

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

contact: Marcia McBrien | (517) 373-0129

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY IS TODAY; 9TH ANNUAL EVENT CELEBRATES ADOPTIVE FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Michigan Supreme Court to host adoption hearings; Governor to sign “fostering connections” legislation

LANSING, MI, November 22, 2011 – Michigan will celebrate adoptive families and efforts to place children in adoptive homes today at the ninth annual Michigan Adoption Day. Thirty counties will finalize a total of about 145 adoptions today.

The event, which is poised to be the nation’s largest Adoption Day event, is co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Human Services, and the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange.

Along with special celebrations on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, the Michigan Supreme Court has issued a resolution declaring that November 22 as Michigan Adoption Day, and Governor Rick Snyder has proclaimed November to be Michigan Adoption Month.

Local courts, DHS county offices and private adoption agencies from across Michigan are collaborating on events that will include finalizing adoptions and parties for adoptive families. Some counties will hold informational open houses with speakers and information about the adoption process. Adoptions for Ingham and Ionia County families will be held in the Michigan Supreme Court courtroom in the Michigan Hall of Justice; Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. will preside with Ingham County Circuit Judge Janelle Lawless and Ionia County Probate Court Judge Robert Sykes, Jr.

The chief justice said that the day should also serve as a reminder of the many other children who still need permanent homes.

“For their sakes, we need more Adoption Days,” Young said. “We hope this event will inspire many good candidates to serve as adoptive and foster parents.”

At a special program at the Michigan Hall of Justice today, Snyder will sign legislation allowing youth in foster care to voluntarily continue receiving services, such as oversight by a foster care worker, until age 21. The Supreme Court and DHS will also present a first-time joint award to Daniel J. Wright of Grand Ledge, former director of the State Court Administrative Office’s Child Welfare Services Division. This program will be carried live online at <http://www.webcast.you-niversity.com/youtools/companies/default.asp?affiliateId=43>; use passcode 1112.

While DHS and state courts strive to reunite children with their birth parents, doing so is not always in the child's best interest. Courts may terminate parental rights in cases of child abuse and neglect. There are about 2,900 children in Michigan whose birth parents' rights have been terminated who have a goal of adoption. In 2011, about 2,400 children have been adopted in Michigan as of September 30.

Anyone interested in adopting a child may contact MARE at (800) 589-6273 or visit the web site at <http://www.mare.org>. For more information about adoption, go to www.michigan.gov/dhs. For more information about Michigan Adoption Day, see <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/supremecourt/Press/MichiganAdoptionDayIndex.htm>.

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