

MICHIGAN
**ADOPTION
RESOURCE**
EXCHANGE



Winter 2014

A spotlight on children
waiting for permanent
& loving families



Jayvon C08155

Photo by
Elizabeth Walker

WELCOME TO THE Winter 2014 Recruitment Periodical, published by the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange. Over the next several pages, you will be introduced to some of the youth in Michigan who are waiting for their opportunity to have a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption.

The youth in the Winter periodical are representative of hundreds of other children in the Michigan foster care system who are waiting to become part of a loving family. To view these children and to learn more information about adoption, please visit our website at www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of waiting children, 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. MARE is available to answer your adoption-related questions and we will do our best to get you headed in the right direction.



THE 2014 MICHIGAN HEART GALLERY WILL DEBUT ON SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2014 AT THE EMAGINE MOVIE THEATER IN ROYAL OAK!

VISIT WWW.MIHEART.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE HEART GALLERY OPENING AND SCHEDULING THE DISPLAY FOR YOUR EVENT OR PLACE OF BUSINESS.

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Adopting a “waiting child” from foster care is often referred to as special needs adoption. This term often makes people think of children with severe mental or physical impairments. In reality, special needs adoption means a child or children who may be difficult to place for adoption for a variety of reasons, including:

- Children school aged and above.
- Children with emotional, mental, learning or physical impairments.
- Children of minority heritage.
- Children who are part of a sibling group that must be placed together.

Many waiting 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% of children in Michigan's foster care system are adopted by the child's current foster family or a relative (someone with whom the child has an established relationship with). The remaining children available for adoption, like those in this periodical & the MARE website, have no identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive family is, therefore, necessary. Over 98% of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. Over 75% 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 support subsidies to help adoptive families meet their needs.

How much does it cost to adopt a child from foster care?

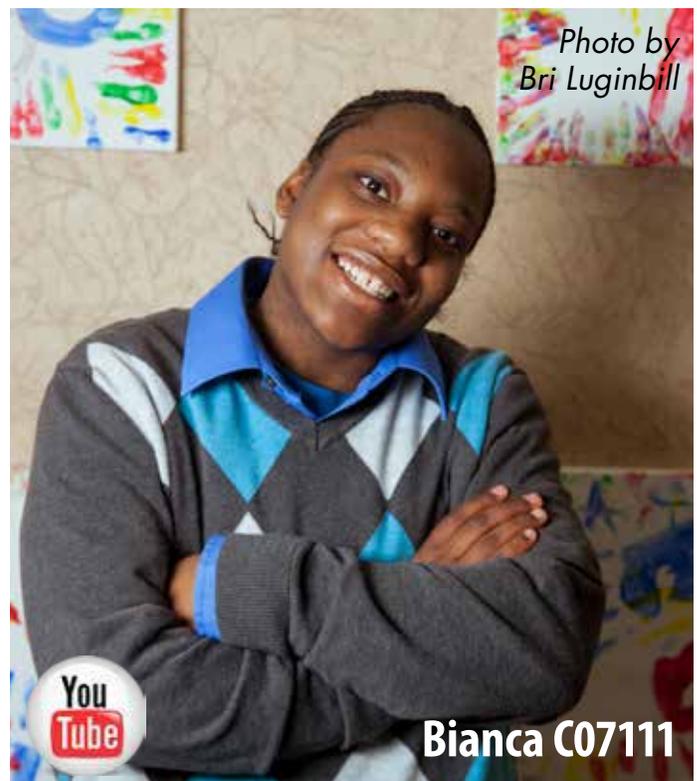
The only cost you should incur for adopting a child from the Michigan foster care system is court filing fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the Family Assessment (also known as a Home Study). Families

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 & on the MARE website) and can take an average of six months to a year to complete. The Adoptive Family Assessment will include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Personal history
- Health statements
- Criminal background check
- 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.

For more information about adoption and to learn about Michigan's waiting children, please visit our website at www.mare.org



Bianca C07111

Photos by
Christy Woods



AMBER WOULD LIKE families to know, "I'm adorable!" She is a very sweet and inquisitive child. Amber is outgoing, active and enjoys a good competition. She is a lovable child who has a very kind heart. Amber enjoys being outside, swimming, drawing pictures and watching TV. Some of her favorite animals are a rabbit, dog and cat. In addition, when Amber grows up she would like to be Minnie Mouse at Disneyland or a dolphin trainer at an aquarium. She loves to play with dolls and her favorite food is chicken nuggets.

Amber would like to have a forever family that will have fun and go places with her. The adoptive family should be able to provide close monitoring and dedicate a lot of time, attention and patience to help Amber reach her fullest potential. The family should have experience or knowledge of parenting children who have overcome turbulent pasts. In addition, the family must ensure that Amber is able to receive all the necessary support services that she may need to help her address her emotions both now and in the future. Amber can struggle with a positive self-image and benefits from consistent praise and encouragement. Amber should be monitored around others as she is still learning to be respectful of others' personal space and boundaries.





TRE'VONE SAYS, "I'M a nice person who gets along great with everyone I meet!" Tre'Vone has a quiet and pleasant disposition. He is very interested in animals and science. Tre'Vone cares very much for his younger siblings and enjoys being an older brother. He is very proud that he was awarded for his good behavior and attitude in his current placement. Tre'Vone gets along well with both children his own age and adults. He likes spending his time playing outside and playing video games inside. Tre'Vone is a very nice kid who enjoys doing things for others. He enjoys living in or being around a farm setting because he likes helping out with animals. Tre'Vone is hoping to be adopted by a family that would encourage him to become involved in football and other sports, as well as allowing him to be part of a Christian church.

Tre'Vone indicated that he would like, "A nice family that treats me well and has other kids." They must be patient with Tre'Vone because he is not being placed with his younger siblings, and this will likely be a difficult transition for him. However, Tre'Vone would like to have older siblings who could be positive role models for him. Tre'Vone says, he would like to have an adoptive father, "because I've never had a dad before," and he would benefit from a strong male role model in the family whom he could look up to for guidance and advice.



Photos by
Melissa Covell



TEAUNNA WOULD LIKE others to know a lot of different things about herself and reports, "I love little kids, I don't like seafood or lasagna but I do love cake, pie, ice cream and I want a Nintendo and a cell phone!" She is a happy teen who has a great sense of humor and enjoys making other people laugh. Teaunna's favorite thing to do after school and on the weekend is to read a good book. When she grows up she reports, "I would like to become the first female President!" Additionally, Teaunna notes, "I love to take pictures and I love to go to different places, especially Kalahari Waterpark!" Lastly, she says, "I love dogs but I do not like snakes, lizards, fish, spiders or mice!"

Teaunna would benefit from a family who will be understanding as she learns to express herself through positive outlets. She says, "I would like a family that will go to different restaurants together, that will adopt a puppy and have family movie and game nights!" It is important to Teaunna that she is allowed to have contact with her sisters, as they are important relationships to her. The adoptive family must provide a caring and understanding home environment in which she can thrive. The family must be willing to seek out any support services that would be beneficial to Teaunna's emotional and educational needs.

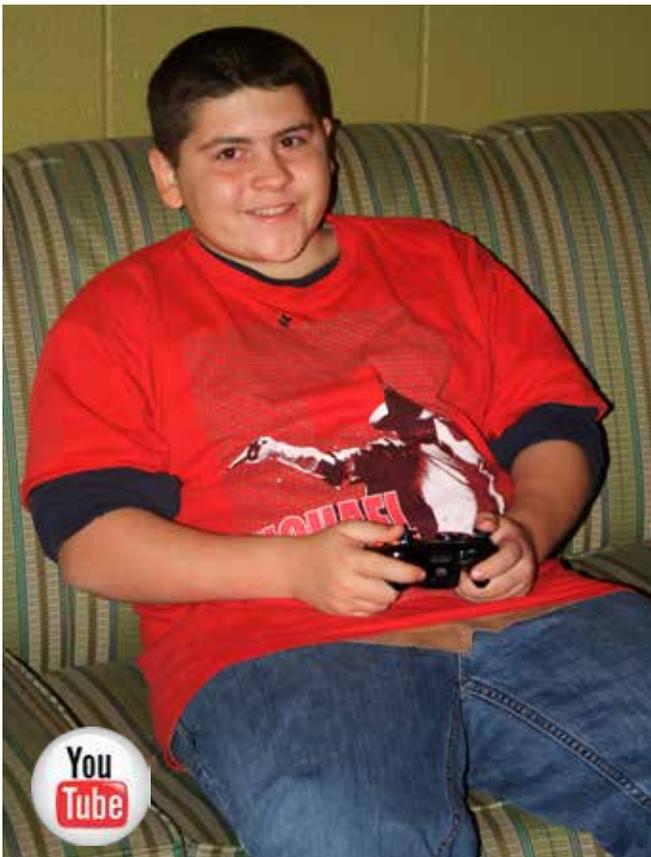
BRYCE WOULD LIKE families to know that it is important to him that he remains in close contact with his sister in a bordering state because, "I'm a twin!" He is an easy going and respectful young man. Bryce likes playing video games and soccer. He has participated in 4H and enjoyed showing lambs. Bryce likes comic books and Michigan State, but indicates he also likes other teams. His favorite subjects in school are math and art. When he grows up he reports that he would like to be an artist or a lawyer. If Bryce had three wishes he says, "I would wish for 1,000 more wishes, to have a Nintendo DSI with all of the Pokémon games and to be able to meet Stan Lee (the comic book creator)!" If he could travel, he would like to go to Italy because of their food and to see Pisa.

Bryce would like to have a family that will go on vacations. Bryce would benefit from a family that would be active advocates for his needs and ensure he receives all the necessary tools to be successful. The family must continue and seek out any additional support services that would help him successfully transition into an adoptive home. It is important to Bryce that he is able to visit with his sister and his grandfather, as these are valuable relationships in his life.



*Photos by
Ashley Nicholson*





NATHANIEL DESCRIBES HIMSELF as being a “nice and outgoing” kid. He likes to play video and computer games. Nathaniel has an artistic side and likes to draw and converse with others. He enjoys telling stories and likes anything to do with zombies or Pokémon.

Nathaniel would benefit from an adoptive family that has experience parenting children who have been in foster care. The family will need to provide him with a high level of monitoring and supervision. He would benefit from being in a two-parent family where he could be the only child, as he requires a lot of individualized attention. The potential family will need to provide Nathaniel with a high level of support and structure. Additionally, they will need to advocate for him in the school setting, and ensure that all of his needs are being met. Nathaniel will need a forever family that will give him a loving home and help him reach his fullest potential.

Photos by
Christine Gribble



MICHAEL WOULD LIKE others to know that he is most proud of learning how to swim. He enjoys spending his time playing computer games. Michael's biggest strength is that he's very thoughtful and loves to make drawings or write short thank you letters to those who care for him. Michael is very organized and likes things to be tidy and neat. He enjoys playing basketball, swimming and playing video games. When Michael grows up, he would like to be on a SWAT team. His favorite food is macaroni & cheese and his favorite holiday is Christmas. Michael is a loving child who just wants a family of his own.

Michael would like to have a forever family that likes to go to the store, go swimming and listen to music together. Michael needs a family who will provide him with a loving and stable environment. The family must provide clear, consistent directions and a structured home. The adoptive family must be encouraging of Michael's positive qualities and help him channel them productively. It would be best if Michael was the only or youngest child in the home. The family must advocate for Michael's emotional and educational needs and provide him with any support he may need in the future. Michael would benefit from a strong and dedicated family who would be able to provide firm rules while being forgiving and nurturing when needed. Michael would also benefit from strong and positive role models in the home. It is important that Michael will need an extended visitation period prior to moving into an adoptive placement.





CHRISTIAN IS A very friendly and funny boy. He has a very strong sense of what is right and wrong and likes to have fun. He loves to sing, dance and perform for others. Christian notes that he enjoys math and science and would like to be a zoologist when he grows up. His favorite food is macaroni & cheese and after school he enjoys snacking on apples or some kind of fruit. Christian's favorite animals are dogs and he likes stuffed animals, such as lions, tigers and dogs. Christian does like to remain active and enjoys playing football, baseball, basketball and he also likes to lift weights.

Christian would like families to know, "I can be a loving child." Christian is in need of an adoptive family that can provide him with love and support. He would benefit from being the only or youngest child in the home, as he does well with a lot of individualized attention. The adoptive family should have good communication skills and be able to provide Christian with structure and routine. He would benefit from an extended visitation period to help transition into the adoptive home. Christian is very attached to his siblings, so it is very important to him that his adoptive family be encouraging and helps him maintain sibling contact with his brother. Christian would also like to have a family that will want to travel to Disneyland, Cedar Point and want to go to regular neighborhood places like the local bowling alley and arcade.



*Photos by
Elayne Gross*

SHILO WOULD LIKE families to know, "I'm funny, I like to laugh and I'm nice!" She is an active young girl who enjoys playing games and playing with Barbies. Shilo likes playing outside, swimming, going to the park or beach, and doing arts & crafts. When she hangs out with her friends she likes to listen to music, play at the park and get ice cream. Shilo loves to go shopping and is willing to try new things. She likes stuffed animals and her favorite animal is a dog, especially puppies. If Shilo could go anywhere in the world, she would like to go to Disney World because she would like to get toys and see the park and the animals there. When asked what she is most proud of, she replied, "I'm proud of my grades, I get A's and B's!" If Shilo had three wishes she says, "I would like to be 16 years old, to have even more friends and to have a nice family." When she grows up she would like to be a nurse.

Shilo reports, "I would like to go shopping, visit Disney World and adopt a dog with my forever family!" An adoptive family for Shilo would need to have patience and understanding when it comes to her transitioning into the family setting. Shilo thrives with unconditional love and support. It would be beneficial to Shilo if she were the only or youngest child in the home with older adult children (late high school or college aged). The family must be able to address Shilo's needs and be able to seek out any support services that would be beneficial to her well-being. It is important to Shilo that she is able to maintain contact with her siblings, as she has strong bonds with them. Shilo has voiced that she would prefer a two-parent home to help her when she is having a tough day.



*Photos by
Marek Dziekonski*





Photos by
Melissa Lapeer



MARK IS A teen with a sweet, sensitive and loveable personality. He enjoys playing video games, drawing with coloring pencils, learning how to play musical instruments and spending time with his siblings. Mark is very close with his siblings, especially his youngest sibling. He is looking for a loving family who will care about him and make him feel involved. Mark loves being a big brother and does very well with young children. Some of Mark's hobbies are listening to music, watching TV, drawing and learning how to build things.

Mark needs a structured, loving and nurturing family environment. The ideal family would be able to provide Mark with attention and encouragement. Mark will need a family that can be patient and motivate him to continue to improve his speech and ability to express his feelings. He would benefit from a family that has the flexibility to give him the needed attention and supervision he needs. The family must have experience or knowledge of parenting children who have overcome turbulent pasts. It would be in Mark's best interest to be the only child in the home as he really needs time, energy and a lot of attention to help him with his needs. The adoptive family must be willing to continue and seek out any additional support services that would be beneficial to his well-being. Mark is hesitant about his adoption plan and really needs a family who will take the time to show him their dedication and desire to have him truly be part of the family. It is also important for the family to nurture Mark's strong bond with his siblings and it is important that he has an opportunity to have contact with them.

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Winter 2014 Periodical.



Photos by
Emily Vandermolen

ABBI IS A friendly, outgoing and talkative young lady who would like families to know, "I'm a good kid!" She is a very energetic girl who thinks honesty is a very important quality in life. Abbi is a resilient spirit who is able to meet new people easily. Her interests include normal teenage pop culture icons and fashion. Abbi has enjoyed reading the Shiloh trilogy and generally takes a great interest in animals; she especially likes bunnies and dogs. Her favorite subject in school is writing and she likes to participate in extra curricular activities like Girls on the Run. Abbi states, "I would like to do dance and church sponsored youth groups." She enjoys outdoor activities such as riding bikes and going camping. Abbi notes that maintaining relationships is important to her, such as her relationship with her sisters, and that she likes to have pictures of the things she has experienced or seen in life. If she could go anywhere on Earth she reports, "I would like to go to Hawaii or Alaska, because Hawaii sounds cool and Alaska is cold and I like the winter!" Abbi is unsure of what she would like to do when she is older but says, "I want to go to college and possibly be a hairstylist, fashion designer, cosmetologist or a boot store owner!"



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.

Upper Peninsula

Anishnabek Community & Family Services, Sault Ste. Marie, 906.632.5250, www.saulttribe.com
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
Good Will Farm, Inc., Houghton, 906.482.5020, www.upkids.com
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877.994.8344, www.lsswis.org
Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency (MICWA), Baraga, 906.353.6178, www.itcmi.org
Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency (MICWA), Wilson, 906.466.0277, www.itcmi.org
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906.249.5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906.273.1095, www.upfs.org

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, 989.892.2504, 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
Heaven Sent Adoption, Charlevoix, 231.237.9880, www.heavensentadopt.com
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 Consultants, Millington, 989.871.6695

Tri-County Area (Wayne, Oakland & Macomb Counties)

Adoption Options Worldwide, West Bloomfield, 248.855.2813, www.adoptionoptionsworldwide.com
Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248.414.4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
Catholic Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313.883.2100, www.csswayne.org
Child Safe Michigan, Southfield, 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 Adoption Consultants, Utica, 586.726.2988, www.facadapt.org
Forever Families, Novi, 248.344.9606, www.noviforeverfamilies.net
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313.961.4777, www.homes4blackchildren.org
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, 248.443.7080, www.spaulding.org
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248.552.1135, www.spectrumhuman.org
St. Francis Family Center/CSS of Oakland County, Southfield, 248.552.0750, www.cssoc.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 Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810.660.7590, www.adoption-specialists.org
 Alternatives for Children & families, Burton, 810.250.3800, www.acfinc.org
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517.336.0191, www.bethany.org/eastlansing
 Catholic Charities of Lenawee County, Adrian, 517.263.2191, www.catholiccharitiesjlhc.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 Services—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 Counseling & Children Services of Lenawee, Adrian, 517.265.5352, www.fccservices.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
 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
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency, Lansing, 517.393.3256, www.itcmi.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.dablodgett.org
 Family Adoption Consultants, Kalamazoo, 269.343.3316, www.facadopt.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269.344.0202, www.fcsources.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269.965.3247, www.fcsources.org
 Greater Hopes Family Services, Grand Rapids, 616.451.0245, www.greaterhopes.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616.356.1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269.345.5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Michigan Indian Child Welfare Agency, Grand Rapids, 616.454.3142, www.itcmi.org
 Pathways, Holland, 616.396.2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269.969.9181, www.cityilinc.org

Please visit www.mare.org for a complete listing of agencies who license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your local County Department of Human Services office.



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange 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, have adopted a number of children, and have knowledge of foster care, infant & older, and domestic & 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 & voluntary service.

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange

P.O. Box 980789

Ypsilanti, MI 48197



**MICHIGAN
ADOPTION
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 Human Services.

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