

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



*Inside:
Nakayla's big heart
and big dreams,
Page 4.*

*Georgey's plan to be
on the best sellers
list, Page 9.*

*Jake longs for a
family who loves the
outdoors, Page 10.*

Summer 2018

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

Davion C08871

Davion's likes:

- Riding bikes and horses.
- Playing action-packed video games.
- Following the Detroit Lions and Tigers.
- Mac 'n cheese and spaghetti.
- A game of catch.
- Playing card games such as Uno.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Youngest or only child.



*Photo by
Mike Lanzetta*

Welcome to the Summer 2018 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.



The 2018 Michigan Heart Gallery will travel throughout the state to help raise awareness of children who continue to wait for their forever families. Visit www.miheart.org for upcoming exhibit locations and events or contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at 800-589-6273.

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 the child’s 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 to help adoptive families meet 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 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.



Lindsey’s likes:

- Listening to music, especially Beyoncé.
- Sleeping in and watching television.
- Drawing and writing in her journal.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Would do best as the only child.
- Fierce advocates for the services Lindsey needs to thrive.

Photo by
Denise Wiles



“I care for other people no matter who they are.”

Nakayla’s likes:

- Exercising and participating in gym class.
- Playing basketball and board games such as Connect Four and Yahtzee.
- Spending time with her nieces and nephews.
- Reading, writing and listening to music.

Intangible assets:

- An active, athletic and artistic young lady.
- Describes herself as having a big heart and a caring nature.

Nakayla’s crystal ball:

- Dreams of playing in the WNBA.
- Wants to become a foster care worker.

Creative interests:

- Doing arts and crafts.

Qualities of a forever family:

- An experienced single mom.
- Youngest or only child in the home.
- Strong advocate for the services that will help Nakayla.
- A family with a dog.

“I like to listen to gospel and R&B. I like gospel better because it calms me.”

Did you know?

Here are a few things that you might not know about www.mare.org.

1. The Advanced Search button on the View Waiting Children link lets you sort your search by gender, age, race and impairment levels.

2. Under the Find a Licensed Agency link, you can look for resources for foster care and special needs adoptions and infant and international adoptions.

3. On the Events Calendar, you can find training sessions held across Michigan, including orientations and adoptive parent support group meetings.

Photo by
Allie Siarto



James' likes:

- Pizza and fast food.
- Interacting with kittens, which makes him laugh when he sees two kittens playing with each other.
- Going outside, playing on a playground and climbing a tree.
- Building things with Legos.
- Going to waterparks.
- Reading, drawing and playing games.

James' crystal ball:

- Wants to become a paleontologist so he can dig up dinosaur bones.

Intangible assets:

- Smart student who does well academically.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who can provide the supervision and attention that James needs.
- Would do best as the only child in his forever family.
- Able to make sure James receives the services that help him thrive.
- Open to letting James maintain his relationship with his brother.

*Photo by
Christie Carl*



Maurice's likes:

- Conversing with trusted adults.
- Listening to music and watching movies.
- Doing magic tricks with cards.

Intangible assets:

- Fun to be around.
- A good sense of humor and likes to be silly and make others laugh.

Creative interests:

- Singing, dancing and acting.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Youngest or only child.
- Able to provide one-on-one attention.
- Patient and nurturing.

“I’m just trying my hardest now to find a family who will love me, care for me and be there when I need them.”



Arreanna's likes:

- Fashion and accessories.
- Getting her hair and nails done.
- A steak and a shake.

Arreanna's crystal ball:

- Wants to work in a store that sells clothes, shoes and jewelry.

Intangible assets:

- An independent and endearing girl who enjoys staying active.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single-female parent, a mom and dad or two female parents.
- Best if she's the youngest child in the home.
- Committed to ensuring Arre receives the services that she needs to thrive now and into adulthood.



Photos by Heather Halligan

Photos by
Lisa Hodack



Heather's likes:

- Yogurt, strawberries and cookies and cream ice cream.
 - The color green.
 - Swimming, bowling and shopping.
- Going for long rides and eating at restaurants.
 - Playing with her teddy bear and other stuffed animals.
 - Participating in community activities.

Heather's crystal ball:

- Owning a green carpet and having "green everywhere."
- Playing together with her future forever family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two female parents or a mom and a dad who can provide the supervision and one-on-one attention that Heather requires.
- Experienced parents who are fierce advocates for the services that will help Heather now and into adulthood.





Photo by
Christine Schafer

Georgey’s likes:

- Playing basketball.
- Reading fantasy books.
- Sharing laughs with others.
- Attending English language arts class because it helps him learn new words for his goal of becoming a writer.

Intangible assets:

- Infectious smile.
- Friendly, honest and responsible.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents.
- Open to Georgey’s input about decisions that impact him.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help him function at his best.
- Willing to let Georgey maintain his sibling relationships.

“Georgey can be timid when you first meet him, but once he feels comfortable, he becomes a jokester and is very friendly.”

“Georgey has always done well in school and takes great pride in his school work.”

Georgey’s worker



*Photo by
Carie Coscarelli*

Jacob's likes:

- Reading, coloring and playing with Legos and superhero action figures.
- Eating mac 'n cheese.
- Being in the outdoors.

Jacob's crystal ball:

- Wants to own a monster truck and lots of toys.
- Dreams of visiting Texas to toss lassos with cowboys.
- Longs for a family so they can go fishing, horseback riding, canoeing, tubing and snowmobiling.

Intangible assets:

- Funny and caring.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents with experience and patience who can provide the attention he requires.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Jake thrive.
- Willing to let him maintain his relationship with his brother.
- Only child in his new forever family.

Shantoria's likes:

- Coloring and reading, particularly the Dragonball Z books.
- Puppies.
- Going to the beach and shopping.

Intangible assets:

- A friendly and funny girl who's caring toward others and loves to help.
- Makes others happy by listening or telling jokes.

Shantoria's crystal ball:

- Wants to be a singer when she grows up.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single mom or a mom and dad.
- The only or youngest child.
- Fierce advocates for the services that will help Shantoria thrive.

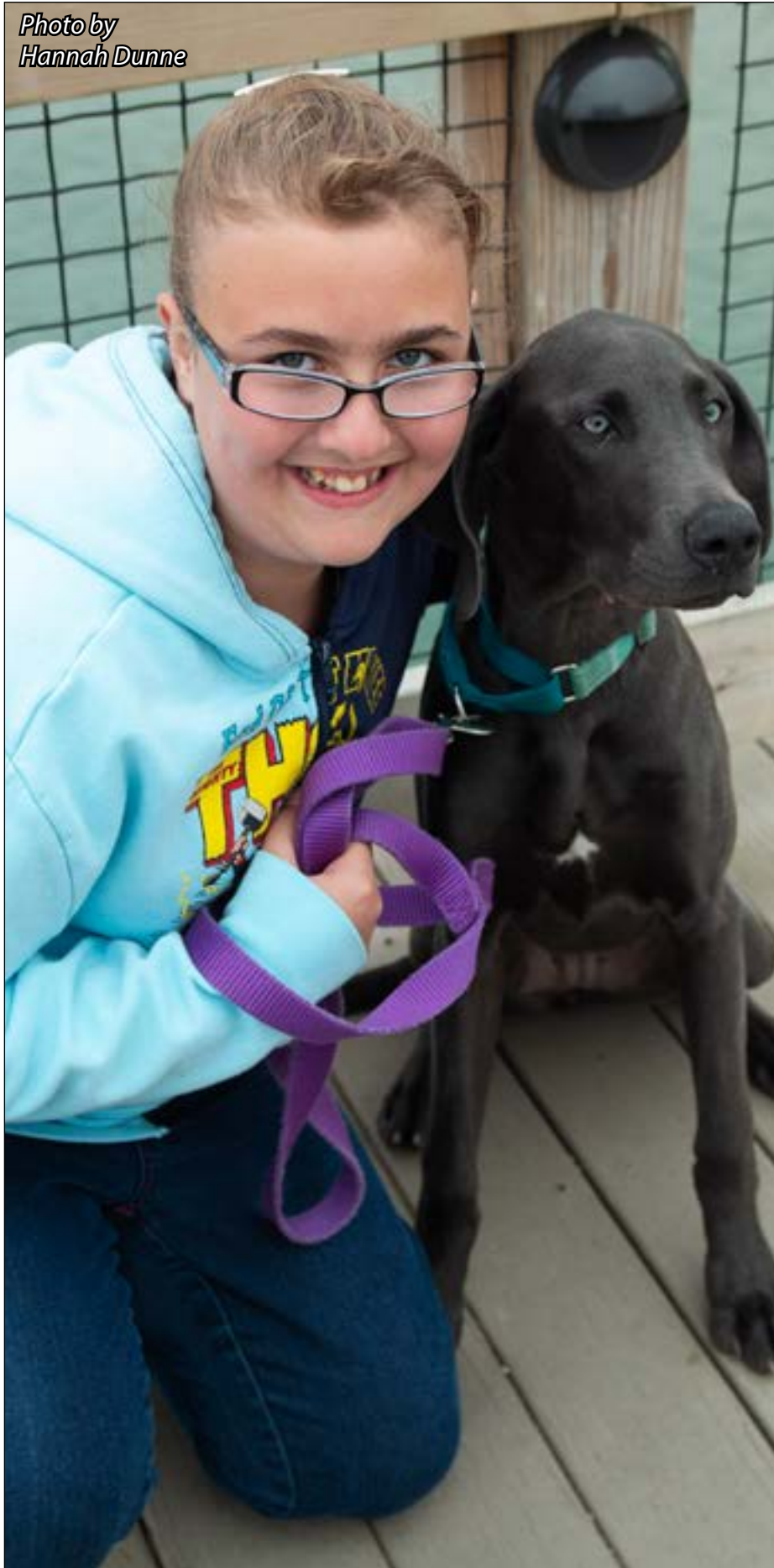
“My favorite thing in the world is anime.”

“I'm looking forward to finding a family really soon.”



Photo by
Toni Hoopingartner

Photo by
Hannah Dunne



Allie's likes:

- Playing with baby dolls.
- Swimming and tubing.
- Taking a nap after school and on weekends.
- Boat rides.

Intangible assets:

- Affectionate and friendly.

Allie's crystal ball:

- Dreams of being a worker in an ice cream shop.
- Wants to become a mother when she gets older.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient parent or parents able to provide a calm and predictable environment.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Allie function at her best.
- Open to letting her maintain her sibling relationships.

“Allie is a joyful, talkative and helpful person. She is considerate of others and is a people person.”

Allie's worker

Michael's likes:

- Chilling out by taking naps, playing video games and watching TV.
- Takes pride in how well he does in baseball.
- Made the Little League all-star team.
- Loves Haitian spaghetti and takes pride in his Haitian heritage.

Michael's crystal ball:

- Wants to visit Williamsport, Pa., home of the Little League World Series.
- Looks forward to attending sporting events with a future forever family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Able to ensure that Michael receives the services to help him excel.

“Mikey is always smiling and pleasant to be around. He loves to make jokes and laugh.”

Michael's worker



*Photo by
Loren Sanders*

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Summer 2018 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, 906-226-2160, 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, 906-482-0520, 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, 989-892-2504, 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
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Harbor Springs, 231-347-4463, www.cfsnmi.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
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.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
Wolverine Human Services, Warren, 888-625-8669, www.wolverinehs.org
Wolverine Human Services, Bloomfield Hills, 248-724-2643, 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 & Community Services, Monroe, 734-344-6606, www.facadopt.org
 Family & Community Services, Howell, 517-615-1275, www.facadopt.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
 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
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Flint, 810-234-9324, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Saginaw, 989-686-3170, 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
 Wolverine Human Services, Flint, 888-625-8669, www.wolverinehs.org

Southwest Michigan

Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.arborcircle.org
 Arbor Circle, Muskegon, 616-396-2301, www.arborcircle.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, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Holland, 231-726-4735, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, www.ccwestmi.org
 D.A. Blodgett for Children/St. John's, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, www.dabsj.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, www.fcsource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsource.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9438, 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



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:



[@MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange](https://www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange)



[@VideosbyMARE](https://www.youtube.com/VideosbyMARE)



[@MAREinMichigan](https://twitter.com/MAREinMichigan)



[@MAREAdoption](https://www.pinterest.com/MAREAdoption)