

In this issue:

Blog.....2,3
Upcoming Events.....4,5
Trainings.....6
Neighbors Fostering
Neighbors.....7
Forever Homes.....8
Anniversaries9

Foster parent shout-out



~ Danisha and Laval Jones

Mrs. Danisha and Mr. Laval Jones have been licensed foster parents with Children's Wisconsin since September of 2021. The Jones' first placement was a sibling set through another agency, and they opened their home to assist until a relative placement could be found for the siblings. During this time, the Joneses did an excellent job communicating and keeping the team from both agencies updated on the siblings' needs. After the siblings moved in with a relative, they accepted placement of twins and have exemplified partnership parenting by keeping the birth parents involved in everything — medical appointments, dental appointments, daycare updates, weekly emails/ phone calls, sibling contacts, difficult behaviors and being a listening ear. After a few months of having the twins, they also took placement of the twins' sister and advocated for all of the children's best interests.

The Joneses have provided respite care for another set of siblings, accepted placement of another child for two months and currently are fostering a non-English speaking child. They continue to be great foster parents and they are greatly appreciated for their hard work and dedication. The Jones' have big hearts and are always willing to help any way they can!

Don't Let the Lessons of Covid-19 go to waste



It was totally unexpected. In a sudden moment, everything in life changed. Places of comfort were immediately closed off. Being with loved ones who provide support and affection was no longer possible, and won't be for an indefinite period of time. And any connection between this new, isolated world and the old one will now be facilitated by an imperfect system of experts doing their best to navigate uncharted waters, changing rules and the constant anxiety that comes from the unknown.

No, this is not a blog post about COVID-19. It's about foster care and what happens to hundreds of children and their families every single day. A life-threatening event occurs, which results in the experience described above — an experience now all too familiar to many more of us as we, too, have our entire lives uprooted for our own safety.

I was talking with a friend when this health crisis began, lamenting the many challenges we are now facing. When I was finished complaining (which went on far longer than I'm proud of, by the way), he smiled and said, "You have been prepared for this."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You have been a foster parent for the last five years. You just finalized the adoption of your daughter after almost three years of indescribable stress and heart-break over the unknown. You know what it is like to live in this unpredictable world. As much as you might not like it, you've been here before."

He was right. My question is, what can we do with this new experience we share? Our foster care system will undoubtedly be overwhelmed in the coming months by incoming cases of abuse and neglect, just one of the many tragic consequences of this global crisis. This will require more families than ever before to step up and willingly enter the unexpected. Just like we need our nurses, grocery workers and other essential personnel in this present moment. Foster parents will be essential in the season to come.

Will you get hurt? Maybe. That is why we are thankful for those today who go to work knowing they put themselves in harm's way so that others might stay safe. Are you willing to do that for a child? A parent? A family? Then let the lessons you are learning today be used to help the others tomorrow. Be a hero. Become a foster or adoptive parent.

TOM DE GROOT

Foster and Adoptive Parent

[Children's Wisconsin](#)

January Activity List

Check out some of the FREE activities going on in the Milwaukee area this month! Activities that require registration will be noted in the description.

3rd Annual MLK Day of Service

Jan 15, 10am-12pm

Bay Shore Lutheran Church (1200 E. Hampton Rd, Whitefish Bay WI)

Join our 3rd Annual MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 15th at Bay Shore Lutheran Church. Our day will formally begin at 10am in the Sanctuary for a brief prayer, hymn and some instructions for volunteers. Afterwards, volunteers can help assemble hygiene kits, write letters to veterans, or make Valentine's Day cards for seniors. That's right, we need volunteers to help us make this day a success!

<https://bayshorelutheran.org/get-involved/mlkdayofservice/>



Kids' Art Day & Community Free Day

Jan 15, 10am-2pm

Grohmann Museum (1000 N. Broadway, Milwaukee WI)

The Grohmann Museum will be open with free admission on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Children and their families are welcome to join us in the Lower Level (stART Lab) as part of our Kids' Art Day series. Guests can make collages inspired by Romare Bearden, draw with coloring pages, and participate in a collaborative writing project.

<https://www.msos.edu/campus-experience/event-calendar/details/kids-art-day/2024-01-15/>



Waukesha Janboree

Registration Required

Jan 19-28

Throughout Waukesha - see website for full schedule and list of locations

Join us for this annual winter celebration throughout the city of Waukesha! Check the website for information on all of our family, children (both young and teen), and adult events. All activities are free unless noted, with registration required for some events. Come for the fireworks, laser light show, snow sculpting, toboggan slide, ice skating, Glow Walk, and so much more.

<https://janboree.org/2143/Events>



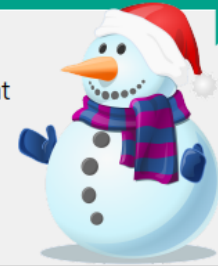
Winterfest 2024

Jan 21, 10am-2pm

Boerner Botanical Gardens (9400 Boerner Dr, Hales Corners WI)

Cure your winter cabin fever. Enjoy indoor activities, guided winter walks and more. Walks begin at 11:00 and 12:30 and last approximately 45 minutes.

<https://boernerbotanicalgardens.org/event/winterfest-2024/>



12th Annual Winter Carnival

Jan 27, 10am-4pm

Lynden Sculpture Garden (2145 W. Brown Deer Rd, Milwaukee WI)

Lynden welcomes winter with a day of outdoor art-making, scavenger hunts, tree-walks, workshops, and whatever other winter activities--ice skating, painting the pond, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing--weather permitting. Our highly participatory, artist-driven carnival offers something for everybody.

<https://www.lydensculpturegarden.org/carnival>



Festival City Symphony Saturday Classics

Jan 27, 2-3:30pm

Bradley Symphony Center (212 W. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee WI)

Festival City Symphony's Saturday Classics concert series welcomes newcomers and established symphony enthusiasts alike, making high-quality classical music accessible to all. Admission to Saturday Classics concerts is FREE with suggested donation. January's theme will be A Classical Affair to Remember. Tickets can be reserved on MSO's website.



<https://www.mso.org/concerts/events/festival-city-bsc/>



Gaming at Good Hope

Jan 29, 4-6pm

Good Hope Library in the Teen Zone (7715 Good Hope Rd, Milwaukee WI)

Whether you're looking to bust a move with Just Dance, build a new world with Minecraft, or come in first in Mario Kart, Gaming at Good Hope won't disappoint! Join us in the Teen Zone for an afternoon of snacks and videogames.

<https://www.mpl.org/services/events/?eid=138418>



Foster Parent Trainings



PARENTS NIGHT IN

8:00 - 9:30 PM

FREE ON ZOOM!



Coping with Frustration

1 Gives suggestions to handle tantrums and teach children to calm down.

TUESDAY Jan. 9th



Coping with Stress

2 Learn how to handle day-to-day stress so you can act consistently and calmly with your children.

TUESDAY Feb. 27



Behavior at School

3 Learn how to positively handle a variety of problems that can occur at your child's school.

TUESDAY Mar. 19

Contact Us

414-671-0566

www.theparentingnetwork.org/triple-p



Foster Support



Neighbors Fostering Neighbors

This monthly virtual support group is an opportunity for foster parents to come together, support, and learn from one another. Fostering has its ups and downs and it's imperative you know you're part of a community and not alone. So please join us to gain support for yourself or be a support to another foster parent. ***One (1) hour of ongoing training credit will be entered into your PDS account for each meet-up attended.***

Zoom meet-ups will be held the ***2nd Wednesday of each month from 7:30-8:30pm***. A calendar invite has been emailed to all Children's foster parents for the monthly meetings in 2023 – just click on the link in the invitation to join each month. You can also use the link here to join:

<https://chwi.zoom.us/j/98839627198?pwd=bWs0ZXJ4RDltM1MxNVowWjkRUNXQT09>

If you have any questions, email Andrea Leaman at aleaman@childrenswi.org.



Kids looking for their Forever Homes

MERSAYDES

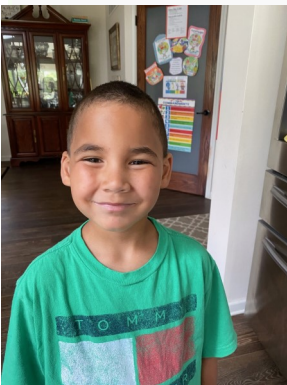


Mersaydes enjoys playing with makeup and dressing up and when she gets older she would love to have a pair of high heels, maybe a pink pair—one of her favorite colors. She also considers herself a tomboy as she enjoys getting into anything outside and playing sports! She likes to ride her bike, play basketball, go fishing, play with bugs, and spend time running around on the playground. Mersaydes is described as a helpful and polite child, **and** when her emotions are regulated and she feels safe and secure. Hugs, snacks, and going shopping can almost always make her feel better when she's having a bad day. Mersaydes thrives on routine, structure, and consistency.

Mersaydes longs for a home with a “no matter what” family who can give her a feeling of support and security. She feels anxious when she doesn't know what's coming next and not having to move again will bring her peace. In the past, she has struggled with transitions and it will take her a bit of time to become comfortable in her new surroundings. An understanding of trauma and an abundance of patience will be key to establishing a strong relationship with Mersaydes. It is imperative that she is in a home with a high level of structure, which includes set rules and logical consequences. Mersaydes deserves all the love, stability, and permanence that a “no matter what” family offers.

If you are interested in learning more about Mersaydes, please contact Caitlin Herrada at (262) 957-6946 or email her at cherrada@childrenswi.org

MICHAEL



Michael is a little boy looking for his forever. He enjoys being active with swimming, riding bikes, playing on the jungle gym at the park. He does well with other kids but at times does need a quiet place to relax and refocus. Michael is on the spectrum so he does sometimes struggle with social interactions. He does well in school he just needs extra support at home at times and a calm environment with routine.

Michael is looking for an adult or two to trust and love him. He would prefer an active household but with structure and support.

If you are interested in learning more about Michael, please contact Caitlin Herrada at (262) 957-6946 or email her at cherrada@childrenswi.org



DECEMBER and JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Thank you for your commitment and support to the children and families in our community!

One Year:

Megan Eichstaedt
Phyllis Copeland
Aisha Howard-Copeland
Tyisha Jones
Tarus Allen
Ryan and Kimberly Pieplow
Melissa and Mark Lang
Amanda and Joel Schomberg
Anitra Stampley
Kashayla Williams
Melinda Simon
Tameka Jones-Clay and William Clay
Alvaro Ramirez Reyes and Amanda Ramirez
Emily Heins
Roberta Bickham
Tina and Kevin Anderson
Selina Ross and Henry Knutson
Christopher Collingwood
Rachelle Gresser
Kealoha Hunt
Ana and Guillermo Ibarra
Juanita Ramos
Jennifer and Travis Morgan
Cheryl Behling
Melissa and Davis Anderson
Emily Junger
Ebonie Merriweather
Brad and Kristen Sleeth

Two Years:

Kenya Owens
Victoria and Jennifer Landherr
Hailee Revels
Elizabeth Uecker
Sabrina and Jaime Colon
Jessica and Dana Langill
Christine and Alan Glass
James Cartridge
Julia Richard and Annie Carrell
German Novelli and Lucia Segovia
Sabine and Ulyses Clark
Daniela Carmona Mejia
Cynthia and Joe Roberson
Kelsi and Jeremiah Barnes
Rachel Moore
Amy Motil and Odilon Nieto

Three Years:

Raejeena Moore
Kirsten and Corey Engdahl
Nick and Rachel Wiedenfeld
Jessica Radliff
Paul and Crystal Harding
Nicole Oechsner and David Bushey
Josiah Williams
Angie and Nick Maniaci
Stephen and Maren Hawkins

Four Years:

Christina and Reggie McDonald
Chakeila Cash
Jenna Lassila and Scott Johnson
Melissa Hass
Linda and Jeremy Walton
Iesha and Kevin Young

Five Years:

Linda Morrison
Cynthia and Nicholas Whipple
Naiomi Lundman

Six Years:

Jennie and Jayme Longfellow
Kelly Moore Brands and Peter Brands

Seven Years:

Robin and Eric Williams

Eight Years:

Marlee and Doug Evans
Ti-Mara Minefee Tribble and Aubrey Tribble
Kristine and Ty Roznowski

Eighteen Years:

Linda Baham



If you do not want to be included in this monthly recognition, please contact Gwen Doyle at gdoyle@childrenswi.org to opt out.

Foster Family Newsflash

A FOSTER PARENT NEWSLETTER

