

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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

Spring 2023

Welcome to the Spring 2023 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.

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.

Save the date: Saturday, Sept. 16

Join us at the 2023 Michigan Heart Gallery Premiere

The Michigan Heart Gallery Premiere is a great event that you won't want to miss.

It is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, at the Emagine Theater in Royal Oak. The show features the unveiling of this year's Michigan Heart Gallery, a traveling photographic exhibit featuring photos of youth currently in the foster care system waiting for their forever family through adoption.

The festivities also include food and refreshments. This year's Michigan Heart Gallery



Premiere includes a special feature film that we're sure you'll love.

So, mark your calendars, and come join us for this truly remarkable event. Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

Can't join us in person? Be sure to follow us at www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange for details on how you can enjoy the festivities virtually.

Emmanuel's likes:

- Playing with his Batman and Spider-Man action figures
- Reading and learning about animals
- Building things with Legos
- Watching TV, especially Power Rangers
- Riding his bike

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents who are experienced
- Able to give him the structure and attention he needs to thrive
- A strong and supportive male role model
- Youngest in the home
- Strong advocates for services that will help him excel



Photo by
Nichole Mehelich

Emmanuel C09340

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.

Anna's likes:

- Korean pop music
- Going to the beach
- Reading a lot
- Panera's broccoli and cheddar soup

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents
- Only or youngest child



Anna C09590

Photo by
Paul Rains



“Chloe is a special kid; she helps around the house, and she is a delight to have in the home.”

Chloe’s likes:

- Gliding on a skateboard or a longboard
- Exploring the outdoors
- Shooting some hoops
- Hanging out at the mall with friends
- Going to theme parks, “but not rollercoasters!”

Chloe’s crystal ball:

- A family who loves the outdoors

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two-parent household
- Only or significantly youngest child
- A home with pets she can help care for

Did you know?

In addition to this quarterly periodical, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange also publishes newsletters for youth, families and professionals. You can find them at www.mare.org > Resources > Newsletters.



Family Newsletter

Photo by
Derek Cookson



“Gabriel is someone who always can put a smile on my face even on the bad days!”

Gabriel’s likes:

- Playing video games
- Celebrating his favorite holidays – Easter, Halloween and Christmas – with “all the festive stuff”
- Riding bikes
- Assuming a superhero persona, including his favorites such as Superman and The Flash

Tremendous traits:

- Silly, playful, social and engaging

Gabriel’s crystal ball:

- Going to Dave and Buster’s with his new family

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parent or parents
- Youngest or only child
- Able to make sure that Gabriel receives any needed support services
- Open to letting Gabriel maintain his relationship with his brother
- Pets preferred



“Tyler makes the most out of every moment.”

Photos by Memories by Mandy

Tyler’s likes:

- Riding his bike
- Going hiking and anything else outdoors
- Spreading his knowledge of the outdoors to others and taking them on adventures with him through the woods
- Engaging in imaginative play with peers
- Being around animals
- Studying science when it features Bill Nye the Science Guy and when the subject is volcanos

Tyler’s crystal ball:

- Hopes for a forever family who has dogs.
- Looks forward to cartoons on weekends

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents
- The only or youngest child
- Active and able to provide the consistency that helps Tyler excel
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Tyler

“Tyler generally approaches new activities or crafts with a positive and enthusiastic approach.”

Honesty's likes:

- The colors pink, purple, blue, gold and silver
- Any Chinese food
- Playing Heads Up! Seven Up!
- Playing with slime, especially on the weekends
- Sleeping in
- Playing on her tablet
- Slapstick humor
- Being herself

Creative interests:

- Drawing and doing arts and crafts
- A natural at hair design and takes pride in her work

Honesty's crystal ball:

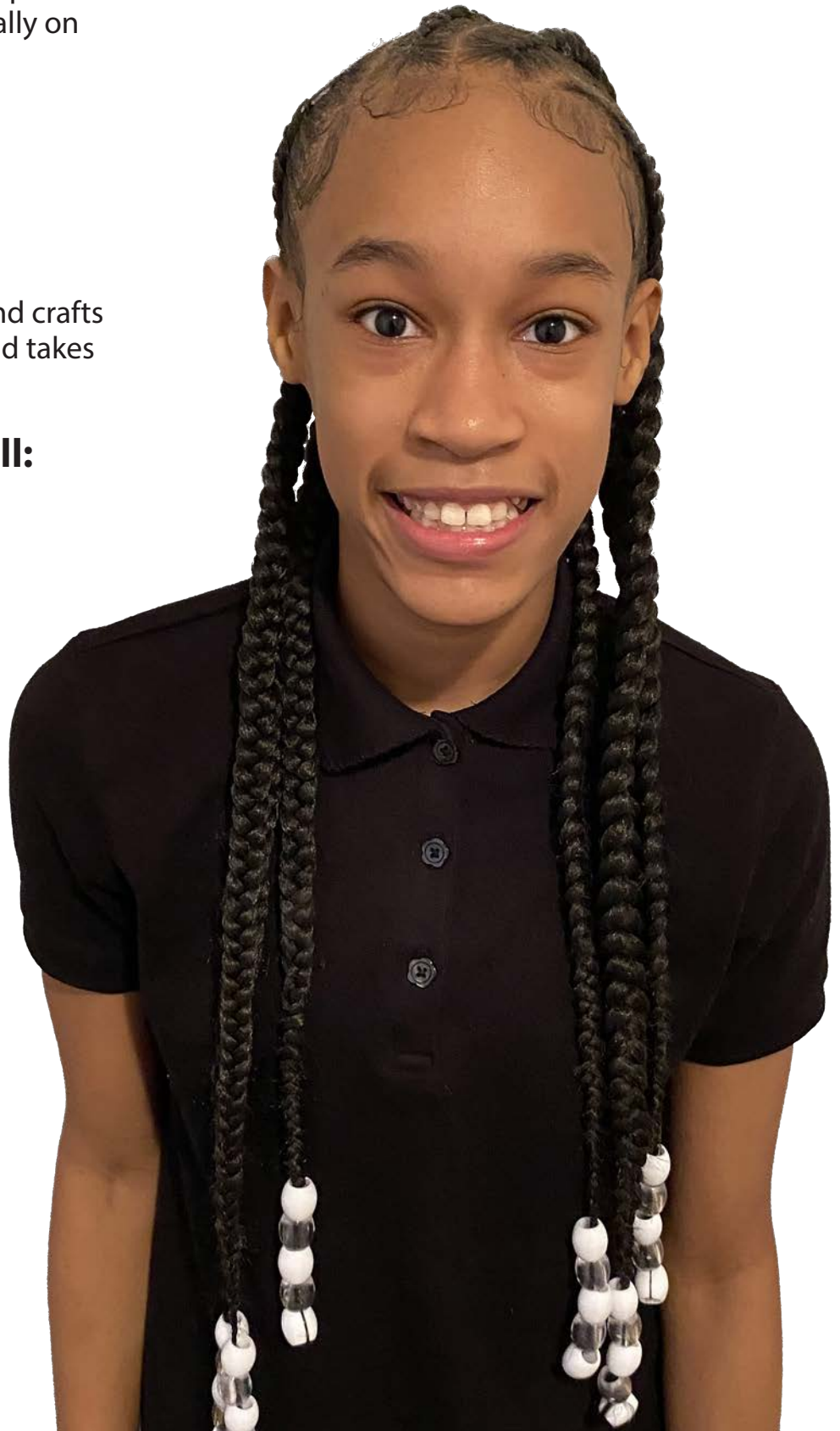
- Becoming a hairstylist

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single female parent or a mom and dad
- Only child in the home
- Able to provide her needed attention
- Willing to let Honesty maintain her significant relationships

“Honesty is really great, and I know she will be great anywhere she goes.”

“I want to be the smartest person in the world, be a better listener and have a successful business.”





“Dalila is a bubbly, friendly, outgoing and kind-hearted girl.”

Dalila’s likes:

- Participating in basketball, volleyball and track
- Singing in the choir and playing in the band
- Listening to contemporary music such as rap and hip-hop
- Outdoors activities such as swimming, sledding and going on walks
- Sleeping in on weekends
- Indoors activities such as bowling, watching TV and going to the mall

- Collecting stuffed animals and accessories, including scrunchies, bracelets and necklaces

Dalila’s crystal ball:

- A career in massage therapy
- Movie nights with her new family

Qualities of a forever family:

- Fierce advocates for any services that she needs to excel
- Able to provide guidance and attention
- Only or oldest child

Photo by
Emily Goudy



“Noah has a tender heart and witty sense of humor. He is highly intelligent but also determined.”

Noah’s likes:

- Playing video games
- Doing puzzles
- Riding bikes and scooters
- Baking and visiting a bakery
- Star Wars
- Sharks
- Turkey burgers
- Reading and loves the Dog Man book series
- Building things with Legos

Noah’s crystal ball:

- Becoming a magician
- Hopes to have fun and go places with his new family

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents or a single parent who can meet his needs
- Only or youngest child
- Patient and experienced parent or parents



Photo by
Paul Rains



Photo by
Paul Rains



“Jacob is a sweet, intelligent, outgoing, creative and lovable child.”

Jacob's likes:

- Chinese and Italian cuisine
- Shooting hoops, kicking a soccer ball and taking his hacks at a whiffle ball
- Going antiquing or thrift shopping
- Attending car shows
- Cooking and wants to become a chef
- Reading books
- Playing card, board and video games

Jacob's crystal ball:

- Bike riding, swimming and hiking with his new family

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad or a single female parent
- Only child in the home or one older sibling
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Jacob thrive

Photo by
Jen Dera



“Emma enjoys laughing and talking. She tends to make people around her feel happy and cared for.”

Emma’s likes:

- Arts and crafts
- The band Imagine Dragons
- Watching mystery movies
- Reading horror and animal books
- Really gives a hoot about owls, her favorite animal
- Celebrating Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine’s Day by eating food, watching movies, opening presents and spending time with friends

- Playing Monopoly
- All food as long as it’s not too spicy

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to give support, guidance, love and structure
- Only child in the home
- Willing to make sure she gets the services she needs to function at her best
- Single female parent or two female parents



“Halie can be a great help and has spent time volunteering at a community center that provides after-school programs and tutoring.”

Halie’s likes:

- Going to amusement parks
- Shopping and getting her nails done
- Relaxing while watching her favorite Netflix programs
- Listening to music

Halie’s crystal ball:

- Wants to travel and explore the world
- Shows interest in pursuing cosmetology as a future career

- Also interested in forensic science and criminal justice

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single female parent or two parents who are experienced
- Fierce advocates for the support and services that will help Halie flourish
- Willing to let Halie maintain her sibling relationships
- Patient and understanding as she transitions into her new home



“Jackson loves to make people laugh and comes up with new jokes often.”

Jackson’s likes:

- Posing as Spider-Man and thwarting imaginary villains
- Board games such as Sorry and Monopoly
- Watching television and getting giggly over funny movies
- Running around the yard with his friends
- Sweet treats such as candy, cake and pie
- Goes ape over monkeys
- Going to Legoland because “I love Legos!”

Jackson’s crystal ball:

- Puppies and playtime with his forever family

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Youngest child
- Patient family who will take their time getting to know him
- Able to make sure he receives the services that will help him thrive

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2023 Periodical.

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
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, www.upfs.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, www.upkids.com

Northern and Central Lower Michigan

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989-839-0534, www.adoptionoptioninc.org
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, www.bethany.org/traversecity
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
Ennis Center for Children, Saginaw, 989-558-0020, www.enniscenter.org
Holy Cross Services, Saginaw, 989-577-5814, www.holycrossservices.org
Legacy Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, www.lasadoption.org
Legacy 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, Southfield, 248-414-4080, bethany.org/locations/us/michigan/southeast-michigan
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.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, Dearborn, 313-794-5653, www.judsoncenter.org
Legacy Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, www.lasadoption.org
Methodist Children's Home, Dearborn, 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, Howell, 517-881-0723, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Monroe, 734-349-6546, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Howell, 517-615-1275, www.facadopt.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
 Legacy Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy 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

Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 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.fcsource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsource.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.cityinc.org

MICHIGAN
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Adoption
Navigators

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
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Ann Arbor, MI 48108



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