A. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SETTING

The Pathways Program offers a full array of services to teen and adult victims of domestic and sexual violence and their children. These services include 24-hour crisis counseling, safe and confidential shelter, support services, peer counseling, weekly open and closed support groups, referrals to community resources, and advocacy with medical, criminal justice, legal and social service systems. The program is structured to address the symptoms of the victim’s immediate crisis, followed by long-term support services to the victim and her family.

The YWCA Missoula Children’s Program is also an integral part of the Pathways Program. The YWCA Children’s Program is a model prevention and intervention program designed to provide a safe, stable environment for children staying at the shelter. Programming aimed at meeting the children’s needs consists of developmentally appropriate support groups and therapeutic play activities that reinforce positive behaviors and help children learn to break the cycle of violence. Through support groups and activities, children learn that they are not alone and the violence they experienced was not their fault.

B. DESCRIPTION OF CLIENT GROUP

The Pathways Program works with adult and teen victims of domestic and sexual violence and child victims/witnesses of domestic violence. Although the majority of survivors are women and children, the program provides shelter and support services to male survivors as well.

C. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

2 Positions

1. Women’s Advocate Position:
   The student in this position provides advocacy, support, referral and case management services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence by staffing the shelter, crisis line and walk in hours.
   - Meets potential residents; provides intake screening and placement into Shelter during shift.
   - Meets with residents individually and provides peer counseling as requested.
   - Provides service advocacy to residents in the shelter.
   - Facilitates resolution with crises that may arise during the shift.
   - Provides crisis counseling and support as needed at the Shelter.
   - Facilitates problem solving with residents as issues arise in the Shelter.
   - Answers the Crisis Line as needed.
   - Staffs walk in hours at the YWCA as needed.
   (continued)
• Advocates for client in a cooperative manner with law enforcement personnel, hospital staff, and other officials as needed.
• Provides overnight crisis line and response coverage, including response to First STEP.
• Acts as a positive role model for Shelter residents and other Pathways participants: is flexible, compassionate and direct; addresses violent language and behavior by providing positive alternatives.

2. **Children’s Advocate Position:**
The student in this position helps direct and coordinate the Children’s Program as part of the YWCA Pathways Program, which works toward breaking the cycle of violence.

• Nurtures, guides, plays with and mentors children in the shelter, kindly attending to their bodies, minds, and spirits.
• Provides appropriate activity and interaction for Shelter children.
• Helps the children in the Shelter have fun and learn.
• Facilitates children’s groups weekly.
• Advocates for shelter children in their interactions with the community.
• Works with mothers in the shelter to help them with parenting skills.
• Acts as a positive role model for children and their mothers: is flexible, compassionate and direct; addresses violent language and behavior by providing positive alternatives.
• Advocates for client in a cooperative manner with law enforcement personnel, hospital staff, and other officials as needed.
• Works with Children’s Program coordinator on the design and implementation of curricula for at-risk children at the shelter and in the Circle of Healing Children’s Group, including curricula designed to break the cycle of violence.
• Helps design and implement intake procedures for children (with their mothers) at the Shelter and in the Circle of Healing Children’s Group.

D. **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**
Performance of duties reflects the YWCA’s value that all people will be treated with respect and dignity and approached with recognition of their individual importance.

The YWCA Missoula Shelter has advocates on sight Monday – Friday 8-10pm and Saturday and Sunday in the morning and in the evening hours. Students must complete a majority of their practicum hours during this time. Students have frequent and close contact with their supervisor, but need to work well independently and take initiative around the shelter.

Expectations of students include completing the YWCA Missoula’s Advocate training in the Fall or Spring and any follow-up training provided. In addition, students must be reliable, consistent, and professional and able to act in a non-judgmental, and non-victim blaming manner. They must be able to uphold the program’s strict confidentiality policy and follow YWCA Missoula policies and procedures.