

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.

REALITY TV WORTH WATCHING

Station's weekly segments feature waiting children

Imagine finding a home every week for a child who's living in foster care. Helen Zeerip believes that it can be done. The foster parent and president of Teddy's Transport envisioned a series of weekly television segments featuring older children in the foster care system.

Her goal is to find homes for 52 older children.

The segments, called "Grant Me Hope," began airing January 6 on Catherine Behrendt's "Take 5 & Company" show on WZZM, Channel 13, which is based out of Grand Rapids. She will air them every Tuesday and give another re-cap on Friday.

One child or sibling group will be featured each week in 2015 with a goal of getting 52 older children adopted this year before they term out of the foster care system.

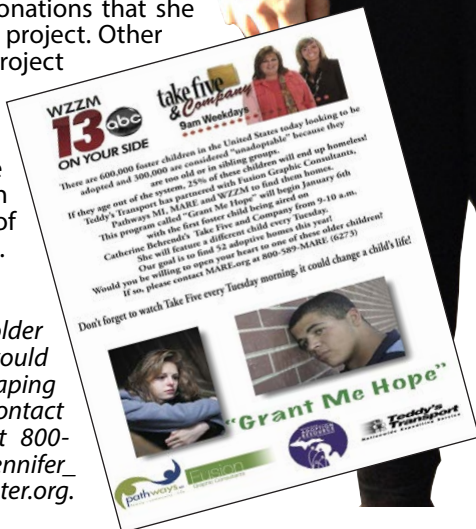
To fund the project, Zeerip raised money from her customers and vendors. She also partnered with Fusion Graphics, a company that sends the camera crew to video the children and edits the segments for the TV station.

In addition, Pathways MI acts as fiduciary for all donations that she raises to fund this project. Other partners in the project include WZZM, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange and Michigan Department of Human Resources.

If you have an older foster child you would like to get on the taping schedule, please contact Jennifer Brooks at 800-589-6278 or jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org.



MclYne, left, and McKenna described each other and their wishes for a family on a recent "Grant Me Hope" segment.



Longest-waiting kids getting help

BETHANY.
CHRISTIAN SERVICES

“Operation Forever Family” is a federal research grant

with the goal of identifying adoptive families for Michigan children who have been waiting the longest for a family (specifically, ages 14-16, available and waiting for more than a year). The program is being administered by Bethany Christian Services, who is working in partnership with DHS, MARE and the Adoption Resource Consultants. Twenty youth currently photolisted on MARE have been identified for this program, and will receive these three main services in addition to the recruitment services they are already being provided:

1. “Been There, Done That” Recruiters

- The identified child will have a recruiter assigned to them that has “Been There” and “Done That,” meaning they have been in foster care themselves. (These Recruiters are hired and trained employees of Bethany Christian Services).

2. Trauma Specialist

- Sara Blomeling DeRoo is the Trauma Specialist for OFF. Initially, Sara’s responsibility will be to complete a trauma assessment on the identified child to develop a trauma-informed recruitment enhancement plan. Once a family has been identified for the participating youth, Sara will provide in-home trauma training specific to that child’s needs. She will also be available to support the family through the transition phase.

3. Support Parent

- Many of the youth referred to this program are currently in residential facilities, so Volunteer Support Parents will be identified for each child that is a part of this program. The support parents (many of whom may be currently licensed foster or adoptive parents) will be similar to mentors, but with more of a personal relationship with the child. Until an adoptive family is identified, the support parents will lead a parental role for the child in areas such as education (attending school, IEP meetings), contact (phone calls, visits), and potentially counseling participation (as requested by the child).

For more information, contact Stacey Goodson, Operation Forever Family Program Manager at sgoodson@bethany.org or 616.284.3291.



NEW RESOURCE FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Service covers the entire state

WRITTEN BY ADOPTIVE FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

What is the Adoptive Parent to Parent Program?

This program provides a listening ear, knowledgeable guidance and community connections to any member of an adoptive family. Our services are offered at no charge, through consultants located throughout the state. We are here to serve any adoptive family member who has adopted in Michigan.

What do we offer?

The Parent to Parent Program encourages and supports adoptive families whenever, however and wherever they need it. We do this in three ways:

- Matching your family to one of our trained adoptive parent consultants whose adoption experience and background most closely fits your situation.
- Providing personal contact and support in whatever way and for however long you need it (phone, email, in person, etc.).
- Connecting your family to other adoptive families so that you can all support each other as you grow together.

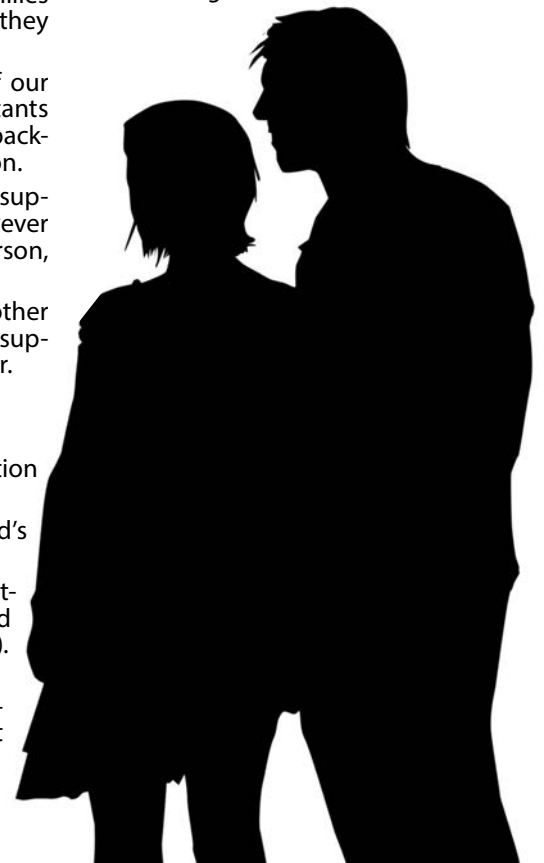
When should you call?

Call us any time you have a question about adoption, such as:

- Identity. How do I answer my child’s questions about his/her identity?
- Behavior. My child is exhibiting some difficult behaviors (mood swings, temper, disobedience, etc.). What can I do?
- Resources. What kinds of medical, emotional and financial support are available to us as an adoptive family?
- Advocacy. How do I obtain the help my child needs in school?

- Referrals. Can you help me find a physician, therapist, or other specialist with experience in adoption issues?
- Peer support. Can I connect with another adoptive family? Is there someone else out there like us?
- Grief and loss. I have heard that there are certain ages when children more commonly have questions about their adoption. How do I respond?

For more information about the program, call 855-MICH-P2P or email Parent2Parent@afsn.org.



Putting MiSACWIS on your side

Here are some tips to help make the system work for you

As most of you have discovered, MiSACWIS has brought many changes; therefore, some changes have been made to the way things are done over here at MARE to match. The first thing you should be aware of is that MiSACWIS replaced SWSS, NOT MARE. You still have all of the same MARE responsibilities as before; just a couple bits of information we collect have changed.

One of the main things you will notice is that MiSACWIS no longer assigns "DHS Case Numbers" as the unique identifier to tell cases apart. Three different types of numbers are now assigned to each case in MiSACWIS:

1. Person ID – a unique identifier to distinguish each individual person in a family.

2. Case ID – refers to the Case Reference Person (head of household), and all information associated to that case; this number links multiple persons in one family or case together; more than one member of the family may be referred to by this number.

3. MiSACWIS Provider ID – an ID issued to all foster, adoptive and residential homes to identify placement.

The one ID number that MARE is using to replace the old "DHS Case Numbers" is the PERSON ID because these numbers are unique to each individual, follow them through the duration of their time in foster care and can be used to identify each person in place of his/her name and DOB, in the event that there are youth with similar names, DOB, typos, missing information, etc.

However, we realize that not all cases are available in MiSACWIS and not all workers have access to the database yet. Due to this transition period, we will still accept and use the old DHS Case Numbers if only that is available, particularly on older cases.

- If you have a case that had a DHS Case Number previously, but has recently been accepted in

MiSACWIS and was assigned a new Person ID, you may feel free to update the information in that child's MARE file so it matches your new records.

- If you have submitted a new case with "unknown" as the ID number, please update it as soon as the data becomes available.

- If you cannot locate an existing case by the Case Number or Person ID using the search form on the MARE website, please let us know the name and DOB, and we will search for you. Until everyone is transitioned completely over to Person ID #'s on every case, it may be necessary to search using less specific terms, like the Last Name only.

We are always happy to help you through this transition! Let us know if you have any questions or need assistance in updating or locating a file.

For more information, contact MARE Data Analyst Chaely Chartier at 800-589-6273, ext. 23255, or email her at chaely_chartier@judsoncenter.org.





Save the Date

The Grand Opening of the 2015 Michigan Heart Gallery is

SATURDAY, APRIL 18
EMAGINE THEATER IN ROYAL OAK

Don't miss it! Here are scenes from last year's event:



It's fitting that the Michigan Heart Gallery debut takes place in Royal Oak, since the kids who attend are treated like royalty. Last year, youth who participated in the youth video project received "Oscars" after watching their performance on the big screen from their reserved seats. All featured youth who attend the grand opening this year will be the VIP's of the day. Be sure to save the date!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 31, 2015

Wayne County Match Party

11 a.m. - 2 pm
Check the MARE website for more details.

For more information regarding these events please contact Jessica Thompson, MARE Recruitment Specialist:

jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org

July 27-28, 2015

Statewide Adoption Worker Conference, Bay City

Heart Gallery deadline nears

Don't break the heart of a child who's assigned to you. Make sure you get the Heart Gallery photos in on time.



Heart Gallery photos are due to MARE by Friday, February 13, 2015. This is the absolute deadline, and failure to submit photos by this date may result in the child not being featured on this year's Michigan Heart Gallery display.

Please contact Jessica Thompson, MARE Recruitment Specialist with questions, concerns or if you are having difficulty reaching a youth's assigned photographer. Jessica may be reached at Jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org or 734-528-2070.

