

EVERY CHILD IS A WORK OF ART

ART & SOUL

OF OAKLAND COUNTY



First Annual Portrait Exhibit Partnering with
Orchards Children's Services - Children Waiting for Adoption



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Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30



24901 Northwestern Hwy., Ste. 500
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www.orchards.org

- Become a partner by donating monthly. Your monthly support guarantees the ongoing and predictable funds necessary to meet the needs of all our children.
- Make a donation in honor or memory of someone, or to commemorate a special occasion. bmarcelo@orchards.org
- Contribute with a gift of stock.
- Explore planned giving options.
- Consider Foundation or Corporation support.
- Plan a fundraiser.
- Change the future of many Michigan children by making a Multiyear Pledge.

On behalf of Orchards Children's Services, and most importantly the children and families that we serve, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to you for your belief in our work and your ongoing support.

Every child deserves the love of a family.
Thank you for opening your heart and soul.

For more information, contact
Katora M. Cole, Chief Development Officer 248.593.1576

Adoption Resource Consultants - ARC

Orchards Children's Services' **Adoption Resource Consultants** are dedicated to building everlasting connections for youth in the Michigan foster care system who have been waiting for an adoptive home for over a year. **ARC** partners with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and statewide private agencies to recruit and identify potential adoptive homes and lifelong support systems for identified youth in need.

View Orchards Children's Services ARC Youth Video Gallery
<http://vimeo.com/channels/orchardsarc>

Adoption Resource Consultants 855.694.7301
ARC2@ORCHARDS.ORG

The Soul of a Child is Waiting...

Welcome to the first annual **Art&Soul of Oakland County** traveling exhibit!

Art&Soul of Oakland County is an initiative created to increase the rate of adoption for children in the Michigan Oakland County Foster Care and Adoption system. To achieve this mission, we have generated an exceptional, distinctive, traveling photo exhibit where every child is seen as a work of **ART** by showcasing the child looking for a forever family. The exhibit features photos of older children taken by nationally recognized and award winning photographers which demonstrates the commitment of the photographer to make the **SOUL** of the child visible. **Art&Soul of Oakland County** is a moving photo exhibit of older children looking for their forever families. The exhibit will visit special events, museums, charity events, theaters, hospitals, libraries, galleries, retail establishments, schools, places of worship, state and county offices and more over the course of a year. It is our goal that 75% of the children featured are matched with families, mentors or community opportunities. We believe that Oakland County residents will open their hearts to this sensitive and compelling exhibit.

The children in this exhibit are beautiful, they have many talents, they hope for better tomorrows, they worry about the unknown, they have waited too long, and they dream of belonging to a family. The children are hopeful that as this beautiful exhibit travels across Oakland County, a family will see them and know that they are their child.

Art&Soul of Oakland County



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Every Child is a Work of Art

We thank the photographers - they continue to change lives.

World-class photographers have come together from Michigan to create an exceptionally special exhibit. These photographers are celebrating children in the Michigan foster care system who wait for loving permanent families. These photographers have shared their time and talents in hopes of capturing that special smile, that incredible spirit, the love between siblings, or the look of hope in a child's eyes.

Touched by the images and stories of these courageous children, our community has found ways to help. From Summer Camp Adventures to Arts & Learning program to our Career Connections initiative, Orchards Children's Services is there for children from birth to adulthood. Your connection with Orchards can be a lifelong partnership too. Together we can make a difference, for ourselves, our community, and for the future of all young people looking for their forever families.

As this photo exhibit travels around Oakland County, look at their faces, share their stories, and ask yourself how you might help.

From our community, we hear words such as:

- "I couldn't get that portrait out of my mind."
- "When we saw her picture, we fell in love."
- "His portrait spoke to us. The rest is history."
- "Oakland County is a special place to live. Once our community knows the stories of these children they will want to get involved."

We can change the future of many Oakland County children by standing together to show children in foster care that they are special.



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Photographed by Linda Solomon

FACT: Dinosaurs are super cool! If you want proof, then ask James, one of the world's future paleontologists. This bright young boy aspires to make major discoveries digging up dinosaur bones! It is easy to see this happening for him as he proudly performs above his grade level for reading, math, and science! But James hasn't limited himself to the pursuit of history. He wants to travel to the Amazon to experience firsthand the fantastic animals in the jungle and the piranhas in the rivers. James has a thirst for discovery and exploration, and his creativity doesn't stop there.

This is where you come in – as someone that James can share his talents with! Whether it's working with his Legos, helping him reach that next branch in a tree, or being his partner as he challenges you in video games, James is waiting for you. This bright boy with a passion for working with his hands and being outdoors wants a forever family to share experiences. Maybe his next major discovery won't be an object buried in the dirt but will be the love found in your home.



Orchard's Children's Services Case Worker:

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Brendan

Photographed by Ara Howrani

Road trip anyone? If you are looking to take the “road less traveled,” there is no better companion than Brendan. This budding 13-year-old car enthusiast is ready to be in the passenger seat as he explores the joy of a forever family. He is adventurous in music, sports and foods he loves! Whether as your co-pilot on a family trip or a bike ride to the ice cream shop, Brendan is your guy!

Brendan’s heart is as big as his smile. Brendan is full of surprises as his active exterior is complimented by his love of nature. Protecting the world, people and animals defines Brendan. This future scientist loves going to the zoo and discovering all there is to learn about spiders, snakes, and reptiles. Enjoying nature alongside a family would only make the road trip more memorable! Do you have the map to his heart?



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Ashley

*Photographed by Linda Shinkle Rodney & Theodore M. Shinkle,
Shinkle Fine Art*

Passionate, outgoing, active. When you first meet this amazing young lady, you know that you have met someone special. As a genuinely creative teenager, Ashley's personal expression is a tapestry woven from her joy for singing, dancing, and drawing. Her strength of character allows her to advocate not just for herself but also for those she loves, whether they walk on two feet or four! This future horse trainer would love to have a family that would nurture and support her hopes and dreams.

After you meet 16-year-old Ashley, the twinkle in her eye and her captivating smile are windows into her beautiful soul. You will want to be a part of the journey of Ashley's life as she continues to discover the wondrous possibilities that await her! She wants to go to college, not only to open doors but to blow them off their hinges as she uses the strength she has gained from her life experiences in order to accomplish more than she has imagined!



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Destiny

*Photographed by Lisa Spindler ©2016
Spindler Project*

Destiny's heart is set on finding her forever family - on finding you. Imagine for a moment your impact on her life as you share how proud you are as she continues to excel academically, how you support her passion for music and dance, and how you see her gracefully bring a joyful ease to everyone fortunate enough to meet her. Though truly remarkable, Destiny is like every other child as she enjoys playing with her American Girl doll, making a mountain out of mac and cheese, and laughing along to a nicely executed knock-knock joke.

Watch out world because Destiny has big plans for her future! Her lofty goals include becoming a pediatrician which is not surprising given her compassion and sense of empathy. Still, above all else, Destiny wants a forever family to call her own. "I am a funny girl," she says, "and I want a family to love and for them to love me back. I also want a family that will always be there for me in life."



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Photographed by Heather Saunders

Sugar and spice, and everything nice - THAT'S what Parris is made of! Bonjour! This sweet and spunky 11-year-old "girly-girl" has to be seen to be believed. This creative artist sees a world of rainbows. Her passion for artistic projects and activities are laying the foundation for her ultimate goal of becoming the world's best fashion designer! Her "passion for fashion" burns brightly with the dream of someday visiting Paris, France to experience firsthand this city of culture. She dreams of understanding the people, the cuisine, the artistry, the clothing, and how people live in other parts of the world. Parris would also like to have new experiences with her forever family.

Parris is not one to stay still. She is an active young lady who finds joy in her soccer, volleyball, and Zumba Classes! She blazes her path with her joy and her passion. She also confidently believes she has so much to offer a special family. Parris lives her life knowing that when you have the right family, life can be brilliant! Is she the "brilliant light" you are looking for?



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Photographed by Eric Perry

Although he would change his name to James Tiberius Kirk, honoring his love for Star Trek, the name Phoenix seems to be much more appropriate for this 15-year-old. When you look into Phoenix's eyes, you can see the childlike nature of his personality while at the same time appreciating his destiny of becoming a fine young man. This uniquely remarkable teenager holds true to his name. You can be part of his transition as he rises to new heights in your family! His soft spoken persona interestingly juxtaposes just how inventive and imaginative this cool kid is! His strong passion for reading crosses between historical and mystical worlds. His creativity is a window into his beautiful soul.

Just like many teenagers, Phoenix dreams of going shopping with you. Simply having something that was specially bought for him would bring a light to his eyes! Like an exciting adventure into the unknown of space, he dreams of the large and small adventures that would come from calling you his family. Having a simple family meal, sharing stories of the day, knowing he has you to say "good night" are all small miracles he wants. Wouldn't you? Yes, it may be unknown, but Phoenix is grateful for the future. He knows you are out there and can't wait to meet you!



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Draven

Photographed by John Osler

Draven is an 11-year-old who is looking for his forever family. He would love the opportunity to experience family things like dinner around the table or playing catch in the backyard. Draven is one of the friendliest kids you will meet, and his smile will melt your heart.

It doesn't matter if the Red Wings are scoring a goal or not, Draven was born to be a Red Wings Fan! His dream is to have a family to cheer with and be his #1 fan. Draven would like to live in an area that would allow him the opportunity to play recreational sports with other kids.

His kindness and caring personality set Draven apart. Unlike so many other youths his age, Draven likes to help out around the house with chores and yard work! Draven responds well to structure and praise, ingredients that he's looking for in a supportive and positive family.

Draven's perfect day would be relaxing with his forever family on the water fishing; catching fish would be a plus! Creating cherished memories to look back on is one of his dreams where you can play a part. Can you help Draven catch his forever family?



Orchards Children's Services Case Worker:

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Photographed by Austin Santangelo

“Star struck” describes how you feel when you meet this incredible 15-year-old young man! He aspires to study astronomy in college and dreams of discovering the unknown in the heavens above. Decota also dreams of discovering the joy of a family to love. Decota is a busy guy as an avid sports lover! Between playing on his football team and rolling strikes for his bowling team, he loves being active and part of the game, not just cheering from the sidelines. He also loves all things about horse, whether it’s horsepower on four legs or four wheels. Decota participates in 4-H to show his horse while hoping one day to feel the horses under the hood of a green Camaro.

Not afraid of hard work, this young man plans to work and earn money while someday getting a higher education. Decota believes all things are possible! He loves the TV show “Chasing Bigfoot” and other television shows that challenge what is known. This special young man yearns for simple experiences such as camping with a family or having a meal around a dinner table. A family trip is high on his list of activities, and he has a strong interest to drive through “tornado alley” to meet people who have struggled and beat the odds. Decota, the dreamer, is on a journey of discovery for all aspects of his life! Would you like to be a part of his journey?



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Eddie

Photographed by Rashaun Rucker

Do you remember this age? When the world was full of opportunities and all things were possible?

Meet Eddie. THIS is the face of youthful exuberance.

Let him show you his free throw form that he dreams will get him into the NBA. "I want to play for the Detroit Pistons, but any other team would be okay," he says. This happy, polite 14-year-old leads with his infectious smile - a smile that can warm the air on the coldest of days. Though he lives by the motto that if you are going to dream, dream BIG, Eddie is grateful for the little things that people do for him, especially when those things involve milk shakes and french fries. Remember those days?

Whatever path this talented young athlete ultimately finds himself on, the travel will be much sweeter and more meaningful if he can share it with you, his forever family. All Eddie wants is his own personal cheering section. You can cheer for him at his games, for his studies, and as he pursues his life's dreams. You can be the family to encourage this superstar!



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The Brown Family - Forever Family

Photographed by John and Jim Carlson, Carlson Productions

It was as if God had a plan for us when Shirley, age three, and Tim, age two, arrived the day after Christmas 13 years ago. My wife and I had been told that we would not be able to have children of our own. The children's mother gave the police our name and phone number and said, "I hope Tim and Mia Brown will take my kids." The mother was a distant, non-blood relative. We took the children in and began the process to get our home licensed for foster care. What a day! Overnight, life had changed. Even though we did not have nine months to get ready like most new parents, everything fell into place, and with the help of family and friends, we made our new family fit together as though it was planned.

Over the years, they have brought much joy and tears, just like any other family. The first time Shirley met Santa, being protective of her little brother, she told Santa he had better have a toy for her brother. She was mad that it took him so long to find them. Today they are fifteen and sixteen respectively, and we could not imagine life without them. Shirley plays seven musical instruments and sings like a star! Tim is a funny, bright, straight-A student, and is a wizard at solving math problems.

People have expressed to us that what we did, saving these children, was a wonderful thing to do. In reality, we needed them as much as they needed us. Shirley and Tim continue to fill our lives with joy and love.

-Tim & Mia Brown

"We couldn't have done this without the support and love from Orchards."

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Can You Give a Child a Home?

All children need love, guidance, and a sense of belonging that only a family can provide.

The children featured in the exhibit of **Art&Soul of Oakland County** are only a small number of the children in Oakland County who are in need of permanent homes. There are approximately **13,000** children in foster care across the state at any given time. Currently there are **806** children in Michigan available for adoption. The children are generally between the ages of **5 - 17** and may have emotional, intellectual, and/or physical disabilities. Although many have challenges, all have strengths and talents. Nearly all these children have suffered abuse or neglect. Some of these children have been waiting several years. All of the children are resilient and courageous.

Who can adopt?

- Must be 18 years of age - married or single.
- Must have sufficient income - you can own or rent your home.
- Must provide a child with love and stability.
- You do not have to have children of your own.
- Must participate in an orientation and training to begin the adoptive process.

What kind of income must an adoptive parent have?

- There is no income requirement for adoptive parents.
- Most adoptive parents receive financial assistance that is not considered income - eligibility is determined by the State of Michigan on a case-by-case basis.
- In many cases, adopted children are also eligible for continued Medicaid after their adoption.

What is a homestudy?

- A homestudy can best be thought of as a mutual learning process. Through a series of group and individual meetings, you will learn more about the kind of child you might best parent and the adoption agency will learn more about you and your lifestyle.
- In addition, there are screening and reference requirements.

How long will the adoption process take?

- When you contact an agency, you will be assigned a caseworker who will work with you through the homestudy process.
- Once you start the homestudy, it may take four to six months to complete.
- The length of time to be matched with a child may depend on the age of a child you are willing to consider.
- The greatest need is for families for older children and sibling groups.

Is there a fee involved?

- Minimal fees are associated with adoption through foster care.
- Costs may include court filing fees and medical and legal documentation necessary to complete the adoption.

How You Can Help

Adoption may not be right for every family,
but there are many other ways you can help a child.

Become a Foster Parent

- A foster parent provides a temporary, loving home for a child(ren) in state care. The foster child(ren) may eventually be reunited with their birthparents or be placed with a family that will adopt them.
- 80% of adoptions through state care are by foster parents.
- To find out more about becoming a foster parent, call **248.258.1278**.

Hold a fund-raiser to benefit waiting children

- Get together with friends, an organization, or a place of worship and hold a holiday drive, a yard sale or a car wash.
- You can also come up with your own resourceful way to help children.

Other Ways to Donate

- Some people choose to make a financial donation of varying amounts.
- Others remember Orchards Children's Services in estate planning, planned giving or as a remembrance donation for a special occasion.
- Donation of a service or resource is also greatly appreciated.
- Maybe you own a salon and could help make a child feel special with a new haircut or manicure.
- Perhaps you can donate a computer that you are not using to a child who is without one.
- If we think about it, we can all make a difference!

Share your talent with a child!

- There are children in state care with many talents but without any access to develop them.
- Teach an art project, give music lessons, teach computer skills or tutor a waiting child in math or reading.
- Whatever your skills or talents, there is a waiting child who can benefit from them.
- Orchards Children's Services offers a variety of programs to children that can make use of your special skills. Please call **248.258.0440** to find out how you can help.

Volunteer at Orchards Children's Services

- Volunteers are essential to our agency. Orchards can always use volunteers. To find out more about volunteer opportunities, call **248. 258.0440**.

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Thank You *to Our Sponsors*



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