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## A Letter from Jen Euell, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Thanks to the generous Missoula community, the YWCA Meadowlark is a place of promise and opportunity. It is the home of second chances. And, for many, a place of hope, connection and possibility.

Tonight, 65 children are staying with us in our shelters at The Meadowlark. Each one of them carries a story of upheaval—of leaving behind what was unsafe, of uncertainty about what comes next. But here, in the middle of all that change, we work hard to offer something essential: stability and hope for a brighter future.

For kids experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence, stability looks like a predictable routine, basic needs being met, caring adults who show up every day, and a chance to play, learn, and just be a kid again.

The other day, one of our staff shared a moment experienced here in the Meadowlark courtyard: a young boy, wobbly and determined, learning to ride a bike. He was surrounded by cheers—from his mom, our advocates, and other kids from shelter. For just a few minutes, he wasn't "a kid in shelter." *He was simply a kid*, gaining confidence with each push of the pedals.

Moments like this are made possible by your support. As we gear up for summer programming at The Meadowlark, our Youth Services team is planning therapeutic groups, play-based learning, and outdoor activities that give children structure, joy, and healing.

Although Missoula Gives has ended, our youth services fundraiser continues through the end of May—and **every donation will be matched up to \$10,000**. That means your gift goes twice as far to support kids — kids who deserve to feel safe, supported, and celebrated.

Thank you for being part of this community. Thank you for showing up for our kids.

In Possibility,  
Jen

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## New & Noteworthy

### Thank You for Making Missoula Gives a Success!

With your support, **we raised \$22,785 from 102 gifts** to support kids staying at YWCA Missoula's Meadowlark shelters. Your generosity helps provide safety, healing, and connection for children recovering from trauma. Thanks to everyone who made a donation and to the

Missoula PaddleHeads for their \$10,000 matching gift.

And we're not stopping there! We've received a new \$10,000 matching gift, and we're continuing to fundraise through May 31. That means your donation will still be doubled. [Learn more and give here.](#)

## YWCA Book Club Launches Next Month

Join us for the launch of YWCA Missoula's new monthly book club, focused on racial and social justice themes that align with our mission. We'll meet via Zoom on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 6–7 p.m. (No meeting in August).

Our first gathering is **Wednesday, June 25**, and we'll be discussing *Cousins: Connected Through Slavery* by Betty Kilby Baldwin and Phoebe Kilby—a powerful memoir about race, family, and reconciliation. All are welcome!

[Click here to register](#) and receive the Zoom link. Questions? [Email Chris Young-Greer.](#)

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## Staff Spotlight

### Danni Johnston, Planet Kids Program Manager

Danni brings a wealth of experience and compassion to her role as the new manager of YWCA Missoula's Planet Kids program. With a background as a Children's Case Manager and nearly eight years as a Victim/Witness Legal Assistant with the City Attorney's Office, she's well-versed in supporting youth and survivors through challenging circumstances. Her background in leadership and advocacy naturally supports the work she's doing now.

Passionate about the YWCA's mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote social justice, Danni is dedicated to creating safe, healing spaces where individuals can grow and thrive.

When she's not at work, you'll likely find her near the water with a good historical fiction novel, or coaching softball, crafting, or cooking

We're so lucky to have her on the team!



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## Program Updates

### GUTS! Summer Camp – A Few Spots Left!

Summer is almost here, and GUTS! Adventure Camps have a few spots still open! These confidence-building camps for girls and gender-diverse youth offer biking,

outdoor adventures, and hands-on learning at local organizations like Freecycle and Garden City Harvest.

[Learn more.](#)

Camps run Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM.

- June 23-27: Incoming 5th & 6th graders
- July 7-11: Incoming 5th & 6th graders (Overnight option Thursday-Friday!)
- July 21-25: Incoming 7th-9th graders (Overnight option Thursday-Friday!)
- August 4-8: Incoming 7th-9th graders



A sliding fee scale and scholarships are available—no one is turned away for financial reasons!

Spots are limited—[sign up today!](#)

Questions? Contact Mia at [mmckinney@ywcaofmissoula.org](mailto:mmckinney@ywcaofmissoula.org).



## Support YWCA Programs by Shopping and Donating at Secret Seconds!

Did you know that **shopping and donating at Secret Seconds Thrift Stores directly supports all of YWCA Missoula's programs**—including our domestic violence shelter, family housing center, and crisis services? With federal funding uncertain and operational costs on the rise, the stores are a more critical funding source than ever.

Every purchase and donation helps keep our services strong and accessible. So next time you're thrifting, choose Secret Seconds—and invite your friends and family to do the same!

Thank you for helping us build a safer, more just community—one donation, one purchase at a time. **Shop both store locations: 920 Kensington and 1136 W. Broadway.**



## Find Your "Y"

*Each month, YWCA Missoula highlights events, debunks myths, explores important topics, and celebrates diverse cultures and identities.*

## Spotlighting AAPI Women Who Inspire

May is Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month—a time to recognize and celebrate the cultures, histories, and contributions of AAPI communities. From groundbreaking science to art, sports, activism, and beyond, AAPI women have been leading, creating, and inspiring change across generations.

This month, we're spotlighting a few remarkable AAPI women:

**Dr. Jane Luu** is a Vietnamese-American astronomer whose co-discovery of the Kuiper Belt transformed our understanding of the solar system. Her groundbreaking work helped redefine what we know about planetary formation and earned her the Kavli Prize in Astrophysics.

**Chanel Miller** is a Chinese-American writer and artist whose memoir *Know My Name* reclaims her identity as the survivor in the landmark Stanford sexual assault case. Her powerful storytelling has helped shift national conversations around trauma, justice, and healing.

**Gitanjali Rao** is a young Indian-American scientist, inventor, and TIME's first-ever Kid of the Year. She's developed tools to tackle issues like contaminated drinking water, cyberbullying, and opioid addiction—proving that age is no barrier to impact.

**Junko Tabei** was a Japanese mountaineer and the first woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest. A pioneer in both sport and spirit, she later became the first woman to climb the highest peak on every continent, all while advocating for women's leadership in outdoor adventure.

These are just a few stories! We encourage you to learn more about the many AAPI women—past and present—whose courage, creativity, and leadership continue to shape our world.

## Planet Kids: Helping Families Stay Safe and Connected

For families impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, shared custody can be a source of fear and instability. Planet Kids provides a safe, child-friendly environment for supervised visitation and exchanges—helping ensure that children can maintain important relationships without putting survivors at further risk.

You don't need a court order to access Planet Kids. Services are available to families facing safety concerns like protection orders, abduction risks, long separations, or when no contact between parents is needed.

Planet Kids is always accepting applicants. [Learn more or refer a family.](#)

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## Get Involved

### Help Us Restock Essential Wish List Items

We're currently in need of **men's and children's hygiene items** (body wash, shampoo, deodorant) to support families staying at The Meadowlark.

If you're able to help, donations can be dropped off at The Meadowlark front desk or ordered through our [Amazon Wish List](#) for direct delivery. Your generosity ensures that every child and parent has the essentials they need.

Drop-off location: The Meadowlark, 1800 S 3rd St W.

Drop-off hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

[View Amazon Wish List](#)

Thank you for supporting families on their journey to safety and stability!



### Get a Family Housing Center License Plate

Make a difference in our community by purchasing a YWCA Missoula + MIC Family Housing Center license plate. With its simple, starry mountain design, the plate represents your commitment to investing in families and children and helps

fund essential services and support to unhoused families at The Meadowlark.

## Employment Opportunities

Join our team and make a difference in the community! We're currently hiring for the following positions:

- Planet Kids Visit Monitor
- Secret Seconds Store Clerk
- Volunteer Program Manager

[Learn more and apply](#)

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YWCA Missoula | 1800 S 3rd St W | Missoula, MT 59801 US

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