Section 2: Building Your Program

Family Visitation & Resource Center

Design Worksheet

There is no single blueprint for a Homeward House Visitation and Resource Center — and this worksheet isn't meant to be one. It reflects the categories and questions we found most useful as we planned and refined our own space. We hope it gives your team a helpful starting point. Work through what's relevant, skip what isn't, and add what we haven't thought of.

1. A House, Not a Facility

The most important signal your space sends is whether it feels like a home or an institution. Families who have navigated dehumanizing systems notice immediately.

What does our space — or potential space — currently communicate to a family walking in?

Equity prompt: How can the design of your Center honor the cultural diversity and accessibility needs of the families you serve — in its décor, materials, and feel?

2. Ordinary Moments Are the Intervention

Cooking together, reading, bath time, celebrating birthdays — everyday family moments are where attachment forms and where it heals. Which of these can your space support?

- ☐ Preparing and sharing meals
- ☐ Bath time / potty training
- ☐ Celebrating birthdays or holidays
- ☐ Quiet time / napping
- ☐ Reading together
- ☐ Playing together
- ☐ Outdoor play
- ☐ Other: _____

What might we add or make possible in the future?

3. Meeting Practical Needs Is Part of the Mission

A parent who is worried about diapers or hasn't had access to a shower cannot be fully present for their child. Which practical supports would make the greatest difference for families in your community?

- ☐ Food / snacks
- ☐ Formula
- ☐ Hygiene supplies
- ☐ Internet access
- ☐ Private bathroom / shower
- ☐ Diapers and wipes
- ☐ Baby and children's clothing
- ☐ Laundry access
- ☐ Harm reduction resources
- ☐ Other: _____

How will we organize and store these resources?

What can we provide now? What comes later?

4. Every Member of the Family Belongs Here

The Center is designed for infants and toddlers — but older siblings are part of the family too. How will your space welcome children of all ages?

How will we welcome children of different ages, including siblings?

Equity prompt: Who in your community has been left out of spaces like this before? How will you design with them — not just for them?

5. The Center Is a Hub, Not Just a Room

Visitation is the anchor, but the Center can also be where Parent Ally Mentors meet families, where infant mental health services are delivered, and where the broader community accesses support. How can your space serve more than one purpose?

- ☐ Parent Ally Mentor meetings
- ☐ Parenting classes / support groups
- ☐ Community resource information
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Infant mental health services
- ☐ Early childhood services
- ☐ Supplies open to community members

Who are our potential community partners?

Racial Equity and Social Justice: A Closer Look

The strongest spaces are built with families, not simply for them. Return to these questions throughout your planning.

• What barriers — visible and invisible — might keep families from feeling truly welcome in our space?

• How do we ensure that families most impacted by systemic racism — particularly Black, Indigenous, and other families of color — experience this space as designed for them, not just available to them?

• How can the design of our Center honor the cultural diversity and accessibility needs of the families we serve?

• Who do we involve in the design process — and how do we continue gathering community input as the Center evolves?

© 2026 Homeward House Collaborative Program. Lead agency: YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish.
Licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0. Noncommercial use with attribution and link to homewardhouse.org.