

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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*Spring 2020*

A spotlight on children  
waiting for permanent  
and loving families



Welcome to the Spring 2020 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 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 an older 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.

## ICYMI: Watch the 2020 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening and video

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening took place online on September 12 and featured some great speakers including former foster care youth, workers, adoptive parents and more. You can view the grand opening by visiting [Mare.org](http://Mare.org). You also can



watch the 2020 Michigan Heart Gallery film "Together We Will Rise." The film features a poem that was written by youth living in foster care, and it describes how they feel about where they are and how adoptive families can help empower them for a brighter future.

### Kaedyn's likes:

- Being outdoors with family, friends
- Playing with remote control cars
- Listening to music
- Playing with remote control cars and airplanes
- Doing arts and crafts

### Kaedyn's crystal ball:

- A forever family who will be a good influence on him

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who can provide the support and attention he needs
- Only or youngest child
- Strong advocates for Kaedyn



## 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 their 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, 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 [Mare.org](http://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.

### Destiny C09820

Photo by  
Katherine  
Hallam



### Destiny's likes:

- Reading books and watching movies
- Studying and interacting with animals
- A cuddly stuffed dog she calls Love

### Forever family qualities:

- A mother figure preferred
- Able to provide consistency



**Dorothea's likes:**

- Getting to play the flute at school
- Mac 'n cheese, fries and chocolate shakes
- Swimming and biking, singing and dancing
- Lending a hand at mealtime
- Horses and wants to visit "anywhere with horses!"

**Dorothea's crystal ball:**

- Being a mermaid and swimming with dolphins

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad who are experienced and patient
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Dorie thrive



Photos by Loren Sanders



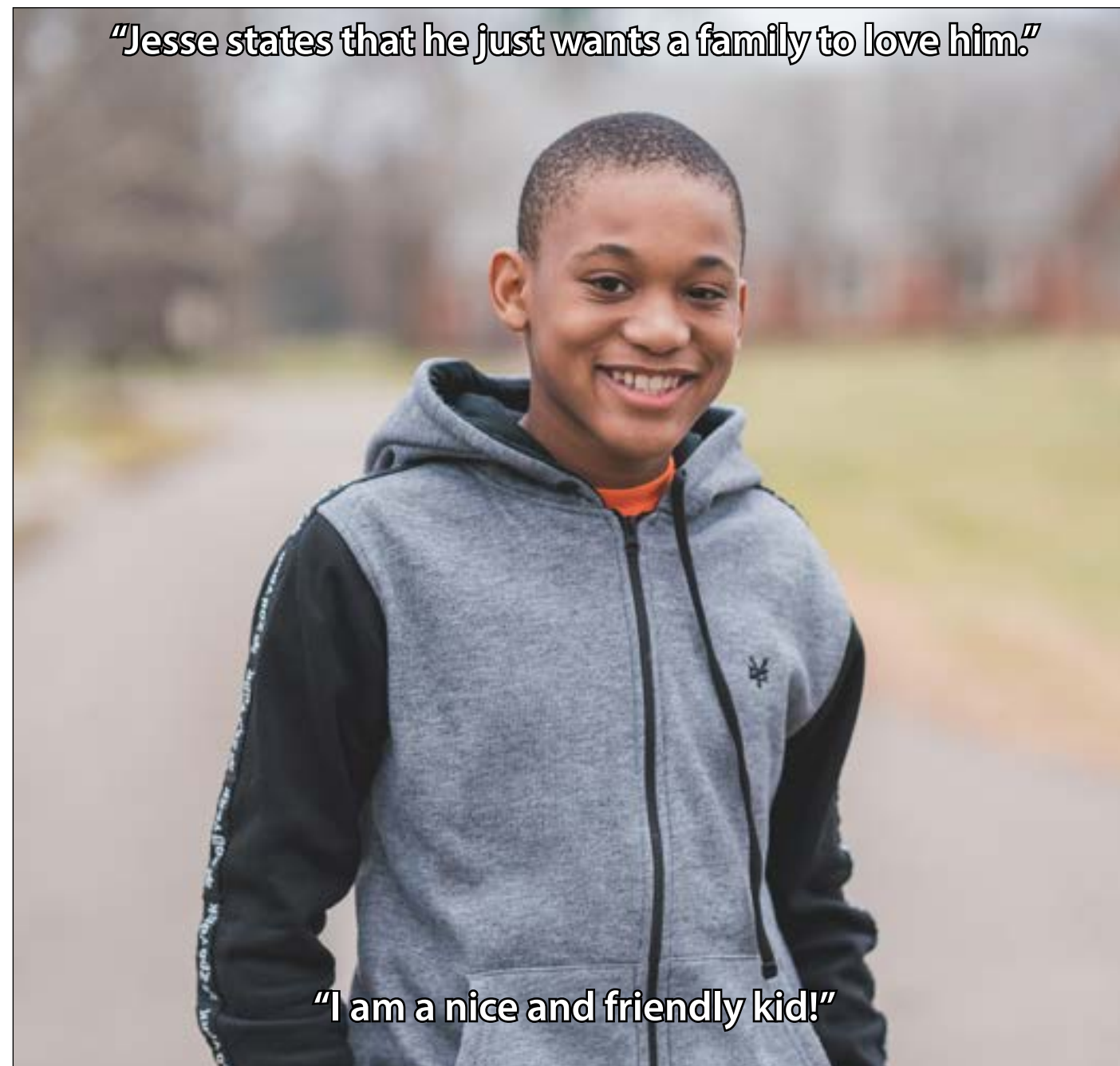
**"Dorie always likes to make everyone (chickens included) feel happy when they are around her."**

**"Dorie loves to give hugs and to please others, and she has a bubbly personality that is infectious."**

**Did you know?**

Whether you're a new or experienced adoptive family, you'll find plenty of valuable information on Mare.org. Visit the For Families section for pre- and post-adoption information including resources to help you at any stage of your journey. If you want more information, call us at 800-589-6273.

**"Jesse states that he just wants a family to love him."**



**"I am a nice and friendly kid!"**

**Jesse's likes:**

- Working with his hands
- Having responsibility and set chores to complete each day
- Playing basketball and riding bike and Ripstik
- Learning new things
- Playing computer games
- Listening to music
- Pizza, chicken fried rice and egg rolls
- Watching movies

**Jesse's memorable moments:**

- Completing tasks because it gives him a sense of accomplishment.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Strong advocates for the services that will help Jesse thrive
- Strong male role model
- Able to devote the time needed so Jesse can function at his best



“Jayden is caring and happy and has a wonderful imagination.”



Photo by Sarah Boyd

**Jayden’s likes:**

- Playing Jenga
- Taking long naps on the weekends
- Shooting hoops
- Munching on pizza

**Takes the most pride in:**

- Being herself and adds that she’s smart, nice and kind

**Intangible assets:**

- Very sweet, friendly and fun-loving

**Jayden’s crystal ball:**

- A purr-fect addition to her life: a cat
- Becoming a police officer
- Visiting Disney World “to see all the princesses”

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced mom and dad, two female parents or a single female parent with a strong support network
- Open to letting Jayden maintain her sibling relationships

“Devon enjoys being around animals and is very knowledgeable about them.”



Photo by Cayla Johnson

**Devon’s likes:**

- Practicing with his horse
- Participating in 4-H
- Hunting and fishing
- Playing the Sonic and Mario video games
- Cheese pizza

**Devon’s crystal ball:**

- Being a professional wrestler

- Wants to travel to Florida so he can visit Disney World and LEGOLAND

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced mom and dad
- Strong advocates for the services he needs
- Only or youngest child





“Daniel is very kind, thoughtful, fun and sometimes goofy.”

Photo by Megyn Ellis

**Daniel’s likes:**

- Playing basketball and football
- Celebrating Christmas and his birthday by spending time with friends and family
- Swimming
- Playing outside so he can enjoy fresh air
- Building things with Legos

**Daniel’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to be a member of his school’s basketball team
- Hopes to travel to California
- Becoming a construction worker

**Intangible assets:**

- Makes others feel welcome
- Friendly and happy

**Qualities of a forever family:**

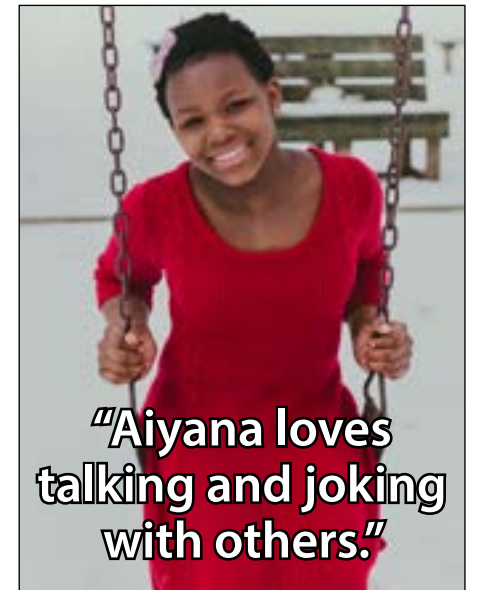
- Two experienced parents
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Daniel thrive
- The youngest or only child
- Willing to let Daniel maintain his relationship with his brother

“I really want to get adopted because I’ve been through a lot in my life and I want to stay in that adoptive home until I’m able to live on my own.”

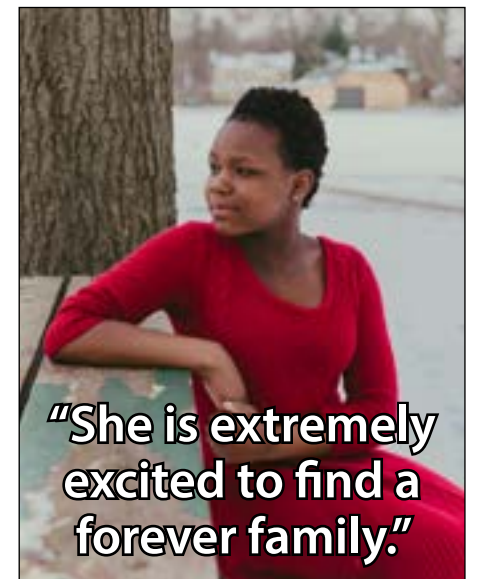


“Aiyana is a warm and kind-hearted youngster who strives to meet her goals.”

Photos by Rachel Resterhouse



“Aiyana loves talking and joking with others.”



“She is extremely excited to find a forever family.”

**Aiyana’s likes:**

- Playing soccer
- Practicing her dance moves
- Doing crafts such as making bracelets
- Getting her nails done
- Cooking and cleaning
- Hanging with friends and riding bikes together
- Watching movies
- Sharing a laugh with others, learning about them and engaging with them

**Intangible assets:**

- Silly, playful, fun, inquisitive and energetic

**Aiyana’s crystal ball:**

- Looks forward to sharing good times with her forever family

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Parenting experience
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Aiyana thrive.





**“Ardez is a sweet, caring, loving and talkative boy who’s easily engaged. He’s a leader.”**

#### **Ardez’s likes:**

- Living in Michigan and the colors green *and* blue
- Playing football
- Being outside
- Superhero action figures
- Fidget toys and video games
- Watching movies
- Reading the Captain Underpants and Diary of a Wimpy Kid book series
- Cheetahs “because they run fast”

#### **Ardez’s crystal ball:**

- Looks forward to spending time together with his forever family

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

- Patient and flexible
- Two experienced parents
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Ardez
- Able to provide structure and stability



**“I’m funny, kind, sweet. I’m not mean. I try to be nice.”**

**“When I get older, I want to be a police officer or an ambulance driver because I want to help people.”**

#### **Angel’s likes:**

- Singing and dancing
- Roller skating
- Writing
- Participating in gymnastics
- Spending time with friends and going out to eat and to the movies
- Listening to music
- Curling up in a comfy chair and reading a good book

#### **Intangible assets:**

- A happy and funny girl with a radiant smile

- Adventurousome
- Bright and cheery personality

#### **Angel’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to spend time with her forever family doing fun things such as traveling and enjoying outdoor activities
- Traveling to Florida to enjoy the warmth and the attractions

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

- Two experienced parents
- Patient and loving
- Pets preferred





"I like sleeping. My perfect day would be rainy so I could sleep all day."

Photo by Jennifer Brooks

**Nevaeh's likes:**

- Singing, dancing and listening to music
- Going to the mall
- Hanging out with friends
- Pizza and chicken
- Celebrating her birthday, which she considers her favorite holiday
- Sharing a laugh with others
- "Getting my hair and nails done"

**Intangible assets:**

- Patient and understanding

**Nevaeh's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a doctor

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Patient and understanding
- Able to advocate for Nevaeh
- Willing to let Nevaeh maintain her sibling relationships



"Isa is very enthusiastic and energetic."

"He has a lot of love to give and a lot of love that he can receive."

"He would be a great kid to adopt."

Photo by Melanie Reyes

**Isa's likes:**

- Listening to tunes and dancing
- Interacting with others
- Bringing joy to others
- Playing with cars and action figures
- Watching videos

- Willing to try anything
- Hungry for knowledge

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single parent with a strong support network or two parents
- Parenting experience
- Fierce advocates for Isa

**Intangible assets:**

- At the top of his game when he's bringing joy to others.

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2020 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, 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)  
 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, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, [www.bethany.org/madisonheights](http://www.bethany.org/madisonheights)  
 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)  
 Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248-353-0921, [www.childsafemichigan.org](http://www.childsafemichigan.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, Redford, 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.catholiccharitiesjlhc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesjlhc.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, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.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.fosteringolutions.org](http://www.fosteringolutions.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**



**MICHIGAN  
ADOPTION  
RESOURCE  
EXCHANGE**

**HOMES**  
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273  
[www.mare.org](http://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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