

## ON A MISSION: AN UPDATE FOR YWCA SUPPORTERS



### Greetings and Gratitude

Last week, the Montana State Senate passed SB 240, a bill that would punish those who falsely report a crime. Ultimately, though, it harms survivors of domestic and sexual violence and detracts from holding perpetrators accountable for their actions.

The vast majority of sexual assaults go unreported to the police. Many survivors don't report their assaults because of fear of the criminal justice system or fear of retaliation from their abusers. SB 240 has the potential to heighten these concerns and further deter survivors from reporting.

Black, Indigenous, and other women of color experience the highest rates of violence, and they also face the greatest barriers to seeking help. While this bill has been touted by its sponsor, Rep. Theresa Manzella, as a way to "empower women," it will really have harmful consequences for women, especially BIPOC women. It perpetuates a myth that women lie about abuse to, as Manzella argued, "destroy the man's life and reputation." The bill is driven by—and drives—mistrust in women.

In the next week or two, SB 240 will move to the House Judiciary Committee. Please join us in taking action and help oppose this bill. [You can use this form](#) to send a message to the House Judiciary Committee, **against SB 240**.

Survivors deserve to be heard and believed. Let's elevate their voices, not silence them.

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

Cindy Weese  
Executive Director

### Program Updates

#### The Meadowlark



After many years of planning and hard work to build The Meadowlark, we are finally in the home stretch!

Construction should be complete in about six weeks, and we'll be moving the first families into the building in May.

Some exciting progress can be seen on main lobby of The Meadowlark (that's the reception desk being built). The lobby is a large, welcoming space and the building's primary entrance, facing Third Street.

Stay tuned for more information about volunteer opportunities and donation needs in the coming months! We are not currently able to accept in-kind donations for The Meadowlark, as we are preparing for our move and have limited storage space.

## Rapid Re-housing Program Helps Families Find Permanent Homes

Rapid Re-Housing provides rent assistance and case management to families experiencing homelessness. There are currently 12 families in the program housed with various property management companies and private landlords. Our staff are also working with nearly 30 families on housing search. Most families in the program lack income, credit or rental history, so it is a long process to find housing. Recently, four families were housed in a two-week span, which is quite an achievement in the current rental market (about a 1% vacancy rate in Missoula).

[Learn more about our housing programs here](#)

## Sexual Assault Support Group

Beginning in March (exact dates still TBD), we will hold a 10-week support group for survivors of sexual violence. A support group can provide survivors with a safe environment to share strengths and struggles, and to work toward healing and growth. The group is open to all genders and offered free of charge.

To learn more or register, [email Carol](#) or call 406-543-6691.

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## Who We Are

### Susan Glueckert, Children's Program Coordinator



Susan Glueckert is the new coordinator of the Pathways Children's Program, which provides trauma-informed interventions and support to children who have witnessed violence in their homes. Susan has 27 years of experience in special education and working with at-risk students, and she is committed to helping young people live their best lives. In her free time, Susan likes to garden, sew, hike and practice yoga.

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## Get Involved

### Donate 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:

- Toilet paper & paper towels
- Alarm clocks
- Lysol/ disinfectant spray
- Anti-bacterial wipes
- Diapers (size 4-6)
- Blankets and bed sheets
- Pillows

- Glue sticks

[Find the full wish list here](#)

## Become an Americorps VISTA Member with Youth Programs

YWCA Missoula will be hosting two Americorps VISTA members for Summer 2021 dedicated to assisting with youth programming. These positions will help run three week-long day camps for girls and gender-diverse youth through the GUTS! Program and will also help plan and implement programming for youth residing in The Meadowlark. Both programs will implement empowerment-based leadership curriculum dedicated to growing the next generation of Missoula's youth and will be supported by YWCA staff.

[See job details and application instructions](#) (scroll down to 'Employment' section on the page).

## Employment Opportunities

Join our team! We're currently hiring for the following positions:

- Overnight Pathways shelter staff (part time and full time)
- Planet Kids visit monitor (part time)
- Secret Seconds store clerk (part time)

[See job descriptions and application instructions](#) (scroll down to 'Employment' section on page)

## Become a Volunteer Housing Advocate

Missoula Interfaith Collaborative (MIC), our operating partner in The Meadowlark's Family Housing Center, is looking for volunteer housing advocates. Advocates will support families who are experiencing homelessness as they navigate a highly competitive housing market that can pose many barriers. This may include assisting with housing search, accompanying families to meet with landlords, and providing friendship and a listening ear.

There are two upcoming volunteer orientations. Click a date below to register:

[March 15, 2021 05:30 PM](#)

[March 18, 2021 12:00 PM](#)

YWCA Missoula | (406) 543-6691 | [www.ywcaofmissoula.org](http://www.ywcaofmissoula.org)

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

STAY CONNECTED

