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at 800-589-6273.

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 the child’s 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 to help adoptive families meet 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 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.

Kaytlyn’s likes:

- Spending time with friends.
- Listening to music.
- Relaxing.

Intangible assets:

- Sweet and comical.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A parent or parents who are strong, firm and consistent.
- Trauma informed.
- Strong advocates for the services she needs.

Kaytlyn C09384

Photo by
Christine Schafer

*Photo by
Lillian Scull*



“Charity is a very funny, outgoing, charming and sweet young lady.”

Charity’s worker

Charity’s likes:

- Telling jokes and funny stories.
- Eating shrimp.

Intangible assets:

- A wonderful sense of humor.

Charity’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a dancer.
- Hopes to visit Puerto Rico because, “It sounds nice!”
- Looks forward to going to the movies and to the beach with a forever family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single mom or a mom and dad.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Charity.
- Willing to let Charity maintain her relationship with her sister.

Did you know?

If you’re an approved family and you’ve registered with MARE’s Family Database, you will receive a list of children who might be a good match with your family. You’ll also have the option to be included on MARE’s Waiting Families page, a companion to our children’s photolisting page. This page can only be accessed by licensed Michigan adoption workers who are registered through MARE. For more information, visit www.mare.org/For-Families/Family-Registry.

Dakoda's likes:

- Playing sports, especially basketball.
- Participating in brain gym.
- Playing card games and Connect Four.
- Enjoying a heaping helping of macaroni and cheese.
- Reading and watching movies on the weekend.
- Snakes and eagles.

Dakoda's crystal ball:

- Wants to have birthday parties and go to Disney World or any place that has snakes with a forever family.

Intangible assets:

- A good kid who enjoys his family time.
- Energetic and funny.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad or two female parents who are experienced.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- The only child in his new forever family.



Photo by
Linda Krehbiel

Also, did you know?

You can find adoption information packets online at www.mare.org. Go to For Families > New to Adoption and click on the Download MARE Adoption Information Packets here! Your choices will include a quick start guide and a satisfaction survey. You'll also find information about how to follow up once you submit an adoption inquiry on www.mare.org.



“Connor is a fun, sweet boy who loves being creative and figuring out the mechanics of things.”

Connor’s worker

Connor’s likes:

- Listening to music.
- Playing games on his iPad.
- Playing with math flash cards.
- Participating in group activities with his peers.

Intangible assets:

- Helpful and caring about others.
- Makes friends easily and enjoys company.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two patient and experienced parents.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Able to provide the support and attention that helps Connor.
- Youngest child.
- Advocates for the services that will help Connor thrive now and into adulthood.



*Photo by
Renee Aleisa*

*Photo by
Focal Point*



Dayjah’s likes:

- Playing board games.
- Looking up words in the dictionary.
- Interacting with animals.
- Reading the Diary of a Wimpy Kid book series.

Dayjah’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a nurse.

Intangible assets:

- Affectionate, nurturing, strong and resilient.
- Sweet and loyal.

Creative interests:

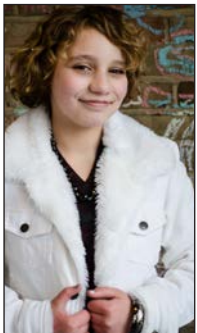
- Drawing and doing arts and crafts.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad who can provide the supervision and attention Dayjah needs to thrive.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Would do well in a home with or without other children.
- Strong advocates for the services that Dayjah needs now and into the future.
- Open to letting her maintain contact with her siblings.

“I am pretty
and I am smart.”

Photos by
Hannah Dunne
and Lillian Scull



Melanie's likes:

- Reading the Twilight series of books and watching movies based on them.
- Playing volleyball and soccer.
- Playing board games such as Life and Monopoly.

• Spending time in the kitchen.

Melanie's crystal ball:

- Pursuing a career in cosmetology.
- Wants to learn how to play basketball.
- "Being back with a family who really wants me there."

Creative interests:

- Drawing and making arts and crafts.
- Making cards for people she cares about.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two patient and experienced parents with knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Able to provide guidance and structure.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Melanie thrive.
- Youngest child in her new forever family.

"I'm an outdoors person."

"I love doing makeup and hair. I believe I can make people feel happy and pretty."

Casey's likes:

- Playing football and basketball.
- Interacting with others and learning about them.
- Playing video games.
- Helping others.

Intangible assets:

- A strong leader and captain on his football team.

Creative interests:

- Dancing and photography.

Casey's crystal ball:

- Dreams of a career as a pro athlete.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Patience as Casey transitions into his new home.
- Supportive of his interest in sports.
- A great sense of humor.

“Casey is extremely athletic and made the all-star football team this year, his first year of playing an organized sport.”

Casey's worker



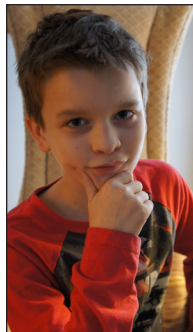
*Photos by
Alexis Brown*



Photos by
Hannah Dunne
and Loren Sanders

Anthony's likes:

- Playing pretend.
- Making up his own games.
- Being outside.
- Playing soccer and basketball.
- Fishing and swimming.
- Playing board and video games.
- Watching SpongeBob SquarePants.
- Anything to do with pro wrestling.
- Flipping water bottles so they stand upright on a table.
- Going to the movies.



Qualities of a forever family:

- The oldest child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Anthony now and into adulthood.
- Trauma informed.

Anthony's crystal ball:

- Dreams of basking in the warmth and sunshine of Arizona.

"I would like hanging out with a family and being with them."

Photos by
Beth and Mike
Severn



Rachael's likes:

- Spending time with cats.
- Reading and writing poetry.
- Listening to music with earbuds.
- Eating pasta.
- Visiting with friends and others.
- Going out to eat.



Qualities of a forever family:

- Fierce advocates for the services that will help Rachael function at her best.
- Patient as Rachael transitions into her new home.
- Pets preferred.

Rachael's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a therapist so she can help youth just like her.
- Experiencing travel and adventure.

"I know right from wrong and have good common sense."

"I've had my blankie since toddler-age. It's my everything!"

Photos by
Beth and Mike
Severn

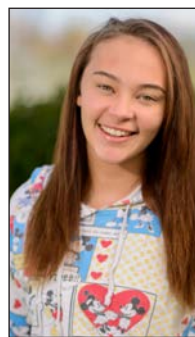


Kaliyah’s likes:

- Munching on tacos, pepperoni and sausage pizza and chicken fried rice.
- English class.
- Celebrating holidays and her birthday by being with the people she cares about.
- Spending time with friends.

Kaliyah’s crystal ball:

- Hopes to visit Paris. “Her bedroom is Paris-themed,” says Kaliyah’s worker.



- Looks forward to family dinners and game nights.
- Wants to become a nurse.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad, two female parents or a single-female parent.
- Open to letting Kaliyah maintain contact with her younger brother.
- A family who has pets, which would help with Kaliyah’s transition into her new home.

“Kaliyah can accomplish anything she puts her mind to.”

Kaliyah’s worker



Bright Bri

Brian's likes:

- Going on walks.
- Swimming.
- Dancing.
- Celebrating Christmas, his favorite holiday.
- Interacting with trusted caregivers.

Intangible assets:

- Very intelligent and does well academically.
- Easy-going and friendly.



*Photos by
Michael
Anlikerr,
Hannah
Dunne*

Busy Bri

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Trauma informed.
- Patient and willing to continue the structured lifestyle that's best for Brian.

"Brian can brighten up a room with his smile."

Brian's worker



Wise Bri



Amazing Bri

Check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2018 Periodical at www.youtube.com/VideosbyMARE.

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
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877-994-8344, www.lsswis.org
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906-249-5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
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, Fremont, 231-924-3390, www.bethany.org/fremont
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, www.bethany.org/traversecity
Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989-797-6638, www.cfssite.org
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.fcsourcesource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsourcesource.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Pathways, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.cityinc.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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ADOPTION
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HOMES
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273
www.mare.org



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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