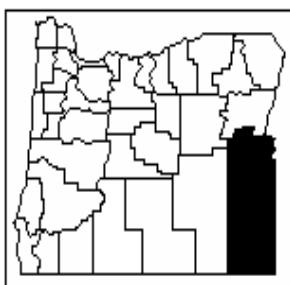


MALHEUR COUNTY

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County improves the lives of children and families through the Migrant Seasonal Head Start 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 program in Malheur County served 269 children in 2008. Of these, 140 were identified as migrant children and 129 were identified as seasonal.

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County currently employs a center-based option, serving children from two locations in Ontario, Oregon, and Nyssa, Oregon. The long-term program runs 32 weeks from January through August, operating, 5 days per week from 8 am to 2 pm in Nyssa, Oregon, and from 9 am to 3 pm in Ontario, Oregon. There are 3 classrooms in Nyssa and 4 in Ontario. The short-term program runs 14.5 weeks from August through November, operating 14 classrooms, and 5 days per week from 6 am to 5 pm. When funding allows, extension weeks are given for 63 slots to begin June 1st. This program option allows us to provide services for families who work in agriculture during two of the high demand seasons in our area.



The service area includes the entirety of Malheur County, some 9,874 square miles. The recruitment area, however, is determined by three factors: (i) the location of growers as the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County attends to those especially agricultural areas of Malheur County, (ii) the program center locations and (iii) acceptable transportation times per the Head Start Performance Standards.

CRITICAL ISSUES

► IMMIGRATION

While raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents continue to be of concern in Malheur County, there have been no recent reports of actual raids. Growers and farmworkers are continually on alert for ICE raids and rumors of raids, but are not currently having the effects of such on employment and employment opportunities. The economic health and viability of this predominantly agricultural region is not as traumatized now as in past years.

Lack of citizenship is becoming more of an issue in Malheur County because farmworkers are now required to provide proof of citizenship when renewing their



drivers license and CDL. As a result, farmworkers are losing their drivers license and CDL and are unable to legally drive cars and trucks.

► EMPLOYMENT

With the closure of the majority of the Amalgamated Sugar Company in Nyssa, Oregon in 2005, agricultural employment opportunities are more limited than prior years in Nyssa. Interest by Fry Foods, an Ohio food processing company, in expanding its operations to Nyssa, Oregon, has yet to materialize. In addition to all of the packing sheds in Ontario, Oregon, Partners Produce is operating their business 24/7, packing frozen chopped onions and onion rings. Dickensen FineFood in Payette, Idaho does the same. This has opened up approximately 35 more jobs in this area.

► GANG RELATED ACTIVITY

With new recruits being sought among grade and middle school students in these areas, efforts are currently being directed toward educating parents, particularly single parents, of the warning signs of gang involvement.¹ The Malheur County District Attorney's Office has a new city and county gang ordinance modeled after that developed by the Portland Police Bureau which essentially works to create official gang designations as a way to restrict associations between gang members and people on probation.

COUNTY PROFILE

► GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Malheur County is located in eastern Oregon, spanning roughly half of the state's eastern border with Idaho. Some 9,874 square miles, Malheur County is the second largest county in Oregon and roughly the size of the state of New Hampshire. Elevation at the county seat, Vale, Oregon, is 2,243 feet above sea level, with average temperatures ranging from well below 29 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter months to well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer months. The area receives approximately 10 inches of rain annually, including significant snow during the winter months, and is recognized for its diverse landscape, open rangeland, and agricultural operations in the Treasure Valley area.² When a canal system was put in place, the Treasure Valley became Malheur County's agricultural hub. Primary commodities produced in this area include onions, sugar beets and potatoes.

¹ Andy Gates, *A Long-Term Challenge*, 2006, Argus Observer.

² Oregon Blue Book, 2008.



► ECONOMIC PROFILE

Data from Table 1 (all tables are contained in the earlier Oregon Community Assessment and OCDC Overview section of the Community Assessment) indicate that in 2007 the median per capita income in Malheur County was \$22,567 which falls well below the \$39,209 level for all of Oregon. In fact, Malheur's per capita income is the lowest of the 12 counties in which OCDC provides services. Table 1 also shows the total number of individuals employed in Malheur County in 2007 was 18,674 with 14.85 percent in agriculture. Of the 12 counties OCDC serves, Malheur has the highest percentage of workers employed on farms. Unemployment in Malheur County was 9.6 percent in 2007 and the rate decreased to 7.8 percent in 2008, but it increased to 11.2 percent in July 2009.

Malheur County - specifically Ontario, Oregon - serves as a retail trade center for both the entire county and neighboring Payette and Washington Counties in Idaho. There is a growing interdependence between Malheur County and western Idaho, noting that the four counties that are primarily responsible for "exporting" residents to Malheur County are all in neighboring Idaho. Likewise, 35 percent of all out-migrants from Malheur County moved to neighboring Payette and Washington Counties in Idaho. Thus, it is not surprising that Malheur County leads the state in the percentage of out-of-state workers employed and the percentage of workers working outside of Oregon.

Aside from the number of non-county residents filling ranks of the employed in Malheur County, employment in the area is highly seasonal, which has the effect of inflating the unemployment rate in this area of the state. The current unemployment rate in Malheur County is 11.2 percent, the second highest in the counties served by OCDC in the state. Higher unemployment in this area is generally attributed to one of three factors, namely (i) that the seasonal nature of employment means that there will naturally be several months during the year when unemployment peaks, (ii) that the local economy lacks diversity and so offers limited job opportunities and (iii) that economic growth in the state of Oregon has historically bypassed southeast Oregon. At any given point, migrant and seasonal farmworkers account for roughly one-third of all farmworkers in Malheur County. (I don't understand this statement. All farmworkers are either migrant or seasonal.

Number of persons employed in Agriculture by Month in 2008

Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1,310	1,330	1,440	1,660	1,830	2,170	2,202	2,060	2,150	2,140	1,780	1,510

Enrollment in the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Migrant Seasonal Head Start program is more a function of harvested acres than total sales. As growers increase efficiency (i.e., farm less acreage and realize greater sales), it is often the case that crops are increasing mechanized as a way to reduce labor costs, thereby displacing agricultural



workers. Interviews with management team members for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County revealed that growers are increasingly turning to machines for “topping” onions, as well as spraying fields to lessen the need for hand weeding later.

► DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Data shown in Table 5 reported the total population of Malheur County in 2008 to be 30,907 up by 1.45 percent from 2007. Table 5 also indicates the total number of children under age four in Klamath County in 2008 to be 1,962.

Oregon Housing and Community Services organization reports that the 2007 number of individuals living in poverty in Malheur County was 37.5 percent. The 2007 poverty rate for children ages 3 and 4 was 34.2 percent and for children birth to two years of age it was 37.5 percent.³ During the 2008-2009 school year 66.7 percent of students in Malheur County schools were eligible for free or reduced lunch (see Table 5).

► DATA ANALYSIS: ELIGIBLE, UNSERVED 3-4 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

The Oregon Department of Education estimates there to be 897 children between the ages of 3 and 4 in Malheur County in 2008. To estimate the total number of Head Start eligible 3 and 4 year old children, the Oregon Department of Education multiplied the total number of children by the poverty rate for Malheur County, 34.2 percent in 2008. Thus, the 2008 total number of eligible Head Start children in Malheur County was 307 children.⁴ From this, the number of Head Start children served in Malheur County by Head Start programs, 258 children, is subtracted. This means the 2008 estimated number of unserved, eligible Head Start children was 49 children. Thus, 84 percent of eligible Head Start children were served in Malheur County.

In the sections that follow, the Oregon Child Development Coalition will further refine the estimates to provide estimates for the number of unserved, eligible Migrant Seasonal Head Start children in Malheur County.

RACIAL & ETHNIC COMPOSITION

► POPULATION & ANCESTRY

In general, Blacks, Asians and Native Hawaiians are underrepresented in southeast Oregon. The area also has fewer multiracial persons. That said, growth in Malheur County’s Hispanic population is consistent with what is currently taking place across the

³ ODE Annual Estimate of Eligible 3-4 year olds and birth-2 year olds, 2009

⁴ Estimated Number of Eligible 3 and 4 Year Olds, Oregon Department of Education, 2009.,



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state and throughout the nation. Roughly 1 in 4 residents in Malheur County is of Hispanic origin, the second highest such percentage in the state next to Morrow County.⁵

► PROFILE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

In 2008, 314 children were enrolled in the Malheur Migrant Seasonal Head Start program based on income eligibility or public assistance. Overall, program participants were of Hispanic or Latino origin, which includes persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South and Central American or other Latino culture or origin. The Hispanic population in Malheur County was at 8,581 down from 8,585, representing a -.05 percent change from 2007 (see Table 5).

► 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.⁶ Table 2 contains the estimated number of MFW and SFW for four years across an 11 year period from 1997 to 2008.

As can be noted, in Malheur County there were 1,765 estimated migrant workers in 1997. The number declined in 2002 and also 2005. The 2008 estimated number of 1,459 is about the same as the 2005 number. Over the 11 year period, then, there has been a decline in the estimated MFM. On the other hand, there were estimates of 821 seasonal workers in 1997 and 2,501 in 2002, showing a large increase. During 2005 and 2008, however, SFW declined somewhat to the 2,130 level, but it is still much higher than the 1997 level. The county trend appears to be shifting from migrant to seasonal workers.

The estimates of children of MFW and SFW reflect the changes discussed above. Table 7 shows the changes in this estimated population of children under five over the three year period 2005 to 2008. The table notes there were 171 migrant children and 534 seasonal children in Malheur County in 2005. The numbers of estimated migrant children remained nearly the same at 172 and the numbers of children from seasonal families also remained nearly the same at 533 in 2008.

Table 8 contains the number of estimated eligible, served and estimated eligible estimated unserved for each county where services are provided by OCDC. **In Malheur**

⁵ Jason Yohannan, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 14, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

⁶ Alice C. Larson, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study: Oregon, 2002, Larson Assistance Services.



County the estimated number of eligible migrant children is 172 and the total number of migrant children served is 215. The estimated number of eligible seasonal children is 533 and the number served is 99, leaving 434 estimated unserved.

One reason the number of estimated migrant children was lower than the number served is that the estimated number does not include children of families served in Payette County, Idaho, the neighboring county where families served by Malheur County reside. A second reason may be that the estimation method employed by OCDC produced an underestimate. The high mobility of migrant families makes it difficult to predict their numbers. The fact that the migrant population reached full enrollment and was served in those areas is the best indication of need. This also reflects the importance of ongoing dialogue with growers to anticipate crop rotation and crop production plans since this influences migration. The “networks” among Migrant workers who use cell phones to communicate weather and crop information influence the number of migrant families who arrive in an area as well.

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

The median level of education in Malheur County is a high school graduate or high school equivalency, with 11 percent of the total population having earned a bachelor's degree or higher.⁷ Data on the educational attainment of parents of program participants from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's 2008 Program Information Report show that 73 percent of parents served have a high school degree or less. Of all families served by the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County, and five are enrolled in either job training or school.

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

- Treasure Valley Community College provides community education classes and workforce training. Serving roughly 2,000 students with these courses and

⁷ DP-2: *Profile of Selected Social Characteristics*, 2000, United States Census Bureau.

- trainings annually, particular efforts are being directed towards ESL and GED courses offered in Nyssa, Ontario and Vale.
- Efforts and fundraising to save the Malheur County Public Library have been successful to date but funding will continue to be an issue for the library in Malheur County. Availability of the library ensures educational opportunities for children and families.
 - The Oregon Employment Department's WorkSource Oregon office provides a range of trainings and services for job seekers and employers.
 - The Oregon Human Development Corporation works with displaced agricultural workers offering a job-training program while also working with local employers in the area.

In general, Treasure Valley Community College has expressed an interest in “developing things that people can actually use,” meaning specialized trainings and other courses. In a team meeting that included the Family and Community Partnership Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County it was revealed that parents are looking to take advantage of those educational opportunities in the area, but many times are inhibited from doing so given that such classes conflict with dates of scheduled parent activities for the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.

Early Childhood Education

In the area of early childhood education, other Head Start programs in Malheur County include that operated by the Malheur County Child Development Center (MCCDC). The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County continues to work with the Malheur County Child Development Center to strengthen Head Start services provided to low-income children and families. Likewise, in neighboring Idaho, the Western Idaho Community Action Partnership (WICAP) also operates a Head Start program and works in partnership with the Oregon Child Development Coalition. Agency representatives note that both MCCDC and WICAP have developed a strong partnership with the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County, including HSAC involvement and shared participation in site reviews.

According to the Education Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County, greater efforts are being made to focus on language and literacy as well as science and math training and social and emotional development, with partnerships being developed and maintained with local Head Start programs and both public and private schools to support such efforts. This emphasis has resulted in much higher outcomes for our pre-school children and has contributed to a more successful transition to kindergarten with a higher success rate for the majority of the children.

Partnerships in the area of early childhood education include:



- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County and the Malheur County Child Development Center continue to work together to strengthen Head Start services provided to low-income children and families in Malheur County.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County continues to work with Western Idaho Community Action Partnership’s Head Start program to join strategies in such areas as recruitment, transitions, health, disabilities, training and technical assistance.
- The Malheur County Commission on Children and Families facilitates the Early Childhood Team, as well as oversees state and federal grants including Great Start funds. The Early Childhood Team has been effective in integrating services and providing information to all county agencies.
- Treasure Valley Community College’s Early Childhood Department continues to develop bilingual curriculum in response needs identified in the community, including a new delivery plan for early childhood classes. They have developed curriculum for an Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education and are currently working with Boise State University for develop a Bachelor of Applied Science so staff can continue up their educational ladder and be in compliance with the educational requirements of the Head Start Act.
- The Malheur Education Service District provides a range of education and support services to children, families and local providers.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition has worked with and obtained signed agreements from local elementary schools that outline an effective transitions plan for children entering kindergarten. The Oregon Child Development Coalition staff participates in trainings provided by the public schools this past year. The two groups have begun work on a longitudinal study to document the success rate of the children coming from the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program through the fourth grade.

There is a pronounced need within local school districts to recruit and retain qualified bilingual Parent Involvement Coordinators to foster greater parent involvement. While the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County has developed a transition plan with the Nyssa and Ontario School Districts, greater efforts are needed to see that parents become more fully involved in their child’s education once in grade school, something that is partially facilitated by opportunities for involvement in the parent’s primary language

Discussions with parents of program participants revealed that parents view the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program as a “safe,” “educational,” and a “helpful” environment. Parents at the Ontario, Oregon, and Nyssa, Oregon, centers expressed the need for additional hours of service per day and weeks of service per year. Additionally, parents noted that additional efforts are needed to promote greater parent involvement, especially at the Nyssa site. Parents were concerned that it has been the same parents who participate during activities and events and that the program would benefit from providing incentives and consequences for greater parent involvement or the lack thereof.



In an effort to correct this concern, Malheur County staff has implemented a number of specific activities in an effort to bring in more parents including: Topic Tables at parent meetings, parent sub-committees in education, mental health and nutrition and health, and parent sponsored events such as The Day of the Child and Moving is Fun Day.

► MENTAL HEALTH & DISABILITIES

Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information Report show that 12 children in Malheur County were provided mental health services in 2008, each of these children also receiving referrals for additional services. Likewise, 6 percent of the children served were determined to have a disability.

The following is a breakdown of the agencies providing mental health and disabilities services - in Malheur County.

- Lifeways provides mental health services to children and families in Malheur County, as well as those enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program. In 2008, they started providing mental health play group for children in the Malheur program who were having social/emotional difficulties. These groups have been very effective for both the child and for the parents.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County contracts the services of The Family Place for mental health services on-site which includes classroom observations, teacher consultations, and parent consultation.
- The Early Intervention program in Malheur County provides additional disabilities services. Services are provided in English and Spanish.
- The Autism Center is a new organization dedicated to assist child with autism and their families. The Autism Center provides extra support for the child and for the family which includes observations, consultation, and support groups.
- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County also participates in monthly meetings with the Oregon Department of Human Services in Malheur County, focusing on individual family needs.

Representatives from several of the above agencies reveal that they are seeing an increasing number of young, Hispanic children that have witnessed domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and homicides. Accordingly, providers such as Lifeways continue to work closely with the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Justice Department. They also continue to explore ways to create a safe environment for children, particularly those children in the foster care system. Currently, providers feel that they are not able to see as many children as they would like, nor are they able to spend as much time with each child as they would like.

In the area of disabilities, the Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County noted that there continues to be an emphasis on community partnerships to facilitate the referral and communication process with the local partners so as to reduce the wait for services. This is especially important



as behavior issues (e.g., fighting, discipline, etc.) are coming up more and more these days. It has also been a challenge to promote parent follow through, something that also may be dealt with collaboratively. Accordingly, the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County has been working closely with the Oregon Department of Human Services in the development of trainings and educational opportunities for parents on this issue.

Parents, too, are aware of the need for additional services, especially in the area of mental health. Parents are frustrated by the apparent lack of mental health services for older siblings. When pressed on this question, parents were uncertain as to whether such services existed in the community or whether they simply were unaware of them. In either case, continuing to educate parents may also prove to be a strategic move toward promoting greater parent follow through and community integration. Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County parents are showing more interest in their child's development and ask many more questions than they have in the past. Continued educations for parents about the appropriate development and mental health of their children is very important and something that is being emphasized in Malheur County.

► **HEALTH & NUTRITION**

Although Malheur County leads the state in the number of cases of West Nile Fever in recent years, The Malheur County Health Department reports that as of August 2009 there are no reported cases on West Nile Fever in this county. Further, there are no cases of Swine Flu. The County Health Department facilitates a Community Disaster Preparation Team that is ready to deal with any significant outbreak of West Nile Fever or Swine Flu.

Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information report show that 257 or 70 percent of the children entered the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in Malheur County in 2008 with health insurance. Of those with health insurance, 209 children were enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan. For those without health insurance the Oregon Child Development Coalition worked with families to reduce the number of children without health insurance and by the end of the 2008 program year 26 more children were covered. Most children receive services through a migrant community health center and have an ongoing source of continuous, accessible medical care. In fact, following dental screenings in 2008, 65 children were identified as needing continued dental care, a service that was in fact provided for 44 of these children. Common health conditions continue to include anemia, obesity, asthma, and vision problems.

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

- The Oregon State WIC program serves 1,911 children under the age 5, up from 1791 in 2005 and 771 pregnant women annually.



- The Malheur County Commission on Children and Families oversees Child, Youth and Families funds, as well as Healthy Start funds, toward building the capacity of local agencies and organizations toward more effectively responding to the health needs of children and families in Malheur County.
- Treasure Valley Pediatrics provides pediatric services to 15,000 patients annually, 200 of which are children. They also operate the Community Connections Clinic, with a client base that is 80 percent Hispanic.
- Located in Payette, Idaho, Valley Family Health Care provides health and dental services, outreach, and education to low-income and migrant and seasonal children and families.
- The Malheur County Health Departments provide core public health services, including family planning, disease prevention, investigation, immunization, environmental health, home visiting, and maternal child health.
- Holy Rosary Medical Center provides a range of medical and emergency services, including childbirth services, pediatrics, and dietary care.
- Jody Stark provides medical services at a free clinic once per week.
- Sunshine Pediatrics provides pediatric medical services to children and families throughout the Treasure Valley.
- Dr. Dahle, Dr. Wettstein, Dr. Tipton, Drs. Lakes, Eastern Oregon Dental and Valley Family Health Clinic provide dental screenings and treatment to children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.

Representatives from the above agencies indicate greatest medical and dental needs of children and families in the Malheur County area. Primary needs identified were (i) the need for public transportation to and from appointments, especially for those mothers with sick children in need of emergency care, (ii) the need for local, pediatric dentists, as the closest pediatric dentist is located in Boise, Idaho, some 60 miles away, (iii) and greater parent and community education to ensure that families understand the need for hygiene and good health habits.

Also of interest was that local medical providers stressed the need for a more collaborative *transition* process for children and families entering the public schools. According to several providers, medical providers in the area witness such a breakdown when parent participation and follow through is less evident (e.g., in well child exams). The situation is such that children and families are transitioned into a public school system which is for the most part is not equipped to address their needs (e.g., bilingual personnel and opportunities for involvement, etc). Thus, fatherhood involvement drops off, parents miss appointments, and ultimately medical providers are left with the fallout. To add further concern to this issue, the schools in Malheur County will have reduced hours for a Registered Nurse available to them due to budget constraints.

To address the collaborative transition process, medical providers indicated that it would be beneficial to continue to collaborate with the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County in the transitions process. Continuing to bring a diversity of partners to



the planning table, including medical providers, will not only promote consistency and continuity in working with children and families, but also ensures that a system of support and accountability are in place within local school districts. Thus, not only would the transitions process build the knowledge and skills of parents, but also the capacity of school districts and other agencies in the community.

The Family and Health Services Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County confirmed that efforts continue to be made to promote preventive schedules with health, dental, and nutrition and partnerships have been built and maintained to promote such efforts. While promoting and encouraging greater parent involvement continues to be an issue, internal efforts are being made to further integrate with Parent Involvement so as to move from a “provider” mentality to a “connector” mentality. A focus group with parents of program participants confirms this emphasis as parents highlighted the agency’s “resourcefulness” in equipping them with information and resources to address individual needs.

► FAMILY SERVICES

In 2008, 120 families received benefits under the TANF program, an increase from the previous year. In addition, the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program responded to a range of family needs, the most common being parenting education, marriage education services, child abuse and neglect services, domestic violence services, and mental health services. The Food Bank is unable to keep up with the demand for food in Malheur County.

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

- The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur 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 Malheur County providing social and health related services to children, adults and families, as well as to seniors and people with disabilities.
- Shelter services in Malheur County are provided by Project Dove.
- The Southeast Oregon Regional Food Bank operates 5 food pantries, 2 emergency meal programs and 2 supplemental programs.
- The Oregon Law Center has an office in Ontario, Oregon, providing legal services to low-income residents, including agricultural workers.
- Community Corrections has worked to translate all documents into Spanish to ensure that monolingual Spanish speakers currently in the system understand all processes and procedures.
- Oregon Rural Action is composed of individuals representing various local service providers and has partnered with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce at their weekly business lunch.



- The local Spanish speaking radio station – KWEI – continues to partner with the Oregon Child Development Coalition to share and disseminate information.

Families - especially primary Spanish speaking families - experience language barriers when attempting to access services in the community. This has lead some, Community Corrections for example, to address this issue by ensuring that all documents are translated into Spanish to ensure that monolingual Spanish speakers understand any and all legal processes and procedures that they may be involved in.

According to the Family and Health Services Supervisor for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County, there has been a marked increase in the number of bilingual staff among local service providers, especially among hospitals and medical clinics. However, there remains some concern about there being limited resources for families in the community, particularly childcare resources as will be discussed in the following section. Likewise, parents of program participants expressed some concern about poor customer service when attempting to access services from local providers, with several parents indicating that they were interesting in learning more about how to file a complaint or grievance.

The County Director and the Family Services Manager for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County reported that the there have been 10 reported incidents of child abuse in 2008 which is about the same as last year.

Lastly, in the area of recruitment, the ERSEA Supervisor noted that efforts are being made to continue developing relationships with local growers and food processors. Growers' and labor contractors from around the county are periodically asked to discuss their business needs, the role of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and ways to move forward collaboratively. These efforts continue to be directed toward engaging growers and food processors is important as there have been recent changes in ownership at Ontario Produce, as well as new businesses coming to town (e.g., Fry Foods), that may impact the number of migrant and seasonal families in the area in the future.

► CHILDCARE

Oregon Child Care Research Partnership reports the following information for Malheur County in 2008. There were 674 slots in child care and education centers, and 279 slots in family child care. Oregon's goal is to have 25 visible slots for every 100 children and Malheur had 17 per 100 children. It was also reported that 182 children age 0-12 received state assistance, through DHS, with part of all of their child care costs.⁸

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

⁸ Child Care and Education in Oregon and its Counties: 2008, prepared by the Oregon Child Care Research Partnership OSU.



- Childcare Resource and Referral in Malheur County makes approximately 115 referrals annually, working with and training 53 childcare providers each year. Recent cut backs in funding has left the Malheur County office under staffed and services reduced to the providers and families looking for child care.
- Seven (7) certified childcare centers operate throughout Malheur County, most of which are located in Ontario, Oregon.
- Approximately 21 family childcare homes operate throughout Malheur County, with many of these located in Medford, Oregon. Only 2 of these providers are primary Spanish speakers.
- The Malheur County Commission on Children and Families' Early Childhood Team is working on final plans for the opening a relief nursery for children of incarcerated parents in Ontario, Oregon.

The greatest childcare needs of children and families in Malheur County include (i) the need for more childcare slots, particularly for the population of infants and toddlers, (ii) the need for more Spanish speaking childcare providers, (iii) the need for, in the words of one respondent, “intense wrap around services for low-income families not falling in Head Start enrollment criteria,” and (iv) safe environments for children before and after school.

To address the above concerns, Child Care Resource and Referral has worked to partner with Treasure Valley Community College’s Early Childhood Education Department, Ontario High School’s Teen Parenting Program, and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. To address the shortage of Spanish speaking providers, it was suggested that the Oregon Child Development Coalition continue to participate in the Caregivers Alliance and possibly help develop a Spanish track. Lastly, to address the training and development needs of new and existing providers, interest was expressed in (i) learning whether joint trainings could be implemented focusing on curriculum and time management, (ii) integrating with agency efforts around the Child Development Associates (CDA) certification process, and (iii) working collaboratively to target local businesses to raise awareness about the need for additional early childhood and childcare services in the community.

► TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING

Transportation services in Malheur County increased dramatically in the spring of 2009 with the opening of the Snake River Transit system. This transportation system services the cities of Ontario, Oregon and neighbor Fruitland, Idaho. Families in these cities now experience one less barrier to the access of a variety of care and services. Families living in more remote areas of the county and in Nyssa, Oregon will continue to see transportation services at a minimum. The Malheur County Commission on Children and Families has long identified the lack of public transportation services as one of the primary barriers impeding the ability to improve rates of adequate prenatal care in



Malheur County.⁹ Likewise, parents of program participants also expressed frustration with the lack of public transportation services and the expense that accompanies having to purchase rides from acquaintances. The new transit system will be of great assistance to families who lack their own transportation.

The following is a breakdown of some of the agencies providing transportation services in Malheur County.

- The Malheur Council on Aging and Community Services provides transportation to and from the grocery store and other errands, as well as medical appointments to as far away as Boise, Idaho.
- Snake River Transit public transit system began service to Malheur and Payette counties in early 2009. There are 24 stops in Ontario and 22 in Idaho.
- Two (2) local taxi services.

The Transportation Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County is doing what it can to address transportation needs in the community. Current efforts include partnering with the Malheur County Traffic Safety Commission to referral parents to car seat clinics every other month in conjunction with Head Start programs and other agencies in the area. To date, no car seat purchase program is in place; however, there is a contract in place with the Malheur County Health Department for a \$20 co-pay. Additional efforts are being made to work with State Farm Insurance agents and the local Chevrolet dealership.

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Malheur County continues to provide transportation services to children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program. The agency currently retains two bus drivers in Malheur County and has done so for over 5 years. In light of such experience and accomplishments, the Transportation Coordinator in Malheur County has identified the need to continue building the capacity of the Malheur County Traffic Safety Commission to, most importantly, begin addressing the lack of public transportation in Malheur County by working with existing agencies to develop safety fairs, provide clinics on car seats, and continue to raise greater community awareness about this important issue.

There is no agency owned labor camp operating in Malheur County since the Malheur County Labor Sponsors closed the Vale site in 2006 and the Adrian site in 2008. A few farmers provide small cabins to support the needs of some of their migrant workers, but this is not common and the condition of such housing is generally sub-standard. Many migrant and seasonal families live in the apartment complexes owned by the Housing Authority of Malheur County in Nyssa and Ontario.

The following is a breakdown of some the agencies providing housing and related services in Malheur County.

⁹ Malheur County Commission on Children and Families, 2006.



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- Several apartment complexes in Malheur County – Rio Vista, Sierra Vista, etc - cater to low-income families. Overall, there are at least 150+ units.
- There are 14 manufactured home parks in Malheur County, 10 of which are located in the Nyssa and Ontario areas.
- There is 1 farm labor camp in Malheur County located in Ontario, Oregon. Total capacity is 12 persons.
- The Housing Authority of Malheur County provides a range of services to low-income residents, including public housing, a Section 8 voucher program, a family self-sufficiency program, and housing projects for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

During a focus group, parents of program participants were asked about their current housing needs. Many respondents indicated that they spend too much (>50 percent) of their monthly household income on rent, with several parents commenting on the cost of utilities during the winter months. What is more, however, is that the seasonality of agricultural work means that household income can vary substantially over the course of a year. Thus, it was not surprising when one parent estimated that nearly her entire paycheck went towards rent during two or three months out of the year when work tends to be scarce. Other parents indicated that they wished to occupy housing that was not substandard, stressing that their current dwelling did not have adequate air and ventilation.



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
Oregon	≈4,464	1,803	≈2,661	≈14,154	916	≈13,238
OCDC Counties						
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
Total OCDC Counties	≈3,679	1,803	≈1,876	≈11,856	916	≈10,940
Total Unserved Counties	≈785	0	≈785	≈2,298	0	≈2,298
Selected Unserved Counties						
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.

