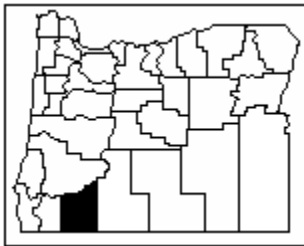


# JACKSON COUNTY

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County improves the lives of children and families through the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and Oregon Pre-Kindergarten program. The agency operates under the direction of the Board of Directors. Program guidance is given by the Policy Council with input, planning, and action provided by local program committees comprised of local parents. Oregon Child Development Coalition's Migrant Seasonal Head Start and Oregon Pre-Kindergarten program in Jackson County served a total of 96 MSHS children and 54 OPK children in 2008. Of the 96 MSHS children, 60 children were classified as migrant children and 36 children were classified as seasonal children.

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County currently employs a center-based option, serving children from one location in Ashland, Oregon. The short-term program runs 14 weeks from September through December, operating 6 classrooms, and 5 days per week from 6 am to 2 pm. The long-term program runs 32 weeks from January through August, operating 3 classrooms, 5 days per week from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm and the OPK Program runs 32 weeks from September to June, operating 3 classrooms, 4 days per-week from 7:45 am to 11:45 am.



The service area includes the entirety of Jackson County, some 2,785 square miles. The recruitment area, however, is determined by three factors: (i) the location of growers as the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County attends to those especially agricultural areas of Jackson County, (ii) the program center location and (iii) acceptable transportation times per the Head Start Performance Standards.

### CRITICAL ISSUES

#### ► GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The median price for a home in Jackson County in September 2006 was \$269,900.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the recent economic recession has reduced this value. In August 2009 the median price was \$190,000, down from the \$223,750 price in September 2008.<sup>2</sup> Although the 2008 and 2009 figures are less than the 2006 figure, home prices are out of reach for many Jackson County residents.<sup>3</sup> Except for the recent recession, one reason home prices have been high in recent years is in-migration to the area. Between 2000 and 2005,

<sup>1</sup> *Jackson County Median Home Prices Fall First Time Since 1984*, September 12, 2006, Associated Press.

<sup>2</sup> Southern Oregon Multiple Listing Service, the Rogue Valley Association of Realtors, August 5, 2009

<sup>3</sup> Robert Plain, *More Apartments Changed to Condos*, September 13, 2006, Ashland Daily Tidings.



Jackson County gained 800 new residents from natural growth (i.e., births) and 14,000 new residents from in-migration, nearly double the rate of in-migration for the state of Oregon.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, cities such as Central Point, Eagle Point, Jacksonville, Medford and Phoenix are considering expanding their urban growth boundaries.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, growers and agri-businesses are increasingly getting into the real estate business and leasing land, with some of the larger operations in the area evidently attempting to move out of the Medford city limits altogether.

## **COUNTY PROFILE**

### **▶ GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

Jackson County is located in southern Oregon in the Rogue River Valley, spanning some 2,785 square miles. Elevation at Medford, the county seat, is 1,382 above sea level.<sup>6</sup> Average temperatures range from well below 37 degrees Fahrenheit during the winter months to well above 73 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months. The area receives approximately 20 inches of rain annually, including snow during the winter months.

The area is internationally known for its tree fruit, with household names such as Harry and David's and Naumes Inc. calling Medford, Oregon, home. The popularity of this area has had the affect of forcing difficult conversations between city and county officials as to how to accommodate growth while retaining Jackson County's distinct rural and agricultural identity.

### **▶ ECONOMIC PROFILE**

Table 1 (all tables are contained in the earlier Oregon Community Assessment and OCDC Overview section of the Community Assessment) lists the 2007 median per capita income for Jackson County at \$34,803. Other Jackson County economic information listed in Table 1 follows: the total number of individuals employed in 2007 was 120,370; 2.24 percent were employed in agriculture; and unemployment moved from 4.9 percent in 2007, to 5.8 percent in 2008, and to 13.2 percent in 2009.

Many industries in Jackson County are predominantly seasonal, which has the effect of raising the unemployment rate. Seasonal unemployment in Jackson County is largely a product of the area's agricultural industry. The months of July, September and October are when agricultural employment in Jackson is at its peak.<sup>7</sup> July is spent preparing orchards and vineyards, with September and October being the months during which tree

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<sup>4</sup> *Jackson County: Migration and Natural Change*, 2006, Northwest Area Foundation. Damian Mann, *Road Work Ahead*, September 13, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Meg Landers, *Medford Weights Growth Changes*, April 27, 2006, Mail Tribune.

<sup>6</sup> Oregon Blue Book, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> *2008 Oregon Agricultural Employment Estimates*, Oregon Employment Department.



fruit and wine grapes are harvested. Also of interest is that, unlike in other areas of the state, there is not a consistent demand for the labor of migrant and seasonal farmworkers throughout the year. In other counties (e.g., Umatilla County), the need for the labor of migrant and seasonal farmworkers can last up to 7 months. In Jackson County, the situation is much different and much more intense, especially during July and September.

While Southern Oregon is known primarily for its tree fruit, wine grapes are becoming increasingly common. Vineyard owners in Jackson County require the labor of migrant and seasonal farmworkers during the months of October and December to both harvest wine grapes and prune the vineyards for the following year. Unique to the Jackson County area is that tree fruit operations have slowly been consolidated over the years. Harry and David's, Naumes Inc, and Associated Fruit have essentially swallowed up their smaller competitors, and each operates its own packinghouse. Thus, when prices drop and supplies are high, these three operations are faced with the difficult decision of moderating production in a way that does not disrupt other parts of the business. A relatively recent development is the construction of a new production facility for Amy's Kitchen in Medford, which opened in November of 2006. This food production facility is already attracting seasonal farmworkers in the area,

In addition, Jackson County's growing population has created a shortage of available, affordable land. Consequently, cities such as Central Point, Eagle Point, Jacksonville,<sup>8</sup> Medford and Phoenix are considering expanding their urban growth boundaries.<sup>8</sup> According to one local grower, several of the larger agricultural operations in Jackson County are looking to move out of the Medford, Oregon area in response to such efforts. However, there continue to be conflicting reports about whether such changes and consequent reductions in tree fruit acreage will necessarily unfold.

In other areas of the state, enrollment in the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Migrant Seasonal Head Start program is largely a product of the total number of harvested crop acres. In general, enrollment is not understood to be a function of total crop sales given that greater revenues do not necessarily imply a greater need for labor. In fact, often such gains imply that growers are successfully mechanizing production, reducing overhead (e.g., labor costs), and effectively regulating supply to increase prices and, consequently, sales. However, in Jackson County, the situation is atypical. The crops of Jackson County are agricultural commodities that can not be easily mechanized. For the most part, tree fruit and wine grapes need to be hand picked.

Consequently, adequate enrollment planning for the Oregon Child Development Coalition must attend to the issue of changing crop sales, as well as the ability of growers to continue mechanizing tree fruit production. Furthermore, Jackson's County's relatively explosive population growth over the past 10 years also warrants continued monitoring, as many low-income residents - including migrant and seasonal farmworkers - are being pushed into small pockets throughout the central part of the county.

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<sup>8</sup> Meg Landers, *Medford Weights Growth Changes*, April 27, 2006, Mail Tribune.



## ► DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Table 5 lists the total population of Jackson County in 2008 to be 20,138 up by 1.1 percent from 2007. Table 5 also indicates the total number of children under age four in Jackson County in 2008 to be 12,123.

Oregon Housing and Community Services organization reports that the 2007 number of individuals living in poverty in Jackson County was 12.7 percent. The 2007 poverty rate for children ages 3 and 4 was 16.6 percent and for children birth to two years of age it was 19.4 percent.<sup>9</sup>

During the 2008-2009 school year, 48.5 percent of students in Jackson County were eligible for free or reduced lunch (see Table 5). This was up from 41 percent in 2005. These figures are important to note for the reason that poverty is often associated with: health problems and access to health care, and the need for food stamps, temporary assistance to needy families (TANF) and housing.

## ► PROFILE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Table 5 displays the Hispanic composition of the population in all counties served by OCDC. Jackson County is reported as having a 2008 population of 18,469 Hispanic persons which represents an increase from 17,674 in 2007, an increase of 4.5 percent. Overall, the Hispanic population in Jackson County has grown over the past 10 years, and currently comprises the largest ethnic group in the Rogue Valley.<sup>10</sup> Jackson County's growing Hispanic population tends to be younger than the general population, with estimates revealing that Hispanics and Blacks under the age of 5 will outnumber non-Hispanic Whites by 2050.<sup>11</sup>

## ► DATA ANALYSIS: ELIGIBLE, UNSERVED MIGRANT CHILDREN

The Oregon Child Development Coalition contracted with a demographer, Jack DeWaard, who developed a method for estimating both the number of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and the number of children ages 0-5 of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Oregon counties for 2005 and 2008. The method builds upon Alice C. Larson's 2002 estimates of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and uses agricultural information from the Oregon Agricultural Information Network through Oregon State University.<sup>12</sup> Table 2 contains the estimated number of MFW and SFW for four years

<sup>9</sup> ODE Annual Estimate of Eligible 3 and 4 year olds 2009

<sup>10</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 8*, 2005, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>11</sup> Ray Collins and Angela Willson-Quayle, *Hispanics and Childcare: The Changing Landscape*, 2004, National Child Care Information Center.

<sup>12</sup> Alice C. Larson, *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study: Oregon, 2002*, Larson Assistance Services.



across an 11 year period from 1997 to 2008. As can be noted, in Jackson County there were 2,901 estimated migrant workers in 1997 and 1,645 in 2008. In addition there were estimates of 834 seasonal workers in 1997 and 2,819 seasonal workers in 2008.

Table 8 contains the number of estimated eligible, served, and estimated unserved migrant and seasonal children for 2008. **In Jackson County the estimated number of eligible migrant children is 228 and the total number of migrant children served is 74, meaning 154 migrant children are estimated to be unserved. The estimated numbers of eligible seasonal children is 648 and the total number of seasonal children served is 53, meaning 595 seasonal children are estimated to be unserved.**

Results of this analysis indicate that the Oregon Child Development Coalition could serve more migrant and seasonal children. Correspondence with the local Migrant Education office indicates that there is especially a need for additional Migrant Seasonal Head Start services in the areas of Central Point, Medford, and less so in White City.

## **STRENGTHS & NEEDS**

In this part of the report, information on services offered to children and families is discussed. External data from secondary sources and community organizations are used at the beginning of each subsection to construct a framework for specific strengths and needs. Internal data is then used at the close of each subsection to demonstrate that program management, staff and parents of program participants actively participated in the construction and development of this document.

### **► EDUCATION**

#### **Adult Education**

Data from the Oregon Department of Education (2008-09) show total public school enrollment in Jackson County to be approximately 28,367<sup>13</sup> students annually, 23.6 percent of which are non-white.<sup>14</sup> Across all high schools in Jackson County, the total number of high school dropouts is 640 students with a 7.6 percent high school dropout rate over the past four years.<sup>15</sup>

In 2007, 41.7 percent of the Jackson County residents 25 years or older had a high school degree or less level of education, with 23.5 percent of residents in the same age range in Jackson County having earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Oregon Department of Education, 2008-2009

<sup>14</sup> Oregon Department of Education, 2005-2006.

<sup>15</sup> Oregon Department of Education, 2005-2006.

<sup>16</sup> US Census Bureau.



Data on the educational attainment of parents of program participants from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information Report show that 93 percent of parents served have earned a high school degree or less. Further, of all families served by the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County, 16 are enrolled in either job training or school.

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing education services to children and families in Jackson County. In the area of adult education:

- Southern Oregon University provides a range of degree and continuing education programs, including a focus on early childhood education through the Department of Education.
- Rogue Community College provides adult education classes such as tutoring and adult basis skills programs, including GED preparation, Adult High School Diploma (AHSD), and ESL courses
- The Job Council provides employment training, referrals and placements, working closely with local employers to identify potential employees who meet basic skill requirements.
- US Bank and the Rogue Valley Credit Union provide consumer credit counseling and financial information.

In relation to the final bullet point, during a focus group with parents of program participants, parents expressed an interest in learning more about how to establish a credit history. Parents are eager to begin setting down roots in the community and are looking for mechanisms that will facilitate this process and put them on a path toward home ownership.

According to the Parent Involvement Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County, parents have expressed an interest not only in the area of learning how to establish a credit history, but also in additional ESL classes in the Medford, Oregon, area. Current efforts are being made to ensure that parents continue to be involved with planning the days and times during which such classes are offered, as well as which days and times work for local partners in the community. In the past, the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County has collaborated with Rogue Community College, the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, WIC, and Project Listo. Additionally, OCDC's main community partner in the area of Parent Education is SOLES, Southern Oregon Language Education Services. SOLES provides OCDC parents with low-cost education opportunities in the area of literacy, computers, citizenship, English and GED, among others.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Other programs that serve the migrant population include Migrant Education for the Southern Oregon ESD. In 2008, 1,067 received services thereby demonstrating the continued need for the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in this area.





Partnerships in the area of early childhood education include:

- The Southern Oregon Child and Family Council (Region X Head Start) and the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County have developed an interagency agreement to join strategies in such areas as recruitment, transitions, health, disabilities, training and technical assistance.
- Southern Oregon University and Rogue Community College provide curriculum on cultural competency. Public school teachers are encouraged to take the course, which offers a public school endorsement.
- The Early Childhood Partnership Group shares early childhood resource and conducts limited projects including developing community early childhood brochures and videos.
- Project Listo is a literacy program for the whole family, which provides: a supportive pre-school environment in Spanish for 3, 4, and 5 year-olds; a multi-age literacy based classroom for school-age siblings; childcare for infants and toddlers in a culturally and developmentally appropriate environment; English as a Second Language (ESL) and basic literacy classes in Spanish for parents; and shared literacy activities for children and parents.
- The Job Council began to offer a Spanish Early Literacy Mentor Program at the close of 2006 to assist early childhood and childcare providers in the community. The program has proven valuable in helping providers access available resources to upgrade site safety and learning tools. As of August 2009 the program is without a mentor. They hope to re-staff the mentor(s) soon.
- The Southern Oregon Education Service District provides a range of education and support services to children, families and local providers.
- Since the fall of 2008, Rogue Community College offers Bi-lingual early childhood education.
- The Jackson County Library systems works closely with OCDC to provide participatory activities for children. The programs offered are Wobblers, Babies-in-the Library and Preschool Story Time which serve infants through five year olds.

Interviews with representatives from several of the above agencies found that there is currently a need to continue building the stock of bilingual educators in Jackson County. Specifically, it was noted that teachers with degrees earned in other countries often experience barriers when attempting to teach in the United States. Many times, these individuals have decades of experience in early childhood education, but lack a degree from a U.S. institution. The need for quality, bilingual educators was also expressed by the Education Manager for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education, in conjunction with the Southern Oregon University, is offering a grant to earn a Masters Degree in the area of language acquisition and teaching English as a Second Language. The SOTELD (Southern Oregon Teachers of English Language Development) grant is offered yearly.



Early childhood providers also cited as a strength the “working relationship” with the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County. According to the Education Manager for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County, additional efforts are being made to expand and maintain these community partnerships, as well as increase representation on the Early Childhood Partnership Group, a direction that is consistent with the need to build greater name recognition and increase visibility in the community, as discussed by one local early childhood provider.

In a focus group with parents of program participants, aside from the expressed need for additional hours of Migrant Seasonal Head Start services per day, there was some confusion expressed by parents as to the difference between the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program and the local, regional Head Start program operated by the Southern Oregon Child and Family Council. Thus, there is currently a need to speak to this distinction in a way that keeps various target audiences in mind - parents, community partners, potential funders, and other key stakeholders.

## ► **MENTAL HEALTH & DISABILITIES**

Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition’s Program Information Report indicated five children were determined to have a disability. The primary disability identified included four children with speech and language delays and 1 child classified as non-categorical.<sup>17</sup>

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing mental health and disabilities services to children and families in Jackson County.

- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County shares an interagency agreement with Asante Health Systems to provide disabilities and related services to children and families.
- Contracted mental health services are provided by La Clinica del Valle to children and families enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.
- Jackson County Mental Health provides mental health services to children and adolescents with mental health disorders. Following assessment, treatment interventions are identified which can include cognitive behavioral therapy for anxiety, depression, eating disorders and trauma, and various forms of parent-child and family interventions including Parent Child Interaction Therapy. Psychiatric assessment and medication management are available and used in conjunction with psychotherapeutic strategies. They also provide Intensive Community-based Treatment Supports based on a wraparound model to families with children with serious emotional and behavioral disorders to enable them to stay at home and in school. Parent's active involvement in their child's treatment

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<sup>17</sup> Program Information Report, Oregon Child Development Coalition, 2008.





and their support of behavioral changes in the family are usually an essential part of the success of any treatment.<sup>18</sup>

The Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County several needs were expressed which were noted to guide the formation and development of partnerships in this area over the next year. First, additional efforts are being made to ensure that contracted mental health services from La Clinica del Valle continue to be provided to children on site. And, secondly, additional efforts are being made to ensure greater coordination with Asante Health Systems such that transportation services are provided to enrolled children by the disabilities services provider to and from the program center.

Also of interest was the expressed need for speech therapies in Spanish. Evidently, Asante Health Systems has experienced low retention of Spanish providers, with current speech therapies provided only in English. Thus, additional efforts are need to expand partnerships in this area. Likewise, parents of program participants also noted that adult quality mental health services in Spanish are quite limited in the community. Parents did highlight the fact that that Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County does provide support in this area; however, there was little knowledge of services outside of what the agency provides.

## ► HEALTH & NUTRITION

Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information report show that 108 out of 127 children entered the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in Jackson County in 2008 with health insurance<sup>19</sup>. Of those with health insurance, 106 were covered by The Oregon Health Plan. For those without health insurance Oregon Child Development Coalition worked with families to reduce the number of children without health insurance. The following is a breakdown of the agencies providing health and dental services to children and families in Jackson County. The number of families receiving WIC services in Jackson County was 82.

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing health and dental services to children and families in Jackson County.

- The Jackson County Health Department provides core public health services, including family planning, disease prevention, investigation, immunization, environmental health, home visiting, and maternal child health.
- La Clinica del Valle provides medical, dental, and mental health services, including screenings, immunizations, and dental work. They also provide outreach workers - or *promotoras* - to make home visits to work with parents and children, as well as oversee the Healthy Start program to support positive

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<sup>18</sup> Jackson County, OR Website August 2009

<sup>19</sup> *Program Information Report, 2008 & 2009*, Oregon Child Development Coalition.



- parenting and improve health support systems. Overall, roughly one-half of their patients are of Hispanic origin.
- Southern Oregon Pediatrics provides medical services to children and families in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and Oregon Prekindergarten Programs (OPK).
  - Providence Medford Medical Center provides health, pediatric and emergency services to Jackson County residents, including Providence Birth Place, a family-centered maternity care program. Providence also operates the Kid's Clinic.
  - The Family Practice Group provides medical services to children and families enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and OPK Programs.
  - The Community Health Center provides primary health services and targeting vulnerable populations in Jackson County, including the medically uninsured or underinsured, the unemployed or underemployed, and those for whom English is not their primary language.
  - WIC provides a nutritionist to work with children and families enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and OPK Programs.
  - Local dentists - Dr. Dennehy, Dr. Cochran, Dr. Hampton and Dr. Shiskin - provide dental screenings for children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and OPK Programs.
  - Melanie Breidenthal is a dental hygienist who works with children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and OPK Programs.

Representatives from the above agencies were surveyed to determine the greatest medical and dental needs of children and families in the Jackson County area. Primary needs identified include (i) the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate programs to educate parents on preventive care, (ii) the need for additional low or no cost services in light of the growing number of uninsured clients, (iii) and the need to speak to the current immigration situation in light of the fact that many families are apprehensive about obtaining services that might, in the future, jeopardize their chances for citizenship.

The common theme in the above paragraph is the need for continued education, with local providers highlighting not only the benefits of a train-the-trainer model, but also a train-the-parent model as a way to build capacity among those in need and as a way to reach out to vulnerable populations that may otherwise be inaccessible. While the growing number of uninsured clients may not appear to invite a discussion of education, according to the Family and Health Services Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County, there are in fact many families who are eligible for the Oregon Health Plan but who would benefit from additional information around the reapplication process and changing providers so that families retain OHP coverage. According to other service providers, addressing these two issues may provide a platform to bring in legal experts from the community to educate clients about those benefits that are available to them despite their legal status given that, according to providers, clients prefer the advice of "experts" (e.g., legal experts) as opposed to advice provided by intake or case workers.



In the light of the issues discussed above, as a starting point, the Family and Health Services Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County is currently looking to develop and disseminate a medical information packet to be distributed to families in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start and OPK Programs. Of notable interest is that this packet would contain information that is relevant to the health needs of the entire family. During a focus group with parents of program participants, it was revealed that parents are often frustrated by the inability to secure appointment times and that quality of care in the community tends to vary by provider. Thus, the development of this information packet would address these issues, providing families with additional resources to manage their health needs.

## ► FAMILY SERVICES

The number of families who received emergency/crisis intervention (addressing an immediate need for food, clothing or shelter) was 2 in Jackson County.<sup>20</sup> Figures from the Children First for Oregon show 1,394 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cases in Jackson County. Additionally, the number of cases for food stamps in Jackson County was 12,190.<sup>21</sup> In 2008, Children First reported figures estimating the number of child abuse victims in Jackson County to be 760 children with 53% of the victims under the age of six.<sup>22</sup>

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing family and social services to children and families in Jackson County.

- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County has developed an interagency agreement with the local Child Care Resource and Referral provider to facilitate referrals.
- The Oregon Department of Human Services has offices in Jackson County providing social and health related services to children, adults and families, as well as to seniors and people with disabilities.
- Shelter services in Jackson County are provided by Community Works.
- Access Food Share boasts 19 food pantries, 7 emergency meal programs and 15 supplemental programs. Each month, 33,080 food boxes are distributed, serving some 6,410 individuals.<sup>23</sup>
- Other food banks in the areas include the Ashland Emergency Food Bank and Buen Provecho Food Bank
- A program of Community Works, Sexual Assault Victim Services provides crisis intervention, advocacy, information and referral, and support group services to Jackson County residents.
- The Job Council has a social service team that provides clothing referrals, referrals, and food bank information. In the past, it has also provided the Oregon

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<sup>20</sup> Program Information Report, Oregon Child Development Coalition 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Children First for Oregon, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Children First 2008

<sup>23</sup> *Regional Food Banks at a Glance*, 2005, Oregon Food Bank.



Child Development Coalition in Jackson County with a small resource support fund.

- The Hispanic Interagency Committee shares resources, networks and updates around current programs that can support Hispanic families.
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church receives referrals for families with immigration concerns.
- The Northwest Seasonal Worker Association provides advocacy and related services.
- Local churches and faith communities provide additional support in the form of volunteers and gift cards.
- The Unete Center for Farmworker Advocacy and Immigrant Rights brings in various volunteers from partner agencies to organize the annual *Dia del Campesino*.
- Centro Hispano and Cross Cultural Communication Center continue to be a strong voices in the community, assisting with interpretation and translation.
- The Center for Nonprofit Legal Services provide no and low cost legal services to those in need.
- John Amaguer and Martha Rangel provide additional legal services in family law, contracts, immigration, simple wills and other civil law matters.

Representatives from several of the above agencies have determined the greatest family services needs Jackson County are in the areas of housing, energy and food assistance. Particularly, it was noted, families are finding it increasingly difficult to manage the cost of living in light of high housing costs and the areas population growth. Another issue that was discussed was families' *perceptions* of barriers in accessing services. In light of fears around documentation issues, families in the community are concerned that many service agencies are tied to the government. Thus, should families apply for food assistance, for example, they worry that they will either ruin their chances for future citizenship or be deported altogether. What becomes clear, then, is that families are in need of additional information and resources pertaining to their rights and those services that are available to them.

The Family and Health Services Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County emphasized the need to advocate for families by increasing their visibility and representation in the community. Local service providers, as well, also spoke to the need for continued advocacy, suggesting that the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County continue to be involved in collaborative outreach efforts.

## ► **CHILDCARE**

Oregon Child Care Research Partnership reports the following information on child care in Jackson County in 2008. There were 3,747 slots in child care and education centers, and 2,173 slots in family child care. Oregon's goal is to have 25 visible slots for every 100 children and Hood River had 18 per 100 children. It was also reported that 1,229



children age 0-12 received state assistance, through DHS, with part of all of their child care costs.<sup>24</sup>

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing childcare and related services to children in Jackson County.

- Operated by the Job Council, Childcare Resource and Referral in Jackson County makes approximately 2,000 referrals annually. Approximately 5 percent of the requests for information are from primary Spanish speaking callers.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition monitors daycare food programs throughout Jackson County, as well as works with Spanish speaking childcare providers
- Sixteen (16) certified childcare centers operate throughout Jackson County, most of which are located in Medford, Oregon.
- Approximately 280 family childcare homes operate throughout Jackson County, with many of these located in Medford, Oregon. 66 of these providers are bi-lingual with the majority being primary Spanish speakers.<sup>25</sup>

An interview with a representative from the Job Council's Childcare Resource and Referral revealed that there is currently a need to focus on building the capacity of new and existing, *quality* childcare providers to ensure that providers are viewed as professionals in the community. A common scenario is that parents sometimes do not pay for received childcare services, thereby frustrating home childcare providers who, subsequently, decide to quit their business.

While collecting data for this assessment, a focus group was conducted with 9 home childcare providers in Jackson County. Providers were adamant about the fact that parents do not view them as professionals, refusing to pay and failing to call if hours of care need to be changed. While providers understand that parents need more hours of care - generally from 6:15 am to 10 pm - they stand at the receiving end of an exchange that leaves them with caring for children long past agreed upon hours.

When asked to describe the most pressing issue affecting childcare providers *in one word*, there was unanimity among childcare providers that *professionalism* is the most important issue. Providers were also given the opportunity to share insights about how to remedy this situation. What emerged was a discussion around the need for greater direct involvement in communicating additional training needs to Child Care Resource and Referral and the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Food Program. Additionally, providers are looking for trainings that are specific to infants, toddlers and pre-kindergarteners, as well as and trainings that cover skills around relating to parents.

In the light of above discussion, it was not surprising when parents of program participants enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program also spoke to the

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<sup>24</sup> Child Care and Education in Oregon and its Counties: 2008, prepared by the Oregon Child Care Research Partnership OSU.

<sup>25</sup> Jackson County Job Council August, 2009



limited stock of quality childcare in Jackson County. Parents noted that the costs did not reflect quality in many cases. Parents also noted that greater capacity is needed, especially among Spanish speaking childcare providers.

## ► TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING

Transitioning from a discussion of childcare to one of transportation and housing, in the area of housing, the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services reported 16 farm labor camps in Jackson County in 2008 with a occupancy total of 608. This represents a decrease from 2006 where 17 labor camps with an occupancy total of 574.<sup>26</sup>

The following is a breakdown of housing and related services in Jackson County.

- Jackson County Housing Authority owns 10 apartment complexes that provide low income housing. At least two apartment complexes - Lilac Meadows and Anderson Vista - cater to farmworker families. Overall, there are at least 78 units in these two complexes alone.
- There are 81 manufactured home parks in Jackson County, with the majority of parks located in Ashland, Central Point, Medford and White City. Total capacity is 3,460 spaces.
- There are 16 farm labor camps in Jackson County, the majority of which cater to single men. Total capacity is 540 persons. Twelve of these camps are located in the Medford, Oregon, and Talent, Oregon, areas.
- The Housing Authority of Jackson County provides a range of housing and assistance programs including voucher assistance, public housing, and home rehabilitation.

Interviews with service providers from across the spectrum found that there is currently a need for affordable housing in Jackson County. According to local service providers, it has been the population of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Jackson County that has been hit especially hard.

Interviews with a number of respondents found that those migrant and seasonal farmworkers who currently lack documentation are unable to find housing. Farmworker housing developments in the area require proof of documentation, while many other apartment complexes have income requirements attached. However, by the nature of the work, migrant and seasonal farmworkers are not employed year round and earn little more than minimum wages. Thus, there is a gap that not only involves wages and the affordability of housing, but also the *availability* of housing to those without documentation.

In a focus group with parents of program participants, it was noted that families also experience barriers to securing housing when farmworker housing complexes adopt

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<sup>26</sup> Agricultural Labor Housing Registry, Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services, 2008.





stringent definitions for what constitutes working in agriculture. One parent noted that she works in a fruit packinghouse; however, she was denied housing at a farmworker housing complex because she did not touch the fruit directly. Thus, this parent was forced to rent an apartment that was substantially more expensive, spending roughly 50 percent of their household income on rent.

Jackson County is also experiencing some growing pains in the area of transportation. The following is a breakdown of the agencies providing transportation services in Jackson County.

- Rogue Valley Transportation District provides public transportation weekday services in Jackson County, serving some 80,000 riders each month. In addition to fixed route service, Rouge Valley Transportation District provides Valley Lift services.
- Operated by Rogue Valley Transportation District, TransLink provides transportation services to patients covered by the Oregon Health Plan.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County works with ACT Oregon to promote access to car seats for migrant and seasonal families.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County continues to partner with other early childhood providers such as the Southern Oregon Child and Family Council toward the development of a substitute bus driver pool.

The Transportation Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County hopes that bus service can be expanded. Also, the Rogue Valley Transportation Authority is looking for ways to increase the number of fixed route riders. Interest has also been expressed in working with local organizations and participating in meetings and events for parents and clients that would not only provide them with more information about public transportation services in Jackson County, but which would also benefit the Rogue Valley Transportation Authority in increasing the number of fixed route riders.



# **EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES, CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES**

## **EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES**

Table 8, contained in the earlier Oregon Community Assessment and OCDC Overview section of this report, listed 2008 estimated eligible and served migrant and seasonal Head Start children. Because it will be referred to several times in this section, a copy of it is also contained on the next page of this section.

Because OCDC gives first priority to migrant children, the following discussion focuses on them. For 2008, the estimated eligible number of migrant children in the state was 4,464 of which 3,679 were located in the 12 counties OCDC serves (Table 8). Of the estimated 3,679 eligible children, OCDC served about half (1,803), leaving 1,876 unserved. There is also an estimated 785 eligible unserved 0-5 year old children living in the other 24 counties in the state.

If resources are available, what opportunities should OCDC pursue? Three broad possibilities exist: market penetration, market development and combined market penetration and market development. These three approaches plus other supporting strategies are discussed next. An important reason for presenting these ideas is to inform the Board of Directors and Policy Council as they consider future directions for the agency. Following this presentation are concluding CA remarks plus proposed changes.

### **▶ MARKET PENETRATION**

With this approach, OCDC would penetrate or access children from the estimated 1,876 migrant children existing in its current territory or market. In Table 8, the Marion/Multnomah/Clackamas three-county area has the largest estimated number of these unserved children (822). The Hood River/Wasco combined area is the next largest with 807 estimated unserved children. An advantage of this strategy is that it would probably be less costly than other ways to serve additional children. OCDC already has resources (e.g., staff, buildings, and buses) and experiences (e.g., relationships with growers and other service providers) in these counties and this probably means less effort would be necessary to serve additional children/families than moving into new counties. This would certainly be true if additional children could be served at current sites that were not operating at full capacity and it would be less true if new service sites were needed.



Table 8: 2008 Estimated Eligible, Served & Estimated Unserved Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Children Ages 0-5

	2008	2008	2008	2008	2008	2008
	Estimated Eligible Migrant Children	Served Migrant Children	Estimated Eligible Unserved Migrant Children	Estimated Eligible Seasonal Children	Served Seasonal Children	Estimated Eligible Unserved Seasonal Children
<b>Oregon</b>	≈4,464	1,803	≈2,661	≈14,154	916	≈13,238
<b>OCDC Counties</b>						
Hd River/Wasco	≈1,191 (565+626)	384	≈807	≈2,903 (1,618+1,285)	121	≈2,782
Jackson	≈228	74	≈154	≈648	53	≈595
Jefferson	≈42	42	≈0	≈134	61	≈73
Klamath	≈19	49	≈0	≈78	80	≈0
Mar/Mul/Clack	≈1,268 (712+105+451)	446 (306+14)	≈822	≈4,641 (2,787+414+1,44)	192 (63+129)	≈4,449
Malhuer	≈172	215	≈0	≈533	99	≈434
Polk	≈199	88	≈111	≈690	49	≈641
Umatilla	≈184	206	≈0	≈1,034	107	≈927
Wash	≈376	299	≈77	≈1,195	154	≈1,041
<b>Total OCDC Counties</b>	≈3,679	1,803	≈1,876	≈11,856	916	≈10,940
<b>Total Unserved Counties</b>	≈785	0	≈785	≈2,298	0	≈2,298
<b>Selected Unserved Counties</b>						
Yamhill	≈393	0	≈393	≈832	0	≈832
Benton	≈175	0	≈175	≈383	0	≈383
Lane	≈97	0	≈97	≈351	0	≈351

Sources: Indirect estimates of migrant and seasonal children ages 0-5, OCDC, 2008; Program Information Report, OCDC, 2008



## ▶ **MARKET DEVELOPMENT**

Another approach is to serve additional children from the 785 estimated unserved migrant children located in counties OCDC does not currently provide service. Hence, OCDC would spread out or develop new territories/counties/markets. In Table 8, OCDC's unserved counties with the largest estimated eligible migrant children are listed. Yamhill County with 393 children has the largest estimated unserved number followed by Benton County with 175 and Lane County with 97. A reason for selecting this approach over market penetration is that children/families in new counties may have greater education, disability, mental health, etc. needs than the additional children that could be served through the market penetration strategy.

## ▶ **COMBINED MARKET PENETRATION AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT**

Employing a combined strategy means OCDC would serve additional children in both its current 12 counties as well as new counties and combine the benefits of each approach. In general, knowledge about the market penetration and market development strategies helps decision makers visualize and understand location differences with regard to serving additional children/families.

## ▶ **OTHER STRATEGIES**

Other strategies also may need to be considered. Suppose a program has decided to serve additional children in new counties or at new sites in its currently served counties. The next question needing an answer is: How should the program enter those new areas? It could enter by itself (start-up entry) or it could partner with others (strategic alliance entry). If OCDC elects to use the start-up entry approach it has complete control of all decisions and the outcomes, both positive and negative. However, OCDC will be responsible for all associated costs. If a strategic alliance is established, the costs are mitigated but there is the need for collaboration and cooperation.

An important part of a strategic alliance is the development of a formal (written) document between the two or more involved parties covering the agreed upon commitments and responsibilities. Ideally, partners provide the alliance with different resources, capitalizing on each of their strengths. Resources include: staff, buildings, equipment, expertise, and funding. Each partner, in turn, hopes that the benefits of the alliance--a synergy--will be greater than those from their individual efforts. The alliance can be cooperation or collaboration. The main differences between these two types is that a collaboration is a more active form of cooperation and, as such, requires more input time while producing more output benefits for the parties. Although alliances are attractive and partners can see the benefits during the planning phase, some do not produce the desired outcomes. Often problems arise during implementation when unexpected issues occur and the parties cannot agree on what actions should be taken.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

OCDC is serving the needs of many Migrant and Seasonal families in Oregon. OCDC offers an array of services to meet family needs to match peak agricultural seasons while addressing long-term needs of seasonal workers who remain in the community. The scheduled hours and program options are designed to meet the varying needs of each of the twelve counties where most migrant and seasonal workers reside or work. However, the “season” for agriculture continues to evolve into one that is year round with no one “peak” harvest period due to crop diversity, crop rotation, and changing farm management practices. In some areas it is reported that there are more than one “peak” season where additional workers are needed. Agricultural reports indicate a continued growth in planting of orchards, vineyards, and hop yards and a growing emphasis on local “farm to market” activities supported by the industry and the consumer.

OCDC has extensive partnerships in the state that are designed: to meet the needs of their employees, through professional development; and to meet the needs of the families, through collaborative partnerships with key agencies in the state providing health, disabilities, mental health and educational services. Of particular note is the expanded emphasis and interest in family literacy and working with local clinics to provide medical and dental services.

## **PROPOSED CHANGES**

The following are suggested changes associated with the Community Assessment process.

- Estimates of MSFW and their children should be carefully reviewed and an emphasis placed on validating the numbers in the state, the counties and in local areas within the counties.
- There appears to be a need to develop a weighting scale to assist in the prioritization of future expansion into additional counties or within current counties served in the state. Should expansion dollars or other resources become available, the scale would include criteria for weighing family and community needs to determine the neediest areas.
- It is suggested that data be gathered from each of the twelve counties rather than consolidating Clackamas into Multnomah and Marion and combining Hood River with Wasco.
- Questions contained in the parent survey should be reviewed. Some questions may need to be redesigned to reduce their ambiguity. Also, depending on the purpose of the survey, other questions may need to be added to more fully cover the services offered by OCDC and the needs of families.
- It is recommended that timelines for completing data reports to inform the grant application using the Needs Assessment, Community Assessments, Training and Technical Assistance Plan, Goals and Objectives and Budget be reviewed and revised at the county and state level.



- An ongoing CA team, led by the Director of Resource Development at the central office, needs to be established to oversee the data gathering and analysis process, and to identify trends that impact the services OCDC offers. The outcomes of the CA can be integrated more fully in training and technical assistance, grant applications, goals and objectives and the self assessment.

