

September 2025



A Letter from Jen Euell, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As the days grow shorter and we settle into fall, I've been thinking about the many ways we show up for each other in community—whether it's helping a friend move, bringing a meal to a neighbor, or sitting with someone who's going through a hard time. At YWCA Missoula, we see that care and spirit every day in our shelter and programs, where staff, residents, and volunteers support one another through some of life's hardest moments.

My own journey with the YWCA began years ago as a volunteer in our domestic violence shelter. Through that experience, I learned first-hand how transformative it is to have someone simply show up, bear witness, and offer support. That experience shaped me, and it continues to remind me that each of us has something vital to give.

This fall, I invite you to consider how you might give back. One of the most impactful ways to get involved is by joining our **Volunteer Advocate Training**, a six-week immersive training program that prepares community members to answer crisis calls, provide support in our shelter, and stand alongside survivors as they rebuild their lives. Advocates not only offer comfort and encouragement to survivors—they also expand our staff's capacity to respond quickly, provide case management, and ensure that no one has to face crisis alone.

If advocacy work sounds like it may be beyond your current capacity, there are so many ways you can volunteer a small amount of time to make a big difference for some of our neighbors facing the most challenges.

When we come together, we create a stronger, more resilient Missoula. And often, we receive far more than we give. I hope you'll join us.

With gratitude,
Jen

P.S. Please join me in welcoming our new Volunteer Manager, **Tara Weaselhead-Running Crane**! We're so excited to have her on board to support and grow our incredible community of volunteers,

New & Noteworthy

Become a Volunteer Advocate – Training Starts Sept. 15

Are you looking for a meaningful way to give back to our community? YWCA Missoula's **free 6-week Volunteer Advocate Training** is your chance to stand alongside survivors of domestic and sexual violence during some of the hardest moments of their lives and really make a difference.

Volunteer Advocates are at the heart of our work—answering calls on the 24/7 crisis line, welcoming families into our shelter, and providing a compassionate presence at our walk-in counseling center. This training will give you the tools, confidence, and knowledge you need to support survivors with empathy and respect.

Training runs Monday and Wednesday evenings, Sept. 15–Oct. 27 (6–8 PM).

Sign up here!

Now Accepting Board Applications!

YWCA Missoula is recruiting up to five new members to join our Board of Directors starting in January 2026. For the first time, board service is open to people of all genders, and we're committed to building a board that reflects the diversity of our community.

If you have experience in fundraising, finance, or nonprofit leadership—or a deep commitment to our mission—we'd love to hear from you.

Learn more and apply here. *Applications due October 1.*

Staff Spotlight

Austyn Sellers, Receptionist

Austyn Sellers manages the front desk at YWCA Missoula, providing a calm, supportive presence for everyone who comes through our doors. With a background in sales, she brings strong customer service skills and a natural ability to assess people's needs, greeting each visitor with empathy and helping connect them to resources.

Austyn's work is also shaped by her own lived experience. Having faced homelessness and substance misuse, she understands the courage it takes to ask for help and sees firsthand how vital YWCA's programs are in preventing people from falling through the cracks.

Outside of work, Austyn enjoys yoga, going to the gym, watching movies, and spending time with her teenage daughter. We're grateful for the warmth, insight, and resilience she brings to our team every day!



Program Updates

Support Group for Survivors of Sexual Violence

Healing from sexual assault or an experience that didn't feel fully consensual can be difficult—but you don't have to go through it alone. YWCA Missoula is offering a **free, 10-week support**

group beginning October 2 for adults of all genders who have experienced sexual violence, coercion, or non-consensual encounters—whether recently or long ago.

This group provides a safe, supportive space to process your experiences, connect with others, and begin or continue your healing journey.

Group meets Thursdays at 5:30 PM. ***Pre-registration is required.*** To sign up or learn more, contact Carol at (406) 541-4006 or croberts@ywcaofmissoula.org.

Find Your Halloween Essentials at Secret Seconds



Halloween is right around the corner—and Secret Seconds Thrift Stores have everything you need to get into the spirit! From creative costumes to festive decorations, you'll find unique treasures at budget-friendly prices.

Every purchase at Secret Seconds directly supports YWCA Missoula's programs—providing shelter, safety, and resources for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and helping families build

brighter futures.

Visit Secret Seconds at 920 Kensington & 1136 W. Broadway. Open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 AM-6PM.

Pathways Domestic Violence Shelter

This has been a busy month in Pathways—we've been at full capacity, with **13 adults and 16 children currently in shelter**—reflecting the high need for safe shelter in our community. Even with the challenges that come with being full, there's so much to celebrate. This month, **five survivors moved into permanent housing**, taking an incredible step toward stability and self-sufficiency.

We're also excited to share that our team is now fully staffed, with the addition of one practicum student and three relief staff members. Their energy and dedication help ensure that survivors have the support they need, day and night.

[Learn more about the Pathways Program.](#)

Planet Kids Supervised Visitation

We're celebrating a milestone this month at Planet Kids, our supervised visitation program that provides a safe, structured space for parents and children to spend time together. After many on-site visits at the center, one parent has graduated to off-site visitations with their child, and both are excited to create new memories in the community.

This step forward reflects the parent's consistency, support, and understanding during visits, and the child's joy after each time together. It's a reminder of why Planet Kids is so important—because positive experiences in a safe environment help build trust, support healing, and strengthen family bonds.

[Learn more about Planet Kids program.](#)



Find Your "Y"

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

History and Injustice: Fort Missoula Internment

During World War II, Fort Missoula was turned over to the Department of Justice and used as an Alien Detention Center, holding more than 3,000 people between 1941 and 1944.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the FBI arrested Japanese community leaders along the West Coast—many long-time residents who, by law, were barred from U.S. citizenship. Over 1,000 Japanese men were eventually imprisoned at Fort Missoula and subjected to “loyalty hearings” in the Post Headquarters courtroom. None were ever charged with disloyalty, yet most remained in custody for the duration of the war.

Fort Missoula functioned like a prison camp, with barbed wire fences, guard towers, and armed patrols.

Today, it is the largest intact WWII internment site in the United States, with many of its original buildings still standing. Its history is a sobering reminder of how quickly fear and prejudice can override justice and civil rights, and how these injustices can ripple across generations. Reflecting on Fort Missoula today highlights the long-standing challenges faced by immigrant communities and underscores the importance of protecting the rights and dignity of all people.

Learn more at the [Historical Museum at Fort Missoula](#).

Get Involved

Donate Items on Our Wish List

Looking for a simple way to support families at YWCA Missoula? Our [Amazon Wish List](#) is updated regularly with the items most needed by survivors and their children—things like **bedding, toiletries, kitchen supplies, and activities for kids**. These basics help families feel safe and cared for as they begin rebuilding their lives.

You can [order directly from our Amazon Wish List](#) and have items shipped directly to us. Or you can drop wish list items at the Meadowlark front desk, 1800 S. 3rd St. W., Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

Every donation, big or small, makes a direct impact. When you give, you're not just providing household essentials—you're sending a powerful message that our community cares.

Visit us at The Meadowlark for *YWConnects*

Join us for coffee and treats on the second Tuesday of each month at The Meadowlark, where you'll hear directly from program staff about the day-to-day realities of serving families, survivors, and individuals in crisis. These casual *YWConnects* sessions are a great way to learn about our programs, ask questions, and see how our mission comes to life.

Whether you're curious about our programs, considering volunteering, or just want to better understand the challenges our community faces, we'd love to have you join us. Bring a friend or a small group!

[Click here to sign up for a visit](#)

Questions? Contact Diane at (406) 543-6691 or dadami@ywcaofmissoula.org.



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.

[Click here to learn how to get your plate](#)

Employment Opportunities

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

- Rapid Rehousing Case Manager
- Rapid Rehousing Program Manager
- Secret Seconds Store Clerk

[Click here for job descriptions and instructions on how to apply.](#)



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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!