



An update for YWCA Missoula supporters

A Letter from Jen Euell, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year, and welcome to 2026.

For many in our community, and across the country, this is a time of real turmoil. Systems are harder to navigate, resources feel more stretched, and too many people are being asked to carry more than they should. And yet, here at YWCA Missoula, we step into this year grounded in something powerful: we have been here before.

For 115 years, the YWCA has weathered change—wars, recessions, social shifts, and moments when the future felt unclear. We have evolved and adapted again and again, not because it was easy, but because our community needed us to and because we are fueled by the passion and commitment of nearly 100 dedicated staff and literally thousands of big-hearted supporters. This moment is no different.

Over the past few years, we have strengthened our commitment to racial justice, grown our services to meet the expanding needs, planned for the future of housing and safety in Missoula, and navigated countless challenges along the way.

I am constantly reminded how much this work matters... by survivors who found safety, by families who found stability, and by community members who cannot imagine Missoula without the YWCA. Together, we are a safety net and a pathway forward.

Thank you for being part of this enduring, compassionate, and courageous community. When the storms of change inevitably shift again this year, we will weather it as we always have—together.

In Possibility,
Jen

P.S. You're all invited to our **Annual Meeting on Friday, February 6**. More details are in this newsletter. We hope you'll join us!

New & Noteworthy

Holiday gratitude and community impact

As we wrap up the holiday season, we're celebrating the generosity of our community. Because of you, the holidays at YWCA Missoula were filled with warmth, care, and moments that truly



mattered for families.

This season, together we:

- Fulfilled holiday **wish lists for 126 children**
- Delivered holiday **baskets to 70 families and individuals** in shelter or transitioning into stable housing

Thank you to our community partners, as well as the many individuals and organizations who donated food, meals, gifts, and holiday basket items.

We often hear from families years later who still remember how special the holidays felt while they were with the YWCA. Thank you to all who helped make this possible!

Supporting families, all year long

We are pleased to share that, because of everyone who donated to our year-end appeal, **we met our matching goal for Nights of Shelter!**

Your financial support sustains YWCA programs year-round—providing shelter, advocacy, and stability for families and survivors long after the holidays end.

If you'd still like to give, there is always a continued need for funding for our shelters and support services. [Make a gift here](#).

You're invited: YWCA Annual Meeting

Join us for YWCA Missoula's Annual Meeting on **Friday, February 6** to reflect on the past year and look ahead to what's next.

[RSVP here](#)

We're excited to welcome **Demetra Lambros** as our guest speaker. A Missoula native and former Justice Department attorney, Demetra has dedicated her career to advancing justice and supporting survivors—including helping lead the White House effort to combat sexual assault on college campuses and working on the Violence Against Women Act.



Staff Spotlight

Tamar Kasberg, Family Housing Center Advocate

Tamar joined the YWCA just over a year ago, and when asked why she stays, her answer is simple: *the people*. She shares that she feels humbled every day by the work and is constantly learning—especially from the participants she works alongside.

Through her role at the Family Housing Center, Tamar says she learns so much from families about trust, resiliency, and the power of community. That perspective, and the relationships built along the way, are what continue to inspire her.

Outside of work, Tamar is a mom to three kids and has worn many different hats over the years—from running a construction company to working as a professional photographer. In her free

time, she enjoys painting, reading (especially books on nature, travel, and philosophy), and letting life unfold naturally.

We're grateful for the care, curiosity, and depth Tamar brings to the YWCA community every day.



Program Updates

GUTS! Spring semester groups are kicking off - Get involved!



This spring, GUTS is launching a new round of community groups at local schools—creating spaces where girls and gender-diverse youth can build connection, confidence, and skills that support their well-being.

To make these groups possible, we're looking for a few additional volunteers to help facilitate sessions during the spring semester. The commitment is 11 weeks, about 2 hours per week, with training and ongoing support provided.

If you're interested in being part of this work, you can learn more and [apply to volunteer here](#). Questions? Reach out to Brooke at bricklay@ywcaofmissoula.org.

Support group for survivors of sexual violence starts this month

YWCA Missoula's clinical program will be offering a free, closed support group for survivors of sexual violence **beginning January 22**. This 10-week group, *tentatively scheduled for Thursdays at 5:30 PM*, is open to people of all genders.

If you've had a sexual experience—recent or long ago—that didn't feel fully consensual and it's impacting you, you're not alone. This group provides a safe, confidential space to process and heal from sexual assault, coercion, or other non-consensual experiences.

***Pre-registration is required.** To learn more or sign up, please contact Carol at (406) 541-4006 or croberts@ywcaofmissoula.org.

Decluttering for the New Year? Donate to Secret Seconds

As you clear out closets and make space for the new year, consider donating gently used items to Secret Seconds. Your donations help support all YWCA programs—providing critical resources for families and survivors while keeping quality items circulating in our community.



Donations are accepted at both Secret Seconds locations (920 Kensington & 1136 W. Broadway), and drop-off is quick and easy—usually with little to no wait. Clothing, home goods, and furniture are always appreciated.

Thank you for supporting YWCA programs in such a simple, impactful way!

Violence prevention group for boys

Violence prevention is a key part of YWCA Missoula's work, and we've long discussed ways to expand it meaningfully. We are now exploring a prevention-focused group for boys in our community—designed to build healthy relationships, support positive identity development, and prevent violence before it starts.

We are in the early planning stages and want input from parents, professionals, and community members to ensure the program is accessible, relevant, and effective.

Please take a moment to [complete this survey](#)—and share it with others—to help us create a program rooted in prevention, care, and community wisdom.

Planet Kids

A big thank you to the Sentinel Kiwanis Club for providing two dinners for Planet Kids families! With their generosity, we were able to serve 8–10 families each time, giving parents and children the chance to share a meal together during visits and build connection.

Planet Kids, YWCA's supervised visitation and exchange center, provides a safe, supportive space for children to spend time with their non-custodial parent when domestic violence has occurred in the family. While we try to offer food and snacks when budgets allow, it isn't always possible—making this donation of meals, time, and care especially meaningful. While we try to offer food and snacks when budgets allow, it isn't always possible—making this donation of meals, time, and care especially meaningful.



Find Your "Y"

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

Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration

Please join the Missoula community next week for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration on **Monday, January 19, 2026**...an evening to come together in reflection, connection, and collective commitment to justice and belonging.

We hope you'll join neighbors from across Missoula to honor Dr. King's legacy and continue the work of building a more just and connected community.

Find more [event details here](#).



Get Involved

Help stock our shelters: Donate from the Wish List

There are always practical items that help our shelters run smoothly and feel more like home. Right now, we're especially in need of a few shelter essentials, including new **vacuums, pillows, dishes and silverware, and towels**—as well as kid and teen items like **Nintendo Switch controllers**.

Donating is easy: you can [order directly from our Amazon Wish List](#) and have items shipped straight to YWCA. You can also drop off new items at *The Meadowlark front desk (1800 S. 3rd St. W.) during business hours*.

Every item on the list helps create safe, comfortable spaces for families and young people while supporting the day-to-day work of our programs. Thank you for helping meet these ongoing needs.

Visit us at The Meadowlark for YWConnects Tour

Join us for coffee 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 tour](#)

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



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