

A young woman with dark hair in a braid, wearing a blue t-shirt, is shown in profile, looking down and to the right. She appears to be focused on a task. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in blue shirts.

***Design Considerations for Low Literacy Audiences:
A Case Study***

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Design Incubation, Colloquium 1.0 June 5, 2014

OVERVIEW

There are 400,000 children are within foster care system in the United States.

The cost is estimated to be 20 billion dollars a year.

Yet no one — not the kids, not the foster or biological parents, not the social workers, the administrators, the politicians, the policy experts — thinks the system is working.

*— Cris Beam, *Till the End of June**

ORGANIZATION

The Inwood House Residences provide 24-hour comprehensive care for pregnant teens in foster care.

These young women are homeless or have nowhere else to turn. This is a temporary housing solution, most residents stay six to twelve months.

PROJECT

Think Big, Start Small.

Redesign of Inwood House Resident's Handbook

Goals:

- Youth friendly
- Engaging
- Present IH as a caring institution

**Pregnant or recent mother
Teenage (13-21)
3rd grade reading level
Short attention span**



FIRST STEPS: Before



FIRST STEPS: After



YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to humane and dignified treatment at all times.

VISITS

Visiting Hours:

Monday – Friday: 7pm-9pm

Weekends: 12pm – 9pm

- You have the right to receive visits from your friends and family
 - This cannot be taken away from you as a form of punishment
- In advance, inform your PC of who will be visiting you.
 - **Visitors must come with valid photo identification card**
 - Visits cannot occur during group sessions, regardless of visiting schedule
- You must inform YDC staff, Case Planner or Social Worker if you are expecting a visit during the day.
- Friends and family are welcome:
 - They must be authorized
 - They must be respectful of residence rules.
 - They must stay in the visitor's area (not in your room)
 - If the rules are broken, your level and allowance will be affected. (reduced)
 - They must be respectful of the physical residence & other residents and staff.
 - If they are not respectful, they will be asked to leave
- When your partner or child's father visits, appropriate behavior is expected:
 - Sit separately (not on each other's laps)
 - Keep doors open & lights on
 - Stay in designated common areas (not your room)
 - Only he may enter the building, not his friends.
- Visitors cannot bring any types of drugs or weapons into the residence
- Visitors cannot be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Only your parents, ACS worker, Social Worker, and Primary Counselor are allowed to view your room

OVERNIGHTS

- You must be at IH for at least 7 days, without violation of program rules, to be considered for a day or overnight pass.
- You may spend a weekend with an adult who has been approved by Social Worker, planning agency, and ACS
 - You must return by 9pm curfew on Sunday night.
 - **Once you have reached 35 weeks of pregnancy or your medical provider states that you are dilating or on labor watch, you will no longer be able to have outside visits.**

You must be fully participating in the program (attending school, mandatory groups and medical appointments, and meetings with your Social Worker) for visits and overnights to be granted.

Overnight or day passes will not be granted if AWOL status occurs during the previous week

TV USAGE

Personal TVs are not allowed.

For general use, there is a TV in the lounge area on each floor. **Television must remain off during school and group hours.**

PHONE USAGE

You have the right to call your Case Planner, law guardian, or mental/medical health provider whenever necessary.

Telephones are located in a common space and are accessible at all times.

Emergency telephone numbers for fire, police and medical assistance are posted adjacent to each telephone unit.

You have the right to privacy during phone calls.

Outgoing calls

Social calls are allowed from 3 pm – 10 pm, except for emergencies

Should not exceed 20 minutes

Incoming calls:

You must ask the YDC to use the phone before making a call.

Should not exceed 20 minutes

You can make up to two calls daily to parents, siblings, friends, etc.

APPLIANCES

You can have a small radio in your room

Volume must be low enough that it can not be heard outside your room.

If it is too loud, it will be confiscated and you must negotiate for its return.

Major appliances (irons, hair dryers, etc.) may be used in your room.

Iron and ironing board are available in the laundry room

Hair appliances can be used in the designated room in the basement

You have the right to practice whatever religion you choose.

We will provide means for transportation to religious services and will support you in your beliefs.

You may not burn candles or incense on the property.

CONSIDERATIONS: Text

Text:

- Technical jargon avoided
- Vocabulary uses common words; 1-2 syllables
- Sentence length <15 words
- Short Paragraphs (2-5 sentences)
- Writing in active voice & positive tone
- Avoid excessive bullets & acronyms
- Break up topics (2-3 per page)

CONSIDERATIONS: Layout

Layout:

- Simple and consistent organization
- Serif Typeface, Sentence case, 12-14 points
- Typographic cues (distinct subheads and call outs)
- Line length 30–60 characters and spaces
- Reduce Clutter

OVERVIEW

Graphics & Color:

- Simple, age & culturally appropriate
- Related to text /line art
- Used to direct attention to specific points or key content
- High Contrast between type and paper
- Avoid color-coding

FIRST ROUND: Roadblocks

INWOOD HOUSE
resident handbook

INWOOD HOUSE
Teen Family Learning Center
Maternity Program (Child Support Program) (MMP)
320 East 120th Street, New York, NY 10035
Phone: (212) 961-6400 Fax: (212) 925-3775 www.inwoodhouse.com

Funded by the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development & the Office of Children & Family Services

primary counselors

_____ is your Primary Counselor (PC) and will support you in many ways. She will identify services you may need, assist you with medical needs and appointments, travel with you when shopping for clothes, attend team meetings with you, advocate for your education, assess your current life skills and help you develop realistic goals. She will help you learn to solve problems and resolve issues, and model parenting skills. She is your connection between your social worker, the program and you.

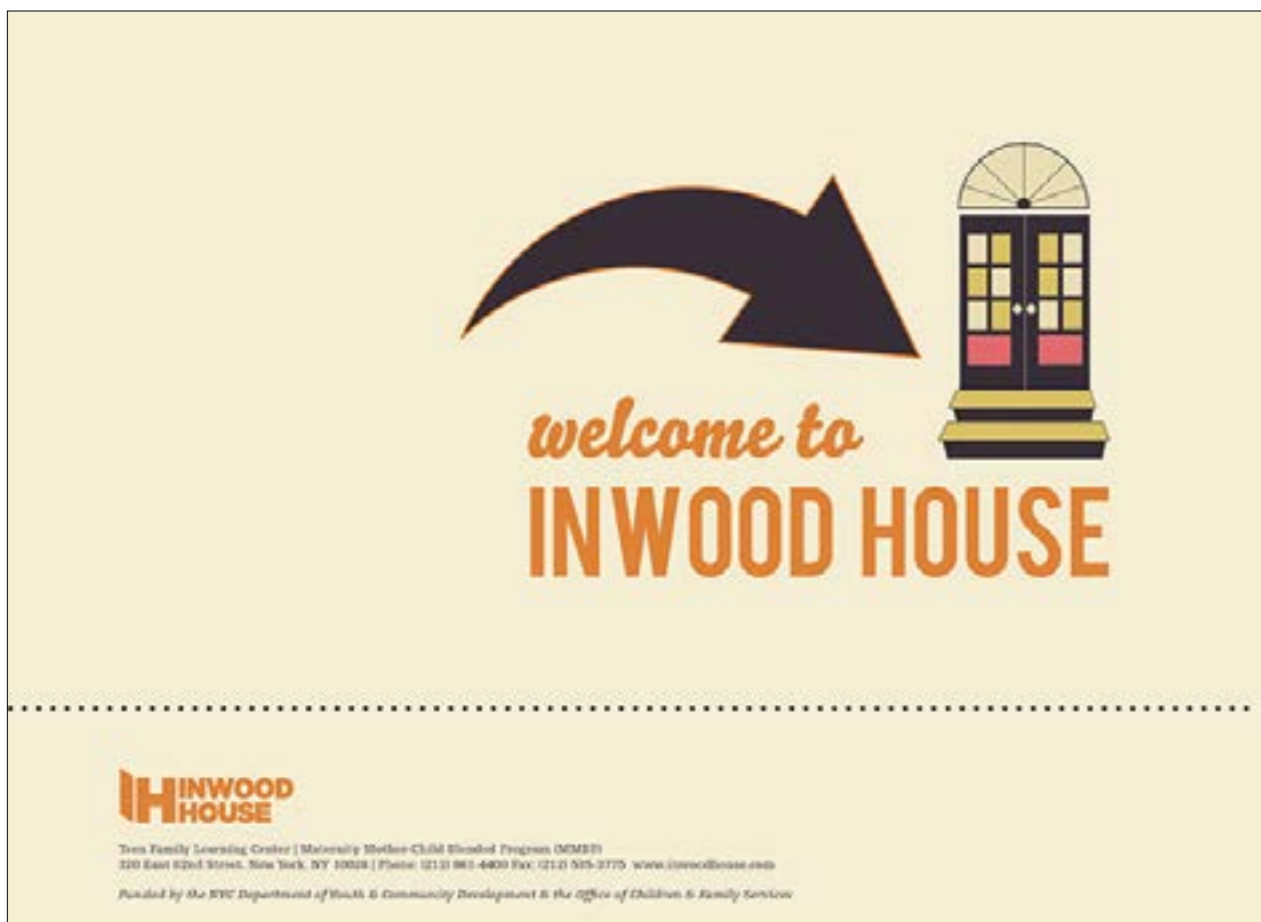
youth development counselors (ydc)

Youth Development Counselors are available 24 hours a day at Inwood House. They will help you with residential matters (for example, if you need toiletries, towels or sheets), support you with your baby, help you when needed with your daily activities/schooling, groups and medical needs. Youth Development Counselors will answer your questions and address any concerns or issues that you may experience at the Residence. They maintain safety and the well-being of the residents of Inwood House. They are the first people you should talk to if there is anything you need while living at Inwood House.

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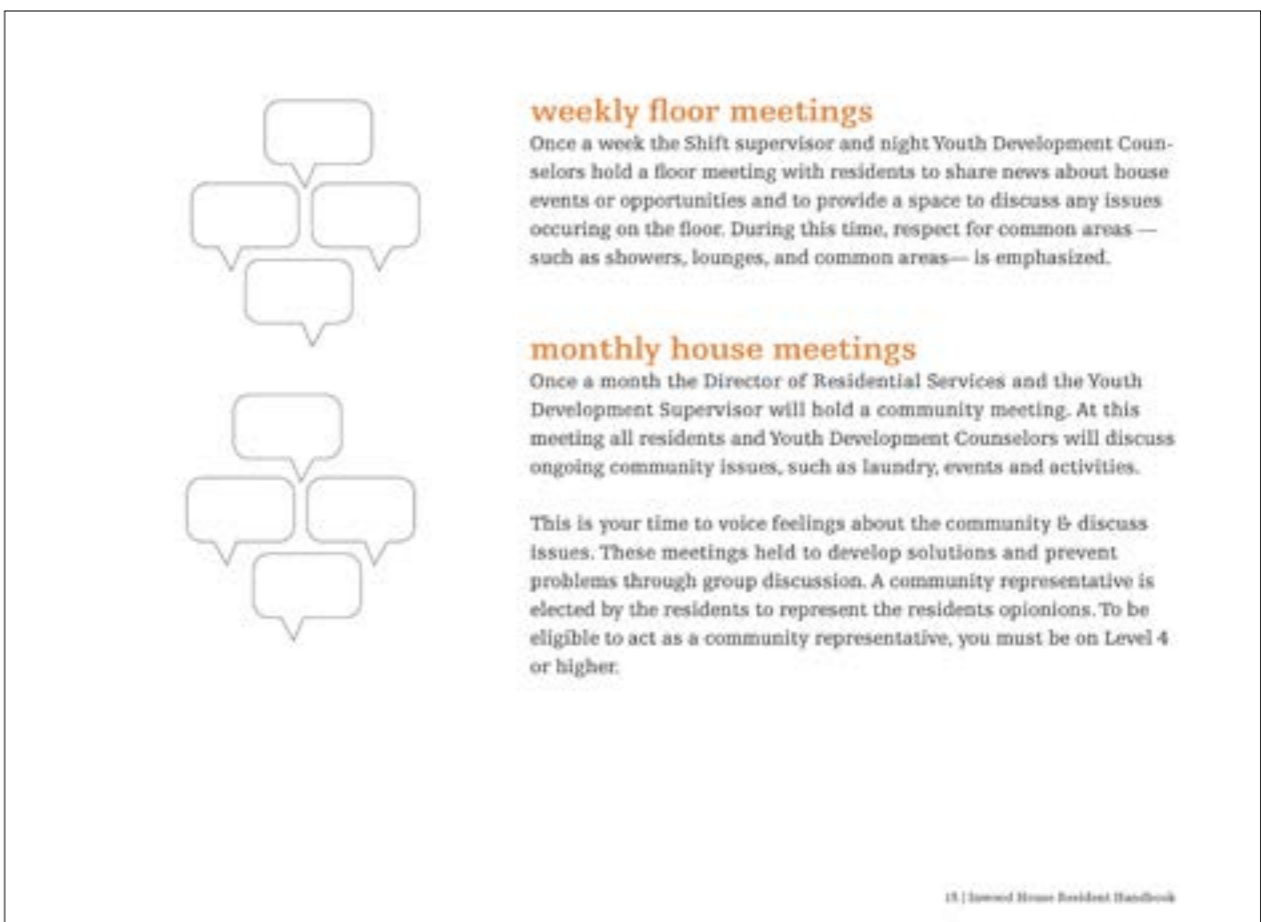
FINAL



The graphic features a large, dark blue curved arrow pointing towards a stylized illustration of a house with a semi-circular window above the door. Below the arrow and house, the text "welcome to INWOOD HOUSE" is written in a warm, orange-brown font. At the bottom left, the Inwood House logo is displayed, followed by contact information and funding details.

**welcome to
INWOOD HOUSE**

INWOOD HOUSE
Teen Family Learning Center | Maternity Shelter-Child Blooded Program (MMSB)
220 East 82nd Street, New York, NY 10028 | Phone: (212) 963-4400 Fax: (212) 515-2775 www.inwoodhouse.com
Funded by the NYC Department of Health & Community Development & the Office of Children & Family Services



This page contains two sections, each with a cluster of speech bubble icons. The first section is titled "weekly floor meetings" and describes the process where shift supervisors and youth development counselors meet with residents to discuss house events and issues. The second section is titled "monthly house meetings" and describes community meetings held by the Director of Residential Services and Youth Development Supervisors to discuss ongoing issues. A note specifies that residents on Level 4 or higher are eligible to act as community representatives.

weekly floor meetings
Once a week the Shift supervisor and night Youth Development Counselors hold a floor meeting with residents to share news about house events or opportunities and to provide a space to discuss any issues occurring on the floor. During this time, respect for common areas — such as showers, lounges, and common areas— is emphasized.

monthly house meetings
Once a month the Director of Residential Services and the Youth Development Supervisor will hold a community meeting. At this meeting all residents and Youth Development Counselors will discuss ongoing community issues, such as laundry, events and activities.

This is your time to voice feelings about the community & discuss issues. These meetings held to develop solutions and prevent problems through group discussion. A community representative is elected by the residents to represent the residents opinions. To be eligible to act as a community representative, you must be on Level 4 or higher.

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FINAL

● Healthy Lifestyles

● School & Jobs

● Building Support

● Planning the Future

now what?

welcome to
INWOOD HOUSE

Inwood House is a short term living facility for pregnant and parenting teens in foster care. Here's what to expect for your stay with us!

as a team

Psychologist, psychiatrists, workshop instructors, tutors and a number of volunteers are available to help you and will be present at the residence on an ongoing basis.

All of these people will know what you and your family need to work on so that you can return home safely, be adopted, live independently, or find a more suitable placement once you are discharged from Inwood House. All of the staff will respect your privacy and maintain confidentiality about what you and your family are experiencing.

In addition to the qualified and caring staff at Inwood House, the family court judge has also assigned a lawyer specifically to help you. You can call this person anytime you like and ask any questions. Once he/she is identified, this information will be provided to you, including name, email, and telephone number.

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OVERVIEW

No one has the right to physically or verbally abuse you in any way.

no abuse/punishment

No one has the right to physically or verbally abuse you in any way. Staff may not allow another resident to discipline or punish you.

If you think you have been abused or maltreated you should tell your social worker, staff or report abuse to the State register by calling 1-800-342-3720 right away.

family planning

You have the right to information about human sexuality, family planning services, and pregnancy information without consent from your parent or guardian. You will be provided with ongoing options counseling to help you make an educated decision about your pregnancy, including adoption, abortion/termination, and pre-natal care.



schedule (it's flexible!)

6:30am Room Check	7:00am Room Check 1st Wake Up	7:30am - 9:00am 2nd Wake up Breakfast	8:00am - 10:30am Prepare for the day
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10:30am - 12:00pm Morning Groups	12:00pm Lunch	3:00pm Lounge area open	4:30pm - 6:30pm Study hours
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6:00pm Dinner	7:00pm Groups	8:00pm-10pm Personal Time Showers Floor/House Mtgs.	11:00pm Sunday-Thursday Lights Out/Bedtime
			2:00 am Friday & Saturday Lights Out/Bedtime



curfew (it's not flexible!)

Sun-Thur 6:00pm Everyone	Fri. & Sat. 9:00pm if you are 14 and under	Fri. & Sat. 11:00pm if you are 15 and over	Fri. & Sat. 12:00am if you are older than 19
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FINAL

4 5 6

public transportation

Subway to Inwood House: Take the # 4,5,6 train to the 86th Street Station & walk towards 2nd Ave.

Make a right and walk straight to 82nd St.

Make a left on 82nd street, we are located in the middle of the block between 2nd & 1st Ave.

medical services

New York Presbyterian Hospital
525 East 68th Street New York, NY 10065 (212) 746-3000

Lenox Hill Hospital
100 East 77th St. New York, NY 10075 (212) 434-2000

Jacobi Medical Center
1400 Pelham Parkway South Bronx, New York 10461
Phone: (718) 918-5000

Lincoln Hospital
234 East 149th Street Bronx, New York 10451 Phone: (718) 579-5000

Montefiore Medical Center
1825 Eastchester Road Bronx, New York 10461
Phone: (718) 794-9161

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SAM*: 88%

FIGURE 4-1

Checklist for print materials.
(Source: Area Health Education Center, Biddeford, Maine)

Title of material: _____

Directions: Place a check next to each item that meets the described attribute.

ORGANIZATION

- 1. The cover is attractive. It indicates the core content and intended audience.
- 2. Desired behavior changes are stressed. "Need to know" information is stressed.
- 3. Not more than three or four main points are presented.
- 4. Headers and summaries are used to show organization and provide message repetition.
- 5. A summary that stresses what to do is included.

WRITING STYLE

- 6. The writing is in conversational style, active voice.
- 7. There is little or no technical jargon.
- 8. Text is vivid and interesting. Tone is friendly.

APPEARANCE:

- 9. Pages or sections appear uncluttered. Ample white spaces.
- 10. Lowercase letters used (capitals used only where grammatically needed).
- 11. There is a high degree of contrast between the print and the paper.
- 12. Print size is at least 12 point, serif type, and no stylized letters.
- 13. Illustrations are simple—preferably line drawings.
- 14. Illustrations serve to amplify the text.

APPEAL

- 15. The material is culturally, gender, and age appropriate.
- 16. The material closely matches the logic, language, and experience of the intended audience.
- 17. Interaction is invited via questions, responses, suggested action, etc.

* Suitability Assessment of Materials, Harvard School of Public Health

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ASSESSMENT

Before moving in you will be given a tour of the house, the resident handbook, and meet with the Youth Development staff to complete personal history packet. Once this is complete, you will meet with the nurse, the education specialist, a case planner/social worker and an intake specialist. With the intake specialist, you will review documentation, sign agency applications, and set goals for your stay with us. On the day of moving in

Before you are shown your room, all of your clothes will be immediately washed. Our bedbug policy requires that everything is washed unless the clothes are still

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SMOG* Assessment of Reading level of prose

Initial Review: 12th grade
Second Review: 9th Grade

You have the right to receive visits from your friends and family and this cannot be taken away from you as a form of punishment. Before the visit, tell your primary counselor who will be visiting you and when. Make sure your visitors know to bring a valid photo ID to show when they arrive. If you are expecting a visitor during the day, you must tell YDC staff, Case Planner or Social Worker.

Visitors must be respectful of residence rules. They must stay in the visitor's area (only your parents & Inwood House staff are allowed to view your room). Visitors must be respectful of the physical residence & other residents and staff. When your partner or child's father visits sit separately (not on each other's laps), keep doors open & lights on and stay in designated common areas (not your room). Friends of your partner/child's father will not be allowed to enter the building. Visitors cannot bring any types of drugs or weapons into the residence.

End

To create and maintain a safe environment for everyone, rooms are checked many times throughout the day. Staff have the right to enter residents' bedrooms for routine checks.

Staff will not search personal items unless there is suspicion of inappropriate items (illegal substances, weapons or behavior, e.g., theft).

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* Simple Measure Of Gobbledygook, Harvard School of Public Health

EVALUATION

Evaluate Residents' reactions

- Do they open the handbook?
- Do they keep the handbook?
- Knowledge of schedules & rules?

Next Steps

- Involve the residents (welcome video?)
- Exit manual

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