



Serving Snohomish County



We specialize in supporting families with young children as they navigate some tough challenges — those stemming from substance use disorders and poverty.

Our unique dedication to these families and to nurturing the vital bond between parents and their children sets us apart. We understand the struggles families face, and that's why we're here.

Parent ally mentors are at the heart of our approach and success. These remarkable individuals are real-life parents who've overcome similar challenges and undergone specialized training to support others. Collaborating closely with each family, they are skilled and accessible allies and a constant source of inspiration, reminding us all that change isn't just a dream — it's also an achievable reality.

2023 Highlights

87

number of
families served

58%

families with an infant 1
year old or younger

249

total number of individuals
in the families served

We take a preventive approach to the big issues, like the harm and costs that come with untreated addiction and family separation.

Our goal? To break the multigenerational cycle of substance use problems, including abuse, neglect, and family separation, in Snohomish County.

homewardhouse.org



In 2023, our staff and partners were alongside the journey of 87 families, each with their own unique challenges and triumphs. The three family profiles that follow offer a glimpse into the many inspiring stories of resilience and transformation that unfolded throughout the year.

Sean and Tynikki: Transforming Challenges Into Leadership

Homeless, a child in foster care, no job history, addiction, and reliance on public transportation was the reality facing Sean and Tynikki, a couple with two young children when they first connected with their parent ally-mentor through Homeward House in 2021.

“The parents’ goals were ambitious but clear: reunite with their older child, secure stable housing, and maintain their sobriety,” says Parent Ally Mentor Cheryl Bruno. “Through unwavering determination and the support of various organizations, they have succeeded.”

Homeward House played a pivotal role in their journey, providing weekly peer support through their parent-ally mentors, guidance in housing, assistance becoming organized, home visits, and facilitation of school meetings. Several partner resources, including the Parent-Child Assistance Program and the Office of Public Defense Social Worker, were also instrumental in their journey. Visitation at Homeward House provided a safe space for family bonding and support.

Both parents secured jobs, their older child returned home, and their case with Child Protective Services was closed. They successfully graduated from Project Reunite and attained stable housing. Notably, one of them even obtained a driver’s license, which broadened their horizons.

But their journey didn’t end there — both parents are actively filling leadership roles for Homeward House. On the Parent Voice Committee, they provide valuable insights from their lived experience. Tynikki also serves as a Parent Voice representative on the Advisory Committee, ensuring that strategic priorities are grounded in the priorities of the families Homeward House serves.

Their story is one of triumph over adversity, a family united by love and determination, and a shining example of what can be achieved with unwavering commitment and the right support.



One to three years

Length of time that families typically engage with Homeward House

Sustainable change isn’t something that magically happens in just a few weeks. That’s why families usually lean on support from Homeward House for several years. It comes at different frequencies — periodically, weekly, or even daily — depending on the family’s situation.

Shanna and Corey: Overcoming Homelessness and Uniting Their Family

Shanna and Corey, parents to two young boys, faced significant hurdles when they first engaged with Homeward House in January 2023. Their infant son was in the neonatal intensive care unit, and their 3-year-old had been placed in out-of-home care. Homelessness and the battle to maintain sobriety added to their struggles. As they juggled traveling between Tacoma and Everett, communication was a challenge due to inconsistent phone service.

Their journey with their parent ally-mentor began in a Walmart parking lot, where they received immediate assistance in the form of gas cards, food cards, and gift cards to keep their phones connected. Over the next few weeks, meetings occurred at Homeward House and the hospital.

“Their initial goals were straightforward: access treatment in Snohomish County, secure permanent housing and bring their baby home,” says Parent Ally Mentor Monica Turner. “They achieved these milestones with support from Homeward House and the YWCA.”

With assistance for a housing deposit, utility bill clearance, property retrieval, and essential provisions, they could look beyond day-to-day survival. They also received funding for a motel stay when safety was a concern, as well as help with transportation, such as Uber rides, and money for car repairs.

Shanna and Corey’s journey with Homeward House continues with support for maintaining sobriety, reuniting with their older son, and pursuing employment and education opportunities. They are engaged in Homeward House’s infant mental health services and maintain an unwavering commitment to bringing their family together.

Infant Mental Health Services: Nurturing the Vital Parent-Child Bond

Infant mental health services are a crucial part of the wraparound support that helps break the multigenerational chain of substance use disorders for families.

Parents learn to read the cues, understand their child’s emotional needs, and respond with sensitivity. It’s all about laying a strong foundation for a child’s mental health and overall well-being right from the start.

The services are essential for families facing poverty and substance use disorder challenges. The expert support and programs are grounded in a deep understanding of the critical importance of emotional well-being, attachment, and the early experiences that shape a child’s long-term development.



Theo's Journey: Reuniting Family and Pursuing Dreams

Theo, a devoted single father of four daughters ages 10 to 13, is a resilient Tulalip Tribes member. His inspiring story centers on family reunification and personal growth.

“Theo has been one of the biggest success stories of not only Homeward House but also his tribe,” says Parent Ally Mentor Monica Turner.

Theo sought help from Homeward House through a Tulalip Tribes social worker referral. He needed support in recovery, treatment, and navigating the requirements of Child Protective Services to regain custody of his daughters.

The first encounter with Theo took place in the parking lot of his apartment building where the intake process commenced. Shyness enveloped him, but beneath that shyness lay an unwavering determination to rebuild his family and reunite with his daughters.

The support that followed extended to all aspects of his life, including navigating through criminal, traffic, and dependency court hearings. Daily conversations provided a lifeline, and in-person support was readily available whenever needed. Homeward House recognized the significance of family connection and facilitated visits among Theo, his daughters, and his mother, ensuring their bonds remained strong.

Fast-forward to early 2023, when Theo's case was closed, marking a successful reunion with his daughters. They now have permanent housing on the Tulalip reservation. Theo completed culinary training through Kindred Kitchen, found employment, and is pursuing education at Everett Community College, aspiring to open a coffee shop on the reservation. He has maintained his sobriety and become a respected speaker at reservation ceremonies.

Forward Together

In 2024, our focus is clear — it's all about increasing our impact and championing positive change for the families we serve. We look forward to expanding our partnerships and helping many more families create a bright future.



**Homeward
House** COLLABORATIVE

Homeward House Collaborative
A program of YWCA Snohomish County
homewardhouse.org

Homeward House Family Visitation and Resource Center
in Everett, Washington.