



A Letter from Jen Euell, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I want to share an important update about Planet Kids, one of YWCA Missoula's most vital, life-saving programs, and the uncertainty we're currently navigating.

For many years, Planet Kids has been funded through the Office on Violence Against Women's Justice for Families grant, making it possible for children and families to safely participate in court-ordered visitation and custody exchanges. These services are critical for survivor safety and child wellbeing.

Right now, that funding is delayed at the federal level, with no clear timeline for the next grant cycle. The funds for this program were already tight, and as our current grant comes to an end, we know we will experience a gap in funding.

We are doing everything we can to respond thoughtfully and responsibly. Our team is actively working to identify additional funding sources to help sustain Planet Kids, while also making difficult decisions to reduce hours and reformat the program so we can continue offering services with fewer resources. We know there may be more changes ahead.

Throughout this process, we are prioritizing continuing to provide the highest quality support we can to the families who rely on this program. Planet Kids is a critical part of our community's response to domestic violence, and there is no simple replacement for what it provides.

In the coming weeks, you'll hear more about how you can help YWCA Missoula meet this latest challenge and **support the important work of Planet Kids through Missoula Gives**. Thank you for being part of this community and for standing with the families we serve.

With Gratitude,
Jen

New & Noteworthy

Missoula Gives is almost here!

Mark your calendars for April 30–May 1 for Missoula Gives, a powerful two-day celebration of community generosity.

This year, we're especially excited to share that Paradise Dental Technologies and Linda Miller have generously committed an **\$11,000 match to support YWCA Missoula**. That means every

gift made during Missoula Gives will be doubled, up to \$11,000—amplifying the impact of every dollar.

Funds raised will **help sustain our Planet Kids program**, which provides safe, supportive visitation and exchange services for children and families impacted by domestic violence.

We're inviting our community to help us meet this match. Your support during Missoula Gives directly strengthens life-saving and life-changing services for survivors and their children. Together, we can turn \$11,000 into \$22,000 of impact!

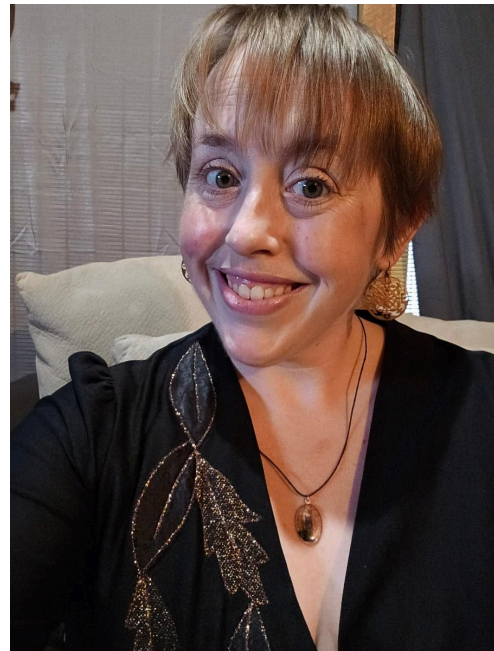
[Learn more here.](#)

Staff Spotlight

Liz Fisher, Case Manager

Liz is a case manager in our Pathways domestic violence program, where she supports shelter residents in accessing the resources they need to move toward their goals—whether that's stable housing, education, employment, or other critical services.

With 10 years of experience in case management, Liz brings both knowledge and deep compassion to her work. Her path into advocacy began in college, when she volunteered with the Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC). That experience opened her eyes to the realities facing survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and set her on a path toward this work.



For Liz, being a steady, safe presence is at the heart of what she does. She values the opportunity to show up for people who may not have had much safety or support in their lives. "It's a small way to make a difference," she says. She also finds meaning in learning from survivors and hearing their stories, and in being part of a team that genuinely cares for one another while working together to support program participants.

Outside of work, Liz enjoys reading, doing puzzles, spending time with her cats, and—perhaps most uniquely—picking up litter while listening to podcasts.

Program Updates

Secret Seconds Needs Your Donations



If you're doing a little spring cleaning, now is the perfect time to give your gently used items a second life at Secret Seconds.

Our store is currently in need of donations—especially clothing, housewares, and furniture. These items directly support YWCA Missoula's programs, helping fund critical services for survivors and families in our community.

Donations are accepted at both store locations, Tuesday-Saturday, 10am - 5pm. It's easy to donate- just pull up to the donation door in the back, ring the doorbell, and a store clerk will be right out to grab your items from you!

Family Dinner at the FHC

This spring the Family Housing Center, our short-term emergency shelter for unhoused families with children, began hosting family dinner for current residents and alumni, welcoming nearly 50 people back into a space that continues to be part of their story. Families reconnected, kids played, and neighbors caught up.

The first gathering was made possible by incredible support from local partners who donated food and helped create a warm, welcoming evening. We're so grateful to Cambie, Noodles & Company, Big Dipper, Great Harvest, and Mark Estep and Living River Farms for showing up for our families in such a meaningful way. Thank you as well to the volunteers who helped cook, set up, and make the evening run smoothly—we couldn't do this without you.

Because of the strong turnout and positive response, we're planning to continue Family Dinners on a monthly basis. These gatherings play an important role in building resilience by helping families stay connected, reduce isolation, and strengthen supportive relationships over time. They offer a sense of continuity and belonging, ensuring that support doesn't end when someone leaves shelter, but continues as they navigate life in the community.



Find Your "Y"

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

Sacred Spaces Now Open for Meadowlark Residents

We are deeply grateful to finally open the Sacred Spaces for residents of the shelters at The Meadowlark to use for spiritual and cultural practices such as smudging, healing, reflection, and more.

These standalone structures- one located in the Family Housing Center and one in the domestic violence shelter-- were created in response to feedback from Indigenous residents and community partners who shared how important it is to have dedicated space for cultural connection during times of transition and healing. It has taken nearly a year to plan, build, secure, and furnish these spaces—but we are excited to finally reach this moment.

This week, the Sacred Spaces will be blessed by Elder Alan Pierre of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Dr. Annie Belcourt (Blackfeet and Chippewa), before being opened for residents to use. We are humbled by the guidance, wisdom, and support that helped bring this vision to life, and grateful to now offer a space grounded in respect, healing, and cultural connection.

Join the *Until Justice Just Is* Challenge

This spring, YWCA Missoula is joining YWCAs across the country in the **Until Justice Just Is (UJJI) Challenge**, a national learning experience led by YWCA USA. The 2026 UJJI Challenge runs through May 4 and invites participants to spend 21 days exploring issues connected to voting rights and civic participation.

Throughout the challenge, you'll learn about the history and future of voting rights, how voter suppression impacts communities, what's happening right now in voting access, and what each of us can do to help strengthen democracy.

Think of it as cardio for your brain—and an opportunity to exercise your civic muscles, too. Participants receive daily emails with short articles, podcasts, videos, and reflection prompts, along with action steps to defend voting rights and resources that help make sense of the past, present, and future of American democracy.

It's not too late to join—[sign up to receive the daily challenge content](#) and be part of a nationwide community learning and taking action together.

Get Involved

Help stock our shelters: Donate from the Wish List

Every day, practical items help our shelters run smoothly and feel more like home. Right now, we're especially in need of **baby wipes, shampoo, conditioner, and other shelter essentials like towels, pillows, and cleaning supplies**. These everyday items make a big difference for the families and young people we serve.

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 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 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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