

Foster children hope to meet forever families at Bloomfield Hills event



Families take part in last year's Forever Home Run 5K. Photo from Facebook

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On Oct. 14, 15 kids who want a family hope that some of the people attending the Forever Home Run will be interested in bringing them home.

The family meet-and-greet is new this year to the third annual Forever Home Run. With approximately 3,000 children in Michigan's foster care system awaiting adoptive families, the Forever Home Run was created in 2014 as an opportunity to build awareness of the need for kids in foster care to find adoptive homes, especially older children, sibling groups and medically-fragile youth, said Lena Wilson, executive director of Adoption for Samaritas, which oversees Lutheran Adoption Service.

The event raises nearly \$40,000 every year with the proceeds going to support an intensive therapy program, adoptive parent support group and trauma-training for all adoptive parents. Last year, the event drew nearly 125 registered runners.

Most children looking for Forever Families have suffered neglect, abuse or abandonment. Statistically, those most in need of adoptive parents are children 9 and older and sibling groups of three or more. Others have medical and emotional impairments, learning disabilities or developmental delays. Often many of these conditions improve when they are placed with a supportive Forever Family.

After adoption, Samaritas continues to provide post-adoption support to adoptive families and children with therapy, coaching and parental guidance, support groups, advocacy and chaplaincy services. When requested, Samaritas can also help with Search and Reunion Services for adoptive children in order to provide them with

Forever Home Run will take place at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 5631 North Adams Road, Bloomfield Hills. The event will also feature an official course 5K, a 1K dress-up dash for kids in Halloween-inspired costumes, face-painting, a bounce house, and a DJ. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m., with the 5K starting at 9 a.m. and awards ceremony by 10:15 a.m. For more information, visit www.foreverhomerun.com.

“The Forever Home Run is a prime example of our deep ties to the faith community statewide,” said Sam Beals, Samaritas CEO. “This event would not happen without the generous and visionary support of Beautiful Savior and its congregants. Community coming together to promote loving families and support for all children is the embodiment of Samaritas’ mission – ‘serving people as an expression of the love of Christ.’”

–Submitted by Lynne Golodner