

ON A MISSION: AN UPDATE FOR YWCA SUPPORTERS



Greetings and Gratitude

Despite the many challenges and ups and downs of this year, our community has continued to come through for us and for the women and families that we serve.

At the end of October, we premiered our first ever *virtual* Women's Justice Benefit 'Lunch-In.' We rely on this annual fundraiser to generate critical funding for all of our programs. While there was much to learn with the new platform, I am happy to share that it was a success. We had 400 people register to watch the program and received close to \$137,000 in donations, sponsorships and pledges.

The funds raised from this event will help provide emergency housing and support for homeless families and domestic violence survivors. The funding will also go toward programming for GUTS! youth leadership and our racial justice initiative. Thank you so much to everyone who watched, donated and shared this event-- and for your continued support of all people in this community.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Weese".

Cindy Weese
Executive Director

Who We Are



Jessica Korth, Housing Case Manager

Jessica is a Jesuit Volunteer/AmeriCorps Member from Kansas City, Missouri. She recently graduated from Loyola University Chicago with a degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology and she was drawn to the YWCA for its justice-focused mission. As a case manager for the Ada's Place Housing programs, she spends her day helping clients with applications, connecting families to resources in the community, and advocating for participants to get into rental units. She spends her free time watching *Gilmore Girls*, cross stitching and looking for the *Yellowstone* cowboys.

Caitlin Acevedo, Housing Case Manager

Caitlin is a Justice for Montanans AmeriCorps member serving as a case manager for the Ada's Place housing program. She is originally from Chicago and graduated from the University of

Dayton in 2019 with a degree in Political Science and Communications. This is Caitlin's second year with Justice for Montanans; last year, she served at the Great Falls Self-Help Law Center, assisting Montanans with their civil legal issues. When Caitlin heard of the new AmeriCorps position at the YWCA for the 2020-2021 service year, she was motivated by the YWCA's mission and wanted to be a part of such an impactful organization for her second service term. She loves taking her housemate's dog on hikes, traveling to new places (pre-covid), and drinking multiple cups of coffee a day!



Program Updates

The Meadowlark



We are thrilled and grateful to announce that the See Them Home capital campaign to build The Meadowlark has succeeded in reaching its \$8 million goal. With the support of over 1,000 donors, together we have raised \$8,190,340. Wow!

The opening of The Meadowlark will allow us to serve twice as many families and provide more comprehensive support. We expect construction to be completed in March, and that the first families will move into the facility in April.

If you drive by the The Meadowlark on West Third Street, you will see that construction is moving right along! They have begun installing siding on the outside of the building (check out that "YWCA orange" in the center!). Inside, dry wall has been installed on the third floor rooms.

Learn more about the project and see more construction progress at [SeeThemHome.org](https://www.see-their-home.org).



Planet Kids Moves to New Location

The Planet Kids supervised visitation program, which had been located inside the YWCA main office building, moved to a new location in the Franklin to Fort neighborhood. Check out the fun and inviting layout of the new space below!

Planet Kids provides safe, supervised visits for children of all ages who have been impacted by domestic violence and their non-residential parents. During visits, children and their parents have the opportunity to play with a variety of toys and games, enjoy time outside, or have a meal together. The goal of the program, which is currently the only one of its kind in Missoula, is to promote positive interactions between children and parents while also protecting the safety of domestic violence survivors and their families.

[Learn more about Planet Kids.](#)



Update from our Pathways Shelter

There are currently six adults and six children residing at our Pathways domestic violence shelter. Many families are navigating remote/hybrid learning with their school-aged children. All the kids at shelter now have access to their own devices to complete school work.

Here is a recent success story from a participant: "Nina" came to shelter just two days after she gave birth with no certain plans for her future. In 60 days, Nina was able to rest and heal from childbirth, adjust to motherhood, and set goals for herself and her family. Nina went to counseling, attended skill building classes, worked with the proper channels to create co-parenting plans with the baby's father, all the while ensuring that she and her baby were safe. There were days that Nina felt defeated and overwhelmed, but she took the time she needed to rest and recharge. While in shelter, Nina got connected with the YWCA housing team, and worked with them to find her own place to rent. Nina and her baby are now settled and safe in their new home.



GUTS! Virtual Groups

GUTS! has just a few weeks left in the fall semester! The virtual program has received great feedback from participants, parents and volunteers alike.

This year, GUTS implemented new activities around the importance of voting and cultural appropriation with regards to Halloween costumes.

GUTS! groups are also working on their community action projects to wrap up the semester. One group is crafting flowers that can be hung in the window with notes of positivity clipped to them!

Get Involved

Donate Holiday Gifts for Families

This holiday season there will be dozens of families staying in our shelter and emergency housing motel rooms. We are currently collecting items for gift baskets, so that even amidst crisis, parents can provide a sense of normalcy and festivity for their children. The following items are needed:

Throw blankets
Family movies (DVDs)
Board/card games
Coffee mugs
Boxes of mini indoor holiday lights
Chocolates, cookies, snacks
Gloves, hats, scarves, face masks
Gift Cards: Walmart, Target, Visa/ Mastercard

Items can be dropped off at the YWCA office, 1130 W. Broadway. Questions? [Email Eileen](#) or call 543-6691.



Donate Other Items on Our Wish List

Our programs are in need of the following items, which are provided to families and individuals in crisis as they work to get back on their feet:

- Child-size pants
- Silverware, bowls and glasses
- Crockpot

Support the YWCA When You Shop Amazon

Did you know that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases to YWCA Missoula when you shop through Amazon Smile? Just choose YWCA Missoula as your charitable organization. Bookmark this link so you can support us every time you shop: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/81-0245851>.



Join us on Giving Tuesday

[Join YWCA Missoula for #GivingTuesday](#) on December 1st as we strive to raise \$5,000 to shelter homeless families this winter. Together we can provide emergency housing to families during the coldest months of the year.

Stay tuned and make sure to follow @ywcamissoula on social media for #GivingTuesday updates.

YWCA Missoula | (406) 543-6691 | www.ywcaofmissoula.org

Crisis line: (406) 542-1944 or (800) 483-7858

STAY CONNECTED

