

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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

Winter 2019

DeShawn C08334

DeShawn's likes:

- Watching and playing sports, especially football and basketball.
- Watching TV and playing video games.

Food of choice:

- Fried chicken, mac 'n cheese and ribs.

DeShawn's crystal ball:

- Wants to be an engineer or anesthesiologist.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents who can help DeShawn receive the services he needs.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Able to provide safety and consistency.



Photo by
Matthew Coon

Welcome to the Winter 2019 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.

Save the date: Saturday, April 13

Join us at the Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

The Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening is a great event that you won't want to miss. It is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, 2019, 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 and a red carpet where many youth will walk and get their pictures taken. This year's Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening 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.

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 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.

August C09511

August’s likes:

- Working on cars.
- Participating in volleyball at school.
- Writing in her journal.
- Going to the mall.
- Watching TV or listening to music on weekends.



Food of choice:

- Mac ‘n cheese and pizza with ranch dressing.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad who are experienced and knowledgeable of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help August thrive.
- Willing to let August maintain her sibling relationships.

“Family means a lot to me. Family means that they’re there for you; they’ll be able to understand your struggles and help you through them.”

Hailey’s likes:

- Reading Harry Potter.
- Building things with Legos.
- Dogs, cats, chickens and horses.

Hailey’s wishes:

- “A gagillion dollars.”
- Being queen of the world.

Hailey’s crystal ball:

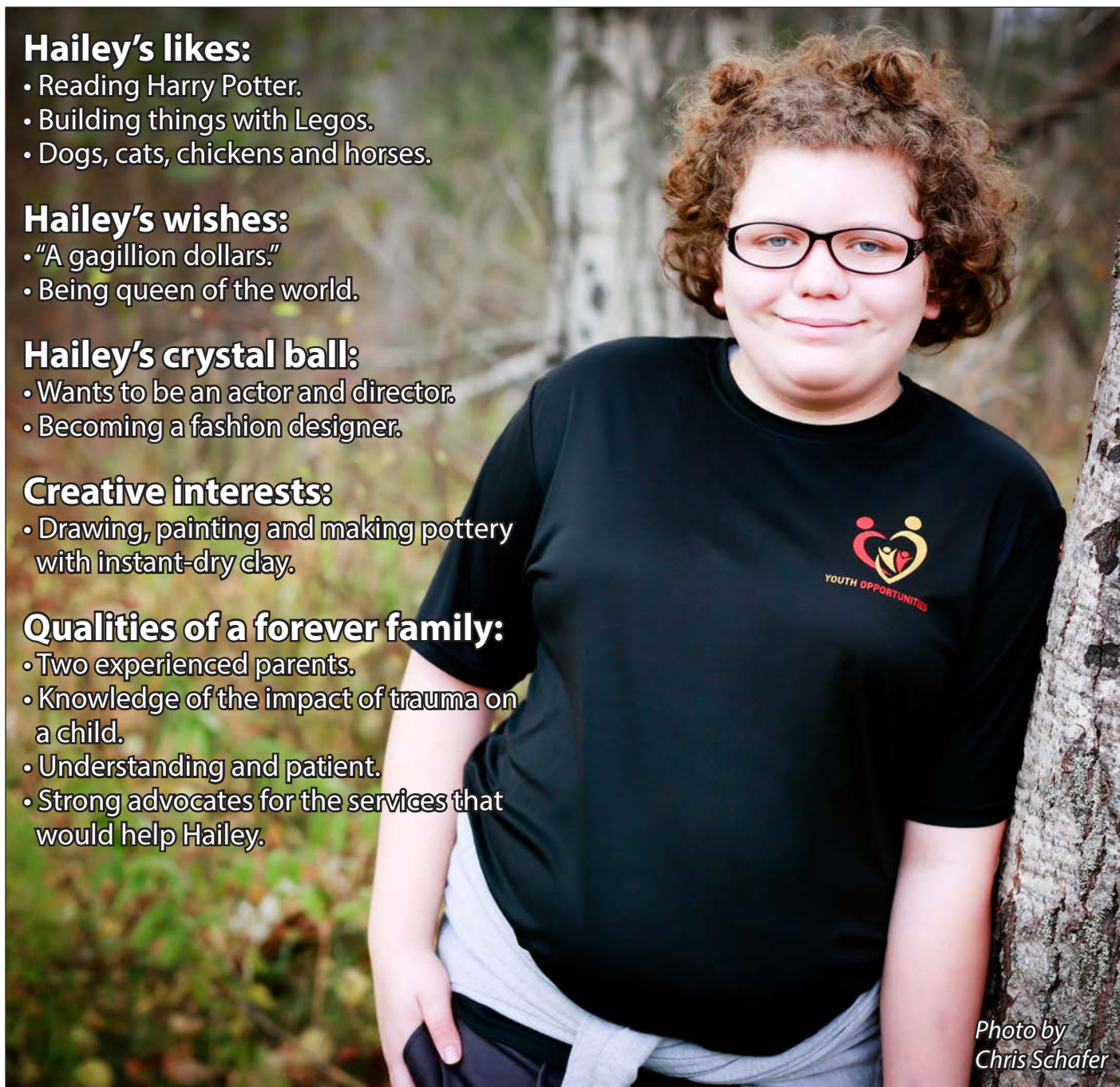
- Wants to be an actor and director.
- Becoming a fashion designer.

Creative interests:

- Drawing, painting and making pottery with instant-dry clay.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Understanding and patient.
- Strong advocates for the services that would help Hailey.



*Photo by
Chris Schäfer*

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.

"I am nice, friendly, caring and sweet."



Andrew's likes:

- Martial arts.
- Playing volleyball and basketball and participating in track.
- Playing video games, especially Minecraft.
- Celebrating the holidays with gift exchanges and good eats.

Andrew's crystal ball:

- Wants to be a Ninja warrior.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Dedicated to Andrew's needs and knowledgeable of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Willing to advocate for the services that will help Andrew thrive.
- Pets preferred.

“I want to be scientist ... I want to wear a lab coat.”



Jacob’s likes:

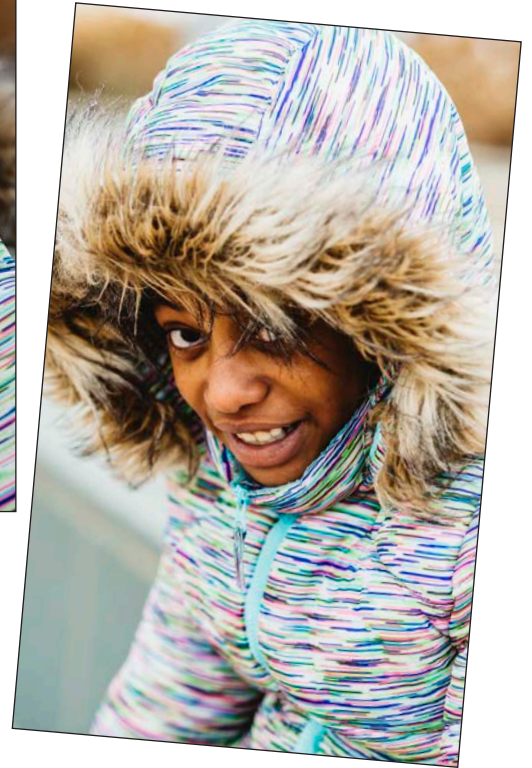
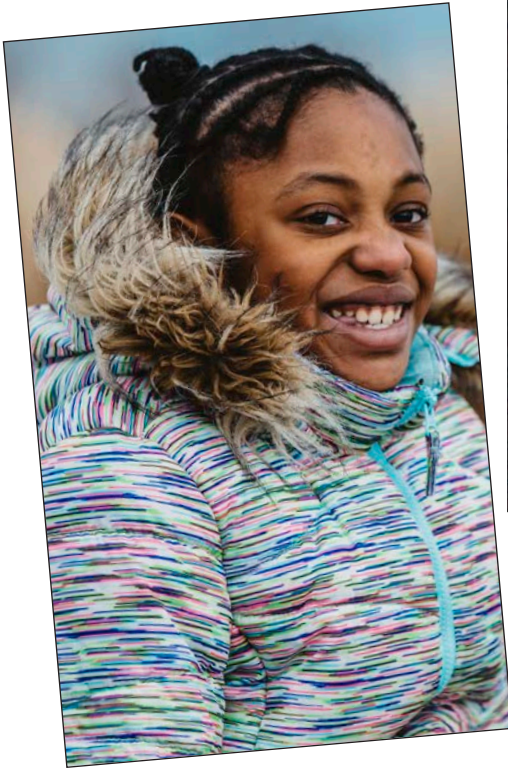
- Building things with blocks and Legos.
- Playing soccer and basketball.
- Playing outside after school.

Jacob’s wishes:

- Wants a magic pocket that could hold an endless amount of stuff.
- Hopes to visit Disneyland because – in his words – “It has a GIANT all you can eat buffet.”

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents or an experienced single parent with a strong support system.
- Youngest child in the home.
- Able to provide structure and routine to give Jacob stability and consistency.
- Fierce advocates for the services that will help Jacob.
- Willing to let Jacob maintain his sibling relationships.



**"I like reading,
math and science."**

*Photos by
Brian Craig*

Tatiana's likes:

- Reading road signs when she travels to help her learn.
- Playing outdoors.
- Floating the lazy river at waterparks.

Tatiana's crystal ball:

- Becoming a police officer "because I can catch bad people."

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single-female parent who can give Tatiana one-on-one attention.
- Experienced and patient.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- An advocate for the services that will help Tatiana thrive.

**"Tatiana would benefit from a loving family who's active.
She doesn't like to sit still; she likes to have fun."**

Tatiana's worker

“She needs a patient family who refuses to give up on her.”

NiAngel's worker



*Photo by
Corinne Toussaint*

NiAngel's likes:

- Thinking of ways to have fun.
- Spending time with friends “talking girl stuff.”
- Going shopping and to restaurants.
- Playing tennis and the card game Uno.
- Celebrating her birthday and Christmas.

NiAngel's wishes:

- Spending time together with a forever family just having fun.

NiAngel's crystal ball:

- Becoming a nurse.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and a dad or a single female parent with a strong support network.
- Experienced and knowledgeable of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Fierce advocates for the services that will help NiAngel function at her best.

“I like it when people dance funny and they tell jokes.”

"I'm thinking about working for the police department because I want to help people."

Photo by
Alicia Leffler

Kyler's likes:

- Playing basketball.
- Biking, bowling and swimming.
- Playing cards and video games.

Food of choice:

- Pizza and burgers washed down with a cool root beer.

Kyler's crystal ball:

- Looks forward to just spending time with a family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents who are experienced and trauma informed.
- A structured home with clear expectations.
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Kyler.
- Patient as he transitions into his new home.

Kyler is a bright, kind and outgoing boy who desperately wants a caring, loving family."

Kyler's worker

“I’m most proud of being a good person and always helping someone when they’re sad.”



Jaiwan’s likes:

- Playing basketball and riding his bike.
- Being outside and roller skating.
- Watching action films such as The Avengers.

Creative interests:

- Drawing and cooking.

Jaiwan’s crystal ball:

- Becoming a game designer.



Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced and trauma informed.
- Youngest child in his new forever family.
- Willing to ensure that Jaiwan receives the services that will help him thrive.
- Open to letting Jaiwan maintain his sibling relationships.

“My wish is to be adopted and safe.”

"I like science because of the hands-on experience, and that's the best way for me to learn."

Audrey's likes:

- Cooking.
- Participating in Junior Achievement.
- Reading and writing.
- Spending time with others.
- Playing Yahtzee.
- Listening to music.

Audrey's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a cosmetologist and open her own salon.
- Becoming part of a forever family who loves traveling and the outdoors.

Food of choice:

- Cookie dough ice cream.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad, a single female parent or two female parents.
- Experienced and patient parent or parents who are trauma informed.
- Strong advocates for the services that Audrey needs to thrive.
- Able to provide structure to help Audrey function at her best.

“When I think of hope, I think of happiness.”

Photo by
Colton Fromhart

Keyaira’s likes:

- Running and playing basketball.
- Playing cards and teaching others how to play new games.
- Listening to rap music.

Creative interests:

- Arts and crafts, which she’s excelled at by fashioning wallets out of duct tape.

Keyaira’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a nurse.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad, two female parents or a single female parent with a strong support network.
- Able to provide one-on-one attention.
- Willing to ensure that Keyaira receives the services that will help her.

“I just want a nice family.”

Hayden's likes:

- Playing with Hot Wheels and remote control cars.
- Riding bikes, four-wheelers and tractors.
- Skateboarding and mowing grass.
- Tinkering with things to figure out how they work.
- Camping and fishing.

Hayden's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a police officer, firefighter or

ambulance driver "because they help people."

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad who are experienced, patient and understanding.
- Trauma trained.
- Strong advocates for the services that help Hayden.
- A home with pets, preferably a cat and dog.



Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in this Winter 2019 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
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.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



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RESOURCE
EXCHANGE**

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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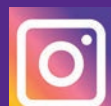
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