



A Letter from Jen Euell, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

A lot of our work here at YWCA Missoula is focused on helping families move from shelter into housing. When a family gets the keys to their own place, it's one of the most exciting moments we get to witness. It's a huge step toward the stability and future they've been working so hard to build.

But recently, a former resident reminded us that moving into housing can also come with an unexpected loss. *"I miss this place every day,"* she told our staff.

She wasn't talking about the noise, the rules, or the bunk beds in the Family Housing Center. She was talking about the community she found here.

Communal living isn't easy. But it does provide a place for real relationships to take root. Children find friends to play with. Parents celebrate milestones together. We've seen residents visit one another in the hospital after giving birth; one mom even accompanied another mom during labor and cut the cord after her baby was born.

Those relationships don't become less important once a family moves into housing. In many ways, that's when they're needed most. That's why, over the last two years, we've expanded our case management to support families both while they're staying at The Meadowlark and for six months after they move into housing. And it's why we recently created new opportunities for current and former residents to stay connected through monthly dinners and a peer support group. (Big shout-out to the volunteers who help bring these gatherings to life!) We're also grateful for our partners at Missoula Interfaith Collaborative, whose volunteers walk with us, alongside families, as they settle into their new homes.

Housing is essential. But so are relationships that help us weather life's challenges. Thank you for helping create a community where families find friendships, encouragement, and a sense of belonging that can last long after they walk out our shelter doors.

In Possibility,
Jen

New & Noteworthy

Celebrating 25 Years With Julie Maturen

This month, we're honored to celebrate Julie Maturen's 25th anniversary with YWCA Missoula!



Julie joined the YWCA 25 years ago as an Office Manager, later became an Events Manager, and eventually found her place in fundraising. Throughout her career, she has helped shape the organization through her hard work, dedication, and deep belief in our mission. The growth and impact of our programs are reflected in the countless partnerships, supporters, and opportunities Julie has helped cultivate over the years.

Anyone who has worked with Julie knows she leads with kindness, empathy, and authenticity, while also bringing the practical, get-it-done approach that helps turn big ideas into real impact. Her commitment to our community and the people we serve is at the heart of everything she does.

Reflecting on her time at YWCA Missoula, Julie shared, "It has truly been my privilege to spend my career at the YWCA.

I'm grateful for the people, the memories, and the opportunity to do meaningful work alongside such wonderful colleagues."

Julie, thank you for 25 years of passion, hard work, and heart. We are so grateful for all you have done and continue to do for the YWCA and our community. Congratulations on this well-deserved milestone!

Join the YWCA Board of Directors

Want to help shape the future of YWCA Missoula? We're looking for up to five new members to [join our Board of Directors](#), with terms beginning in January 2027.

Our board helps guide the programs and services that provide safe shelter, housing support, and vital resources for families experiencing domestic and sexual violence.

We're especially seeking **people with experience in social work, legal or financial fields, communications/PR, and construction/development**—but we value a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and skills. If you care about building a safer, more equitable Missoula, we'd love to hear from you.

Board members serve a three-year term, attend monthly board meetings, participate on at least one committee, and support fundraising and community engagement efforts.

[Learn more here](#). Applications are due October 16, 2026.



Thank You, Brondum Foundation

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Brondum Foundation for its generous final gift before the foundation sunsets this year.

For many years, the foundation has been a valued partner of YWCA Missoula, supporting projects that made our facilities more accessible and welcoming for all. Their contributions helped fund the elevator installed during the construction of

The Meadowlark in 2020, as well as the addition of accessible door buttons after the building opened. The foundation also frequently provided extra support to help ensure children in our programs received holiday gifts.

We are deeply grateful for the Brondum Foundation's longstanding commitment to the YWCA and the people we serve. Their generosity has left a lasting impact on our community!

Staff Spotlight



Carson Putnam, Housing Stabilization Case Manager

Meet Carson, our new Housing Stabilization Case Manager! In his role, Carson works closely with families staying in the Family Housing Center, helping them connect to housing opportunities and other resources that support long-term stability.

Before joining the YWCA, Carson worked as a Family Support Specialist at Family Outreach in Bozeman, providing case management services for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families. He also served as an advocate at the VOICE Center on the MSU campus, supporting individuals impacted by interpersonal violence.

What Carson enjoys most about his work is partnering with families and helping them recognize and build on their strengths. Since joining the Family Housing Center, he says the welcoming and supportive staff and participants have made him feel right at home.

When he's not at work, you'll probably find Carson at a local show. A semi-professional drummer, he toured the West Coast twice with his band, Icarus, before moving to Missoula and has played with nearly a dozen bands spanning all kinds of genres. If you've got recommendations for music to check out or local bands to see, Carson is always looking for suggestions!

Program Updates

Burgers, Backpacks, and Back-to-School Fun!

At the end of August, more than 80 current and former YWCA residents joined us for our annual Back-to-School BBQ. Families enjoyed an afternoon of good food, face painting, haircuts, nail painting, and community, while children picked up school supplies to help them start the year ready to learn.

A huge thank you to our partners at Family Promise for providing the food, to the wonderful volunteers who grilled, painted nails, and helped throughout the event, and to everyone who donated school supplies. Your generosity helped make the day a fun and meaningful sendoff to the summer and the start of a new school year.



Rapid Rehousing Program Helps Families Maintain Stability

Rapid Rehousing helps families move from homelessness into stable housing by providing rental assistance, security deposit, and individualized case management. Beyond financial assistance, participants work closely with case managers to identify and address barriers to housing stability, connect with community resources, strengthen financial skills, and build a foundation for long-term success.

For many families, the challenge is not simply finding housing, but maintaining it while navigating obstacles such as limited income, childcare needs, transportation challenges, or unexpected emergencies. Rapid Rehousing offers the support and stability families need during that transition, helping them secure housing and remain housed.

We are currently accepting job applications for an open Case Manager position in this program, at least one year of case management experience required. [Find details here!](#)



Find Your "Y"

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

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

From September 15 through October 15, we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, a time to recognize and honor the rich cultures, histories, and contributions of Hispanic and Latine communities. It is an opportunity to reflect on the resilience, traditions, creativity, and leadership that continue to shape and strengthen our communities.

Here in Missoula, we're grateful for organizations like **Viva Montana**, which creates opportunities to celebrate and share Latine culture throughout the year. Last week, Viva Montana hosted its annual festival at Caras Park, bringing the community together through music, dance, food, and cultural celebration. The organization also offers monthly Latin dance nights and a variety of events that foster connection, cultural exchange, and belonging.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we encourage our community to learn, participate, and support the local organizations and leaders who help make Missoula a more vibrant and inclusive place for all.

Get Involved

Donate Items on the Wish List

You can make an immediate impact for the families and survivors in our programs by donating essential items on our wish list. Right now, our shelter residents are especially in need of **baby wipes and size 6-7 diapers**.

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 or gently used* items at The Meadowlark front desk (1800 S. 3rd St. W.) during business hours, M-F, 9am-5pm.



Support Families with YWCA + MIC License Plate

Show your support for local families by purchasing a YWCA Missoula + MIC Family Housing Center specialty license plate. Proceeds help provide shelter and support services for families experiencing homelessness in Missoula.

Featuring a simple, starry mountain design, the plate is a visible reminder that everyone deserves a safe place to call home.

You can purchase the plate at any time through your county treasurer's office. [Learn more here.](#)

Job Opportunities

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

- Rapid Rehousing & Transitional Housing Case Manager (full time)
- Secret Seconds Store Clerk (full time and part time)

Find job descriptions and how to apply [here](#).



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