

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



## ***Inside:***

***A friend indeed  
for those in need,  
Page 4.***

***A fun-loving  
playwright in the  
making, Page 7.***

***Simply sensational  
sibs, Pages 8-9.***

## ***Spring 2022***

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

Welcome to the Spring 2022 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.

### Deidra's likes:

- Dancing and listening to music, especially Michael Jackson
- Playtime with her dolls
- Picking out her clothes

### Qualities of a family:

- One or two parents who can provide the care and attention she needs
- Strong advocates for Deidra's needs
- Understanding, patient and able to provide a stable home environment



**Deidra C010104**

*Photo by  
Deb Hoag*

## 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.

Families who are approved to adopt and those completing their home study are all welcome

to attend.

Look for future Waiting Family Forums on our home page under Events. Pre-registration is required.

*If you have any further questions, please contact the MARE Adoption Navigator Supervisor via email at [kimberly\\_wolowski@judsoncenter.org](mailto:kimberly_wolowski@judsoncenter.org) or by phone at 800-589-MARE (6273).*

## 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.

### Kakashi's likes:

- Collects flags and has more than 50
- Playing at the playground
- Kayaking and swimming

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents who can be strong advocates for him
- Youngest or only child
- Patient and understanding parents



Photo by  
Lauryn Carroll

**Kakashi C010164**

## David C010269

---

### David's likes:

- Playing football, his favorite thing to do with friends, favorite thing to do on weekends and the one thing he wants to do when he gets older
- Following his favorite team, the Kansas City Chiefs
- Celebrating Thanksgiving by "eating food and having the family all together" and Christmas because "I like going through neighborhoods in the Christmas season to look at all the lights"

### Tremendous traits:

- Wants to help people in need, especially the homeless

### David's crystal ball:

- Visiting Hawaii because "it's tropical, and there are volcanoes"

### Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad who are experienced
- Open to letting him have contact with his sisters
- Pets, especially dogs



---

### 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).

*Photo by  
Pictures EnPointe Photography*



**Sandy's likes:**

- Spending time with family and friends at Christmas
- Getting her hair done and dressing up
- Playing Monopoly and card games such as Uno and Skip-Bo
- Going swimming and shopping
- Going to school and attending math class

**Creative interests:**

- Coloring, drawing and doing arts and crafts

**Sandy's crystal ball:**

- Becoming a singer, artist or fashion designer

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Wants a mom and a dad, but other couples will be assessed if they can meet Sandy's needs
- Would do best as the only or youngest child
- Willing to let Sandy maintain her sibling relationships

**"Sandy's energy, joy and smile are infectious."**



Photo by  
Loren Sanders

**Ty's likes:**

- Reading, which is his favorite part of the school day
- Playing video games
- Being outdoors and going for walks
- Hunting, camping and four-wheeling
- Riding his bike
- Pets such as dogs and horses

**Tremendous traits:**

- Friendly and outgoing boy

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Experienced and patient parents
- Open to letting Ty maintain his sibling relationships
- Youngest child

“Star is polite to everyone she meets and has a big heart.”



**Star’s likes:**

- Entertaining others
- Creating art
- Going to the beach, taking a plunge and recreating onshore afterwards

**Star’s creative interests:**

- Singing and dancing

- Writing – is working on a play that she is proud of and excited to finish

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced parent or parents
- A forever family with or without other children
- Open to letting Star maintain her sibling relationships



**Eleasia's likes:**

- Snowboarding, ziplining and riding on huge roller coasters
- Going rock-wall climbing and on obstacle courses
- Taking swimming lessons
- Playing board games

**Creative interests:**

- Painting and making crafts

**Eleasia's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a firefighter
- Traveling to New York because "it would be cool to watch the New Year's Eve ball drop"

"Eleasia loves to help cook when given the chance but really lights up when it comes to baking."



**Johan's likes:**

- Riding bikes and scooters
- Playing Candy Land and Shoots and Ladders
- Opening presents, making cookies for Santa and enjoying "The Elf on the Shelf" at Christmastime

- Playing with Play-Doh
- Spending time with family on the weekends

**Johan's crystal ball:**

- Envisions a career as Catboy from PJ Masks
- Visiting an interactive museum and owning all the toys in the world

"Johan not only loves to hug but also cuddle with those who are close to him."



**Elan's likes:**

- Finds joy in music and art at school and loves drawing and coloring at home
- Playing the keyboard
- Doing projects and watching movies on the weekends
- Going to the movie theater with friends

- Engaging in Nerf toy wars

**Elan's crystal ball:**

- Wishes to visit a waterpark as well as "buy all the toys I want"

"I am a little kid, and school is boring."







**Elan, Eleasia and Johan**

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

- Willing to adopt Eleasia, Elan and Johan together
- Fierce advocates for their needs and services
- Willing to become familiar with the children's culture and heritage and assist in helping them appreciate it and learn more about it





**Machai's likes:**

- Spending time outdoors whether it's shooting hoops, tossing around a football or playing kickball
- Spending time in the kitchen and eating family dinners
- Eating burgers, which he might help cook on an outdoor grill
- Cooking at Christmastime, which is his favorite holiday

**Most proud of:**

- "My Native American culture and traditions"

**Tremendous traits:**

- Calming presence to be around

**Machai's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a firefighter
- Traveling to Florida because of its outdoor fun, especially when lounging by the ocean

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced mother and father
- A home with structure and routine so he understands the plans for the day
- Only child

"Machai is polite and has a calming presence to be around."

“It amazes me how much Leland values family and relationships at his age. Leland is a truly unique teenager with an old-school spirit.”



**Leland’s likes:**

- Playing football, basketball and the occasional video game
- Celebrating all holidays by being with family
- Science class

**Marketable skills:**

- Very good at fixing things and working with his hands

**Leland’s crystal ball:**

- Traveling to Hawaii because “I have heard cool things about being there”

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Willing to adopt Leland and Mallory together
- Two experienced parents

“Mallory is very energetic and passionate about life, and she finds beauty in everything.”



**Mallory’s likes:**

- Spending time outside and going swimming
- Playing on swing sets
- Shooting hoops
- Engaging in imaginary play
- Munching on pizza and chips
- Drawing and doing crafts
- Playing with baby dolls
- Spending time with family

**Mallory’s crystal ball:**

- Becoming a doctor
- Wants to travel “to somewhere warm”

- A forever family with or without other children
- Strong advocates for Leland and Mallory



Photo by  
Christiana Thompson

**Joshua's likes:**

- Playing laser tag
- Kicking a soccer ball and tossing a football
- Participating in track
- Most passionate about basketball
- Eating shrimp alfredo
- Celebrating Christmas "because it's Jesus' birthday"
- "Dogs for pets; tigers for not a pet"

**Joshua's crystal ball:**

- Traveling to Florida so he can visit Disney World
- Doing fun things with a forever family

**Tremendous traits:**

- Loving, adventurous and outgoing

**Joshua's biggest wish:**

- "To show people God"

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad who are experienced
- Able to provide strong supervision, structure and a daily routine
- Able to provide love and guidance
- Youngest child preferred but not a requirement
- Open to letting him maintain his sibling relationships

"Joshua has a sweet, loving side and loves to get one-on-one attention."

“Carson is a great leader, very helpful and creative.”

Photo by  
Jen Brooks



**Carson’s likes:**

- A basketball in his hands, chicken nuggets on his plate and video games and funny movies on his screen
- Football – playing and watching it
- Playing outside and shooting hoops
- Hanging with friends
- Going on outings
- Working out at the gym
- Sharing knowledge about sports

**Carson’s crystal ball:**

- Traveling to Hawaii because “it is beautiful and relaxing”

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Would do well with any type of forever family
- Prior parenting experience
- Open to letting Carson maintain important relationships

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2022 Periodical.

**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, Saginaw, 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, Southfield, 248-414-4080, [bethany.org/locations/us/michigan/southeast-michigan](http://bethany.org/locations/us/michigan/southeast-michigan)  
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)  
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, Dearborn, 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, Howell, 517-881-0723, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Monroe, 734-349-6546, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Saginaw, 989-558-0020, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Howell, 517-615-1275, [www.facadopt.org](http://www.facadopt.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.

Follow the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange on Social Media:



@MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange



@VideosbyMARE



@MAREinMichigan



mareinmichigan