

Be the Change

Spring 2025

*Change the life of a
child... adopt from
foster care*



MICHIGAN
**ADOPTION
RESOURCE
EXCHANGE**

Inside:

Meet our cover girl: Page 3

MARE has teams to help you: Page 13

Get started with adoption: Pages 14 - 15



Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of Be the Change – a quarterly publication dedicated to highlighting Michigan children in need of permanent, loving families. In this issue, you'll meet some of the young people in Michigan who are looking for a supportive and permanent family through adoption. These featured youth represent hundreds of others in Michigan's foster care system who are also hoping to find a loving home.

At MARE, we are here to help answer your questions and walk with you through the adoption journey. To learn more about adoption, visit www.mare.org, call us at 800-589-6273, and follow us on social media. No matter where you are at in the process, we want to support you.

- Michelle Parra, LMSW
Director of MARE and Family Services Judson Center
-

Jesse's In-Depth Profile



"The family I'm looking for is anybody that cares about me, loves me, and wants me around."

- Jesse

**IN-DEPTH
PROFILES**

Jesse just completed an In-Depth Profile and you should check it out! Jesse is a talented artist who wants to share his work with potential families and the world. He's got a keen eye and his artwork truly shows what's in his heart. View his artist portfolio to get a glimpse into Jesse's world.

In-Depth Profiles are a personalized way for MARE youth to share their story in their own way with potential families. In-Depth Profiles are entirely youth-led and MARE staff supported. Jesse's In-Depth Profile and many more are live on indepthprofiles.mare.org now!

Who Can Adopt? You Can Adopt!

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange exists to connect hopeful adoptive families with Michigan youth who need a permanent, loving family. Notice that we didn't say they need a perfect family? Trust us, the kids aren't looking for perfection. If you would struggle to help a teen with their algebra homework... that's okay. If your aim when playing a game of catch is a bit off... that's okay. If your knowledge of music and slang is still stuck in the 80s... that's okay, too! Kids need love, stability, consistency, advocacy and a parent or parents who will stick with them no matter what. There are a lot of myths about who can adopt. Let's bust some of those:

- **Do you have to own your own home?** No! As long as you have safe, stable housing with enough room for a child to play and have their own space, you can adopt.
- **Do you need to be married?** Absolutely not. Married couples, single parents, same sex parents... all family structures are welcome. In fact, some kids would thrive best in homes with same sex or single parents. Even if you aren't married, you can adopt.
- **Do I need to make a lot of money?** Nope. As long as you have the resources to adequately cover your monthly bills and necessities for your family and any children you welcome into your home, you can adopt.

Be the change... adopt!

Elizabeth C010458

"Elizabeth is a blessing to know and love. Liz has grown to see and feel this reciprocated adoration."



Elizabeth's likes:

- Spaghetti
- The color lavender
- Playing board games
- Diamond dot art
- Disney characters
- Celebrating Christmas

Remarkable traits:

- Kind, resilient, loving, and passionate

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced mom and dad or two moms
- Youngest child in the home, pets would be a bonus
- Supportive, involved, and loving

Photo by
Paul Rains



"Olly is a lovebug and artistic. They are a joy to have around, and bring so much light into our lives."

Olly's likes:

- Sushi, ramen, and Japanese snacks
- Dark colors
- Sugar gliders, snakes, and monkeys
- Horror games and card games
- Drawing
- Five Nights at Freddy's
- Spending time with friends
- Halloween and spooky fun

Remarkable traits:

- Warm-hearted, loveable, and creative

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced mom or two parents
- Youngest or only child in home
- Pets would be a bonus
- Supportive, loving, and accepting

Did you know?

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange has staff to help you during every step of your adoption journey. From answering your first questions about adoption to supporting your family after being matched with a child, we're here to help. Learn more at www.mare.org

*Photo by
Paul Rains*



"Bryan can be helpful and likes to make people laugh."

Bryan's likes:

- Coffee ice cream
- The colors blue and yellow
- Playing video games
- Dogs and cats
- Michigan (Go blue!)
- Playing basketball
- Loves food
- Peanut Butter and jelly (especially the peanut butter)

Remarkable traits:

- Sociable, funny, adventurous, and friendly

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Youngest or only child in home
- Patient, understanding, and active

"James is a smart, capable child who is just beginning to discover all that the world holds for him."

All About James:

Michigan, who prefers to go by James, is interested in many activities. He enjoys participating in soccer, swimming, biking, youth group, nature walks, and photography when he can! He loves to build new structures with Legos and enjoys his technology and math classes. James also enjoys creative endeavors such as reading and writing.

In fact, he wants to be an author someday. On the weekends, James prefers a slower pace from his busy week. He likes to watch his favorite TV shows and relax. James' favorite foods are pickles, pizza, caramel ice cream, and candy, though he probably wouldn't want them all at the same time!



Additional Info:

Remember, James is a guy of many interests. He has many favorite holidays including Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, Mom's and Dad's Day, and Valentine's Day. He likes to give presents, go trick-or-treating, make food, hunt for eggs, pray for moms and dads, and give cards to celebrate these special days. James wants to visit a little place called Socotra, an island in Yemen, someday because "I want to see why it's so weird and study it."

James is looking for a one or two parent home, but preferably a mom and dad.

He would like to be the only or youngest child in the home. He loves animals and would love a home with pets.

His forever family will need to help him maintain important relationships. He looks forward to joining a family that can have fun, talk to each other, and play together!

*Photo by
Paul Rains*



"Harmony is kind to those around her, she is a great friend and also thoughtful."

Harmony's likes:

- Seafood and pizza
- The colors red and green
- Kittens and puppies
- Playing basketball and volleyball
- Swimming
- Going to the park
- Watching movies
- Art class

Remarkable traits:

- Resilient, honest, creative, and a strong communicator

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Youngest or only child in the home
- Patient, active, likes to talk, and trustworthy

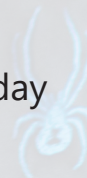
*Photo by
Paul Rains*



"Christian effortlessly advocates for others that appear to be in need or mistreated."

Christian's likes:

- Pizza and tacos
- Spider-man
- The color green
- Playing video games
- Celebrating his birthday
- GameStop
- Playing soccer



Remarkable Traits:

- Protective, fun-loving, creative, and ambitious

Qualities of a forever family:

- A dad or mom and dad
- Siblings or only child in the home
- Patient, loving, and consistent

**Skylar's likes:**

- Telling jokes
- Playing with others
- Going for walks
- Watching the Trolls movies
- Being in the sunshine
- Going to football games
- Spending time with others

Remarkable Traits:

- Funny, joyous, wondrous, and loveable

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents
- Knowledgeable about her needs or willing to learn
- Secure, patient, committed, and fun-loving

"Skylar is a happy, laid-back, easy-going little girl. She can be bubbly and a jokester with people she knows well."



Isa's likes:

- Science experiments
- Singing and dancing
- Going to the arcade
- Trivia
- Pizza
- Coloring and drawing
- Cooking
- Playing outdoors

Remarkable Traits:

- Playful, curious, creative and thoughtful

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents
- Siblings or only child in home
- Committed, active, structured, and fierce advocates

"Isa is a cheerful and social child who brings energy and joy to those around him."

Destiny's likes:

- Shrimp, fried chicken, and mac and cheese
- Singing in the choir
- Shopping
- Going to the arcade
- Mopping (yes, really!!)
- Dancing
- Art class

Remarkable Traits:

- Creative, talented, adventurous, and helpful

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced mom, mom and dad or two moms
- Youngest or only child in home
- Accepting, curious, and loving

"Destiny is a loving and caring individual, who enjoys giving and receiving words of affirmation."



*Photo by
Paul Rains*



Cornell's likes:

- Origami
- Military history
- Shrimp and lobster
- The color green
- Playing video games
- History and science class
- Exercising
- Going on outings, especially when food is involved!

Remarkable Traits:

- Creative, passionate, enthusiastic, and funny

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced parent or parents
- Youngest or only child in home
- Pets would be a bonus
- Patient, structured, and likes to go out occasionally

"Cornell can be a very energetic and vibrant individual when talking about things he loves. He doesn't hold a grudge and moves on from conflict quickly."

Ready to adopt? MARE is here to help!

When you're ready to learn more about adoption or to begin the process, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is available to you free of charge.



Adoption Navigators: Guiding families interested in adoption.

Staffed by experienced adoptive parents, the MARE navigator team is eager to provide support to all families considering adoption. Whether you just have a few questions you want answered or you are ready to begin the adoption process, the navigators are available to assist you and be a listening ear. The navigator team offers several services:

- Guiding your family by answering questions and helping initiate the adoption process.
- Providing support throughout your adoption journey.
- Hosting regular trainings and providing referrals
- Providing a voluntary directory of approved families.

If you'd like an experienced adoptive parent to walk alongside you on your adoption journey, complete the General Adoption Information Inquiry on www.mare.org or call 800-589-6273 to be connected with an adoption navigator.



Match Support Specialists: Supporting families after they're matched with a child.

Match Support is a statewide service available to you once you're matched with a child from the MARE website and are proceeding with adoption. Program specialists tailor their services to your unique needs, goals, and interests. While specialists have the flexibility to assist in several ways, families' top requests often include:

- Providing parenting resources and training options
- Navigating trauma and developing attachment
- Understand behaviors and brainstorming solutions
- Working with adoption teams
- Locating service providers

If you'd like a caring, professional partner on your adoption journey, Match Support is here for you! For more information, contact Julie Miller, Match Support Program Supervisor, by calling 734-528-2002 or emailing Julie_Miller@judsoncenter.org.



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
Delta County Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Escanaba, 906-786-5394, www.michigan.gov/hopeforahome
Legacy Social Services of Upper Michigan, Inc., Lansing, 517-886-1380, 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, Negaunee, 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 Northwest MI, Harbor Springs, 231-347-4463, www.cfsnwmi.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
Northeast Michigan Family Resource Center, Alpena, MI, 989-356-4567, www.nemifrc.org

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
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., Sterling Heights, 586-726-2988, www.fcsserves.org
Forever Families, Livonia, 734-762-0909, www.forever-families.org
Guiding Harbor, Belleville, 734-697-7242, www.guidingharbor.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 Society, Redford, 313-531-4060, www.mchsmi.org
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248-858-7766, www.oaklandfamilyservices.org
Orchards Children's Services, Detroit, 313-416-0200, www.orchards.org
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248-258-0440, www.orchards.org
Orchards Children's Services, Sterling Heights, 586-997-3886, 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, Bloomfield Hills, 800-214-6186, www.wolverinehs.org
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888-625-8669, www.wolverinehs.org
Wolverine Human Services, Warren, 800-214-6186, 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.catholiccharitiesjhlhc.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, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., East Lansing, 517-615-1382, www.fcsserves.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Howell, 517-615-1275, www.fcsserves.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Monroe, 734-344-6606, www.fcsserves.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 Family Services, Jackson, 517-936-7713, www.opendooradoptionsservices.org
 Orchards Children's Services, Ann Arbor, 734-622-0217, www.orchards.org
 Orchards Children's Services, Flint, 810-239-3264, www.orchards.org
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, 517-323-4734, www.stvcc.org
 Wolverine Human Services, Flint, 800-214-6186, www.wolverinehs.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, Benton Harbor, 269-593-100, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Holland, 616-796-9595, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, www.ccwestmi.org
 D.A. Blodgett - St. John's, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, www.dabsj.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, www.fcssource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcssource.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Pathways Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.arborcircle.org
 Pathways Arbor Circle, Muskegon, 231-777-2222, www.arborcircle.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.citylinc.org

**For an interactive map of statewide
licensed agencies, follow the QR code.**





*FOR CHILDREN IN
FOSTER CARE*

800-589-6273

www.mare.org

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:



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@mareinmichigan