



# **MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY**

**Giving thanks for families**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2013**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Michigan Adoption Day 2013 to be held Tuesday, November 26 State's celebration of adoptive families now in 11th year, includes 30 counties**

LANSING, MI, November 19, 2013 – Courtrooms don't usually feature laughing children, beaming parents, Teddy bears, or balloons. But on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, happy families will be seen celebrating in many Michigan courtrooms, along with judges, court staff, and social workers.

In what is now a holiday tradition for many Michigan family courts, Michigan Adoption Day will be celebrated on November 26. The event is held on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving each year, highlighting the importance of adoption and the needs of children in foster care.

Thirty Michigan counties will participate, finalizing the adoptions of about 80 children. While many courts observe Michigan Adoption Day by finalizing adoptions, others will hold informational events to reach potential adoptive parents. Michigan Adoption Day is co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Human Services, and the Child Welfare Services division of the State Court Administrative Office.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. will join judges Gregory P. Iddings from Lenawee and Dorene S. Allen from Midland in finalizing adoptions in the Supreme Court courtroom in the Hall of Justice in Lansing. The ceremony, which begins at 10 a.m., will include

the presentation of the Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award. Allen is this year's recipient of the award, which recognizes outstanding service to Michigan children and families.

Young said that Michigan Adoption Day provides a valuable window into the adoption process. "Adoption finalization hearings are usually private," the chief justice explained. "But on Adoption Day, the participating courts open these hearings to the public. We are allowed to witness the joy of the adoptive families, and to hear their stories. We hope the experience inspires others to consider adoption and will call attention to the needs of the young people who remain in foster care."

"Every child deserves a safe, loving and stable home," former justice and current DHS Director Maura D. Corrigan said. "Our department has undertaken significant reforms, doing our part to make that happen. Because of our efforts and those of our partners, we finalized 88 percent of the adoptions for eligible children in Michigan last year. It's the highest rate in nearly 20 years, helping more children leave Michigan's foster care system for permanent homes."

Anyone interested in adopting a child may contact MARE at P.O. Box 980789, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. MARE can also be reached Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. at (800) 589-6273 (in Michigan), via fax at (734) 528-1695, or through the MARE web site at <http://www.mare.org/>.

For more information about Michigan Adoption Day, including local events, see <http://courts.mi.gov/Courts/MichiganSupremeCourt/PublicInfoOffice/PublicOutreach/Pages/Michigan-Adoption-Day.aspx>.

### **Michigan Adoption Fast Facts**

- As of September 30, 13,402 children were in Michigan's foster care system. The vast majority are victims of abuse and neglect.
- There are about 2,700 children in Michigan who have the goal of adoption. The courts and DHS work to find adoptive parents for these children.
- About 2,300 children were adopted in Michigan in FY 2013 through DHS or private adoption agencies. Most were adopted by their foster parents or relatives.
- Many children who are available for adoption qualify for adoption assistance. About 27,000 adopted children receive ongoing support subsidies.