

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Human Services.



To learn about foster care adoption and view photolistings and videos of waiting children, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).

# “SHE TURNED HER CAN'TS INTO CANS AND HER DREAMS INTO PLANS”

— Kobi Yamada

## TURN IDEALISTIC RESOLUTIONS INTO REALISTIC GOALS

Follow these steps to accomplish your dreams

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE PARRA, MARE SUPERVISOR

**T**his time of year a lot of people, kids and adults, make New Year's Resolutions that are easily broken, myself included. I have decided to focus this month on setting goals for myself that I can actually stick with. Here are some tips on how to set goals and accomplish them. Remember this:

**A goal is a dream with a deadline.**

— Napoleon Hill

So ... why should you set goals? Setting goals can help you stay focused and take control of the direction your life is going. It also feels really good to accomplish a goal you set, even if it's a really small goal like waking up five minutes early every day. Accomplishing small goals can give you the confidence to set bigger goals.

**Step 1:** Set a goal. What is something positive you want to happen this year? Examples could be learning how to knit, how to play the guitar, improving your grades, write your resume, get a job, save some money, learn money management ... A goal can focus around your health: start exercising, eating healthier, learning how to do yoga. Whatever goal you choose to set, make

sure it's something you can achieve and that it's specific enough to where you will know when you achieve it. For example, if your goal is to save money, be specific and set a goal of HOW MUCH money. If your goal is to get good grades, be specific and set a goal of what grades you want to get in what classes.

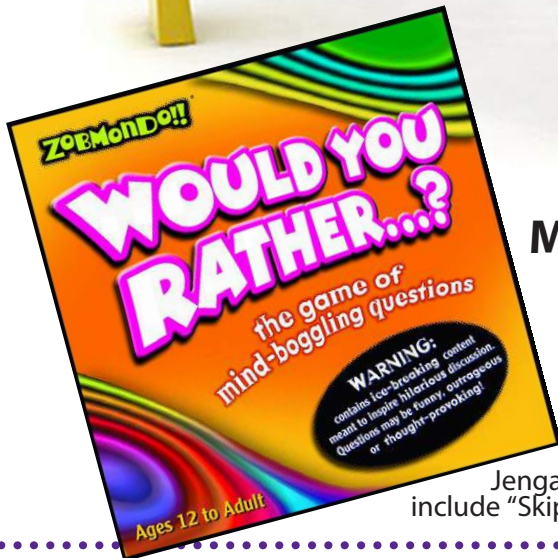
**Step 2:** Now that your goal is set, make a plan for how you will accomplish the goal. Write it out. You may want to start small; for example, set a goal to turn in your homework every day for an entire semester and this will help you accomplish your larger goal of getting good grades. You will want to make a plan of HOW and WHEN you will do your homework to make sure it's done on time.

**Step 3:** Set dates when you will review how you are doing on your goal. You can do this daily, weekly or monthly, whatever you think is best. Remember, this is your goal, so you can be in control of this. It is a good idea to have a visual reminder of your goal so you don't forget to review it.

**Step 4.** NEVER GIVE UP! Don't get discouraged if you mess up or have a setback. Keep trying! The most important part is to keep trying and feel good about yourself for trying.

It's a new year and a new us, and it didn't take a New Year's resolution to get us to change. When we asked for your feedback to rejuvenate Life Books, gift cards and Match Party activities,

# You talked; we listened



## Match Party makeover

**You** wanted more pizzazz in your party, so out go the lame games that were too easy and not much fun and in come the age-appropriate activities for younger and older youth as well as for both genders. One title we're excited about is "Spikeball," which is sort of a way to enjoy beach volleyball without covering an entire schoolyard while playing it. Then there's "Icebreaker Jenga," a more interactive version of the classic game. Other new titles include "Skip-Bo," "Spot It" and "Would You Rather ...?"

## The prize is right

We also received some nice prizes to match – see what we did there? – your interests such as watches, sunglasses, art supplies, cards, basketballs, footballs and soccer balls. With your feedback and our responses to it, we hope 2015 will be a great year for Match Parties.



## Yeah, we heard you

Get out those drawing implements and that sketch paper. You said you wanted more choices for the \$10 gift cards that you receive for each drawing or writing you send to us, so we added new retailers such as iTunes, Five Below and Target to the list that already included Walmart, Meijer and Barnes & Noble. And if you don't have fancy sketch paper, send in your work on a paper grocery bag or some other paper. For details on how to receive up to \$30 in gift cards per month, see page 3.



## Resuscitating the Life Book

Hey, it's a play on words, but we're dead serious here. As a matter of fact, a subcommittee was formed to update MARE's Life Book, and several focus groups throughout Michigan have met to improve the Life Book, which is designed as a workbook/journal to document your journey throughout your time in foster care.

If you'd like your voice to be heard about the Life Book or any topic, we'd love to hear from you. Please send your letters to Jen Brooks, 3840 Packard Road, Suite 170, Ann Arbor, MI 48108 or email [jennifer\\_brooks@judsoncenter.org](mailto:jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org).

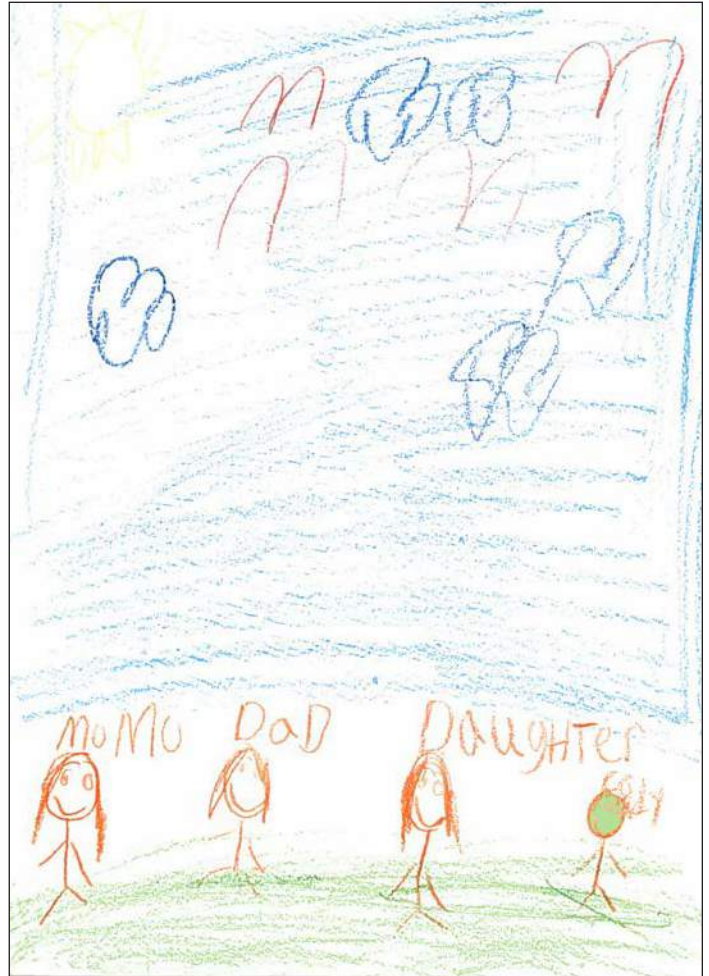
And we will do anything we can to help!

# THE TALENT SHOWCASE

Since he's interested in cars, Michael takes to the road



Michael, 17



Cody gets creative with the forever family of his dreams



Cody, 15

If he could have one superpower, Cody says it would be invisibility so that he can use it to joke around with people.

# CALENDAR: SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY

## OF EVENTS

**January 31, 2015**  
**Wayne County Match Party**

11 a.m. - 2 pm  
Check the MARE website for more details when they become available.

For more information regarding these events please contact Jennifer Brooks, MARE Youth Specialist: [Jennifer\\_brooks@judsoncenter.org](mailto:Jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org)



Fostering Success Michigan is seeking student stories to be highlighted on their website!

We are currently seeking students who are interested in being featured on our website. We have all heard the statistics and know about the obstacles students face. This is an opportunity for students and professionals alike to read the success stories and learn about what supports helped youth succeed. The stories will be used as a way to highlight students and their

achievements.

If you know of any youth or alumni of care between the ages of 18 and 24 who are currently enrolled in high school or college, we would love to hear from them.

Contact Fostering Success Michigan Student Researcher, Brittney Grant, at [fostering-info@wmich.edu](mailto:fostering-info@wmich.edu) to have the interview questions sent directly to your inbox.

We look forward to featuring youth and alumni stories from across the state!



## YOUTH RESOURCES



**FosterClub** - FosterClub is a national network for young people in foster care and young foster care alumni. The site includes blogs from current foster youth, success stories from youth who have come out of the foster system as well as celebrities who faced foster care. It also provides a listing by state of contact information for professionals and hotlines.



**Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative** - MYOI is a partnership between the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Oakland/Livingston Human Services Agency, and many other local community partners. MYOI's goal is to ensure that young people in foster care have successful outcomes in housing, education, employment, community engagement and health.



**Foster Youth in Transition** - An organization that is geared towards youth who are aging out of foster care. It's a comprehensive, youth-oriented site with information, advice, interactive features and a useful glossary of foster care terms. This is a website with information on a variety of issues important to current and former foster youth. The site provides links on how to develop supports, find services, get answers to important questions and just keep you posted on what's new.



**Camellia Network** - Camellia Network harnesses the power of new technology to connect youth "aging out" of the foster care system with a community of resources, opportunities, encouragement and support. Youth have profiles on the site, giving them a place to express themselves, share their goals for the future and articulate what they need to be successful. Individuals and companies from across the country are able to collectively provide the support these young people lack by offering up doses of encouragement, career advice, professional connections, and financial support to help them navigate their way into adulthood.