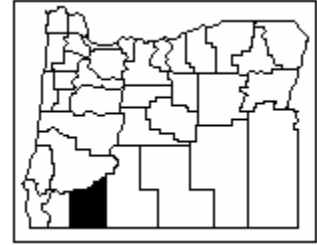


## JACKSON COUNTY

The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County improves the lives of children and families through the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program. Directed by a County Executive Committee, which includes a County Director, parents of program participants and community representatives, the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in Jackson County serves a total of 96 children annually. Of these, 60 children are classified as migrant children and 36 children are classified as seasonal children. In 2005, the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County served 128 percent of funded enrollment. As of May 2003, average daily attendance was 83 percent.



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, 5 days per week from 6 am to 2 pm. The long-term program runs 32 weeks from May through December, operating 3 classrooms, 5 days per week from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.

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. For illustrative purposes, Appendix C3.1 displays a map containing the service area, as well as grower's locations and program center locations.

### COUNTY SNAPSHOT

#### ► QUICK FACTS

- Jackson County has seen more than 7 percent growth in its population over the past 5 years, with areas such as Central Point, Oregon, and Phoenix, Oregon, seeing more explosive growth since 2000.
- The median household income in Jackson County is 11 percent lower than the state median, with over 2,500 children under the age of 6 living in poverty and 41 percent of public school children eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- As of 2006, there are an estimated 371 unserved, eligible Head Start children in Jackson County with the percentage of unserved, eligible children at 39.7 percent.
- With unemployment at 6.5 percent, Jackson County is seeing growth in art, entertainment and recreation, health care and social assistance, and accommodations and food services.
- Over the past year, Jackson County has seen a substantial reduction in tree fruit acreage (-17.7%) and total sales (-17.5%), with wine grapes continuing to post gains in harvested acreage (+7.0%) and total sales (+36.1%) annually.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 1,518 migrant farmworkers (-16.2% between 2002 and 2005) and 5,087 seasonal farmworkers (+68.1%) in Jackson County with the total



number of migrant and seasonal children under the age of 6 estimated at 143 children and 286 children, respectively.

▶ **CRITICAL ISSUES**

- Immigration

While U.S. Immigration and Custom’s Enforcement agents were not rumored to have visited Jackson County this year, local grower’s stressed that *it has been difficult for their workers to find housing* this year given not only the lack of affordable housing in the area, but also the fact that many employees do not qualify for low-income or farmworker housing because they lack documentation.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, this has placed burden to provide affordable housing squarely on local growers, including planning, expenses, and management. The absence of affordable housing only hurts the ability of growers to attract farmworkers to the area, thereby perpetuating labor shortages each year. Local wine grape growers spoke to this shortage, indicating that labor contractors and staffing organizations were unable to accommodate their requests for additional labor. Additionally, individual interviews also confirm that growers view the existing H2A guest worker program as insufficient and not cost effective.

*“Many [migrants have chosen] to save the expense of migrating. They will stay until the grape harvest.*

*-Local wine grape grower  
Jackson County*

\*\*\*\*\*

*“It’s fear of the unknown, fear of people they haven’t had the opportunity to meet.”*

*-Local Medford, OR resident  
March 31, 2006. Mail Tribune*

- Growth and Development

The median price for a home in Jackson County is \$269,900 as of September 2006.<sup>2</sup> Although this figure is down slightly from one year ago - the first such decline in over 20 years - it remains that home prices are out of reach for many Jackson County residents.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the past one year, that home prices have increased is a product of in-migration to the area. Between 2000 and 2005, 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.

<sup>1</sup> John Darling, *Immigration Marchers Head For Medford City Streets*, March 31, 2006, Mail Tribune.

<sup>2</sup> *Jackson County Median Home Prices Fall First Time Since 1984*, September 12, 2006, Associated Press.

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

<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.



## **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.

Jackson County was named for President Andrew Jackson and established in 1852. Originally, Jackson County encompassed the entire southwest Oregon area before the creation of Coos, Curry, Josephine, Klamath and Lake Counties.<sup>7</sup> That Jackson County was established in 1852 is not coincidental; 1852 was also the year that gold was discovered near Jacksonville, Oregon, and when the wagon road was completed which connected the area to California. What is more is that four years later, in 1856, escalating conflicts between settlers and the native Indian tribes lead to the forced removal of the Rogue River Tribe to the Siletz and Grande Ronde Indian Reservations.

Today, Jackson County continues to attract tourists and new residents, many of which are transplants from California. 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. As will be discussed in a later section, 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**

In 2003, the median per capita personal income in Jackson County was \$26,617, which falls above the 50th percentile when compared with all other counties across Oregon, but still ranks below those figures for Oregon (\$29,175) and the United States (\$31,487).<sup>8</sup> Looking at household income, figures from the U.S. Census Bureau show that just less than 50 percent of households in Jackson County earn less than \$35,000 per year.<sup>9</sup> In context, this means that that a family of four living in Jackson County falls on average \$3,341 short of what is needed to meet necessary estimated yearly expenses, including rent, food, childcare, transportation, insurance and taxes.<sup>10</sup>

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

<sup>7</sup> Oregon Blue Book, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> *Oregon Per Capita Personal Income: 1983-2004*, November 2005, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>9</sup> *DP-3: Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics*, 2000, United States Census Bureau.

<sup>10</sup> Economic Policy Institute, 2005



**Figure 3.1 - Employment by Sector**

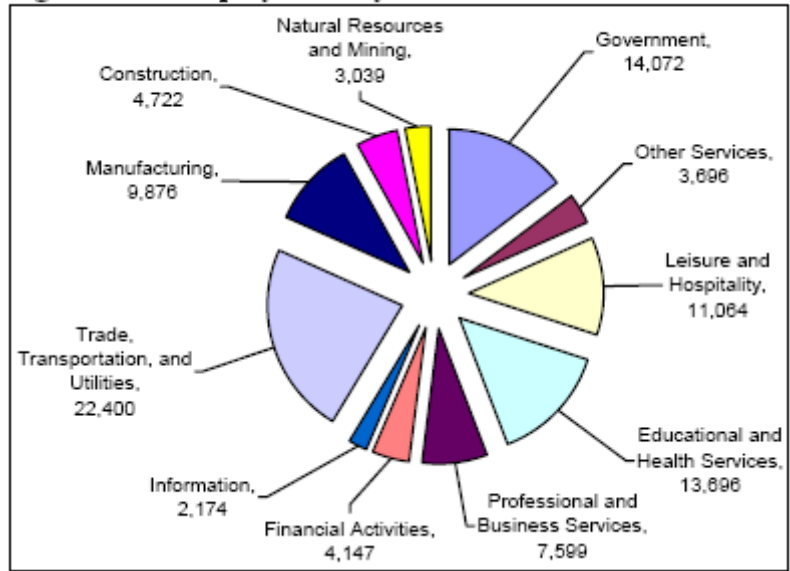


Figure 3.1 displays information for each of the major industries in this area of the state. With an economy once reliant on agriculture and wood products manufacturing, Jackson County has diversified much in recent years, moving towards becoming a “retail and services hub” for much the southern Oregon region.<sup>11</sup> By some measures, Jackson County’s economy is one of the most diverse in the state. Those industries with a higher percentage of employment than statewide figures include art, entertainment and recreation, health care and social assistance, and accommodations and food services.<sup>12</sup> According to state economists, growth in these industries, and particularly in wholesale and retail trade, is due Jackson County’s proximity to the state of California and it’s location along the Interstate-5 corridor.

Trade, transportation and utilities continues to be the leading industry category in Region 8, an area that includes both Jackson and Josephine Counties, employing nearly 25 percent of the workforce in this region. Over the next ten years, trade, transportation and utilities is predicted to add 1 out of every 3 new jobs.<sup>13</sup> In general, state economists note that

**Figure 3.2 - Total Employment and Unemployment**

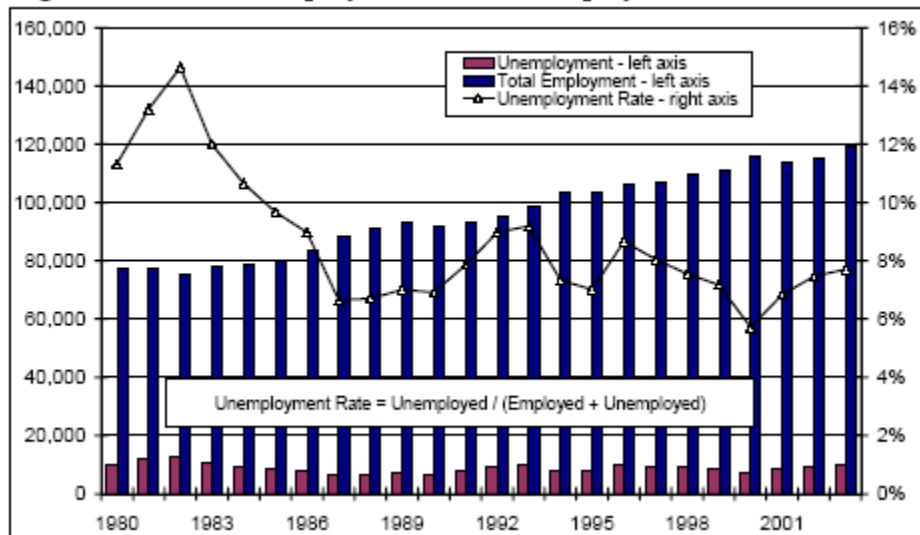


Figure 3.1 – Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Industry Employment in Region 8, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

Figure 3.2 – Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment in Region 14, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>11</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment in Region 8, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>12</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment in Region 8, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>13</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment in Region 8, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.

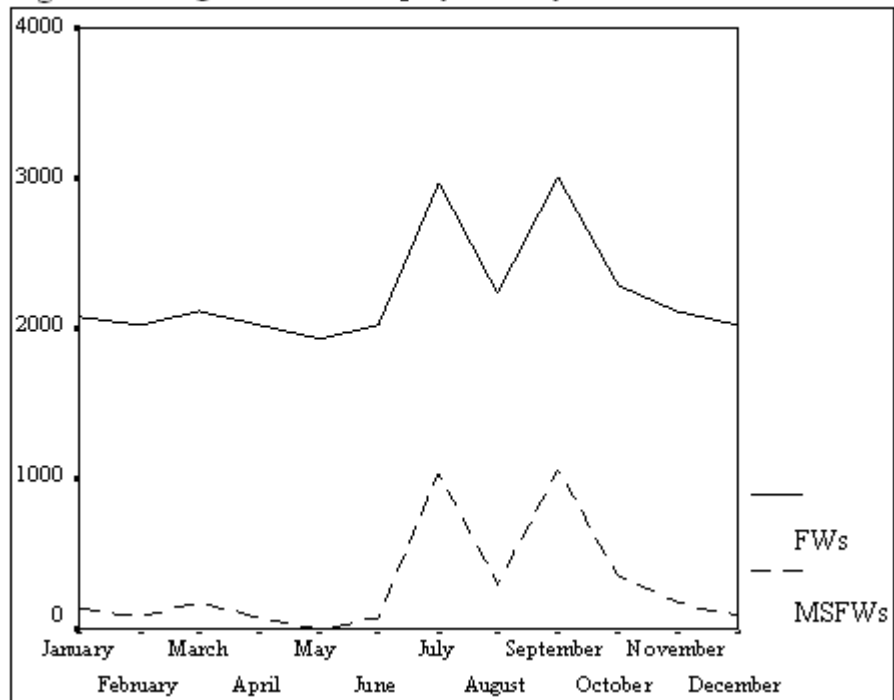


growth in trade industries often accompanies population growth; Jackson County grew by 7.3 percent between 2000 and 2005, the 6th fastest growing county in the state of Oregon.

Many industries in Jackson County are predominantly seasonal, which has the effect of raising the unemployment rate. Between March and 2005 and March of 2006, the unemployment rate in Jackson County dropped to as low as 4.9 percent during the month of October and as high as 7 percent during March of 2005.<sup>14</sup> As of March 2006, the unemployment rate in Jackson County was 6.5 percent, equal to the state unemployment rate of 6.5 percent, yet still several points higher than the national unemployment rate of 5.1 percent. To further put these figures in perspective, between 2001 and 2003, coupled with a state and national recession, the area's growing population outpaced the demand for labor, resulting in an unemployment rate that reached as high as 9.3 percent in January of 2002.

Seasonal unemployment in Jackson County is largely a product of the area's agricultural industry. As shown in Figure 3.3, the months of July, September and October are when agricultural employment in Jackson is at its peak.<sup>15</sup> July is spent preparing orchards and vineyards, with September and October being the months during which tree fruit and wine grapes are harvested. Also of interest is that, unlike in other areas of the state, there 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.

**Figure 3.3 - Agricultural Employment by Month**



On average, agricultural operations in Jackson County employ some 2,160 farmworkers per month, as shown in Figure 3.3 for both the general population of farmworkers (FWs) for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs).<sup>16</sup> In 2002, Alice C. Larson estimated the total number of

<sup>14</sup> *Oregon Labor Force and Unemployment by Area*, April 20, 2006, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>15</sup> *2005 Oregon Agricultural Employment Estimates*, 2010, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>16</sup> *2005 Oregon Agricultural Employment Estimates*, 2010, Oregon Employment Department.



migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Jackson County.<sup>17</sup> These estimates, as well as 2005 estimates calculated by the Oregon Child Development Coalition, are shown in Table 3.1. Between 2002 and 2005, the number of migrant farmworkers in Jackson County declined by 16 percent and the number of seasonal farmworkers increased by 68 percent, respectively. Such estimates evidence the changing agricultural landscape in Jackson County in light of stiff international competition, growing retail and service industries, and an increasing number of migrant workers settling in the area and taking on a seasonal status.

While Southern Oregon is known primarily for its tree fruit, wine grapes are becoming increasingly common. Table 3.2 displays information for selected crop outputs in 2004 and 2005. While pear acreage has declined by roughly 18 percent over the one-year period, wine grape acreage grew by 7 percent. Likewise, while total pear sales have fallen by 18 percent, wine grape sales grew by 36 percent over the same period. Currently, there are 125 vineyards in Jackson County ranging from 3 to 200 acres, with local growers estimating that nearly 95 percent of 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.

**Table 3.1 - Estimates of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers**

	2002	2005
<b>Jackson County</b>		
MFWs	1,812	1,518
SFWs	3,025	5,087
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,837</b>	<b>6,605</b>

**Table 3.2 - Selected Crop Outputs<sup>18</sup>**

Jackson County	2004			2005		
	Acres	Production	Sales (in \$000s)	Acres	Production	Sales (in \$000s)
Pears	7,925	84,425	31,565	6,525	61,675	26,040
Wine Grapes	743	2,080	2,463	795	2,544	3,353
Nursery	---	---	1,600	---	---	1,700
Greenhouse	---	---	---	---	---	1,500
Squash & Pumpkins	120	3,000	1,110	150	3,750	1,388
Peaches	210	52,500	788	175	43,750	525

In general, wine grape growers in Jackson County grow more Spanish varieties than growers in other areas of the state. What is more is that Oregon's most important grape - Pinot Noir - does not grow well in Jackson County. Growers in Jackson County tend to focus on Pinot Gris and Chardonnay, securing small contracts with wineries in the northern part of Oregon to produce these grapes. While profitable, there are conflicting accounts as to the viability of this industry over the long-term.<sup>19</sup> That said, the wine industry continues to grow each year, while it has been tree fruit operations that have not been as fortunate in recent years.

<sup>17</sup> Alice C. Larson, *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study: Oregon, 2002*, Larson Assistance Services.

<sup>18</sup> Oregon Agricultural Information Network, 2003.

Unit of production varies by commodity.

<sup>19</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Industry Employment in Region 8, 2005*, Oregon Employment Department.



Unlike in 2005, a recent article noted that tree fruit prices have dropped this year due to greater international competition and oversupply.<sup>20</sup> 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.

If falling prices were not enough, a relatively recent development is the construction of a new production facility for Amy's Kitchen in Medford, scheduled to open in November of 2006. This food production facility is already attracting seasonal farmworkers in the area, as wages are rumored to start at \$10+ per hour. Interviews conducted for this assessment reveal that tree fruit and wine grape growers have already had to endure a labor shortage this year, as local labor contractors and staffing agencies could not accommodate requests for labor, a shortage that could be worsened by greater competition (e.g., with Amy's Kitchen and the Bureau of Land Management, as the latter hires large numbers of tree planters annually) to attract workers in the future.

In addition, Jackson County's growing population (+7.3 percent between 2000 and 2005) has created a shortage of available, affordable land. Consequently, cities such as Central Point, Eagle Point, Jacksonville, Medford and Phoenix are considering expanding their urban growth boundaries.<sup>21</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. For instance, The Oregonian reports that local orchardists are pulling out some 750 acres of fruit trees.<sup>22</sup> However, other reports indicate that the opposite is true.<sup>23</sup>

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.

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<sup>20</sup> *Orchardists Turn their Attention to Fall Pear Crop*, August 27, 2006, Statesman Journal

Alex Pulaski, *Oregon's Shrinking Orchards*, August 1, 2006, The Oregonian.

<sup>21</sup> Meg Landers, *Medford Weights Growth Changes*, April 27, 2006, Mail Tribune.

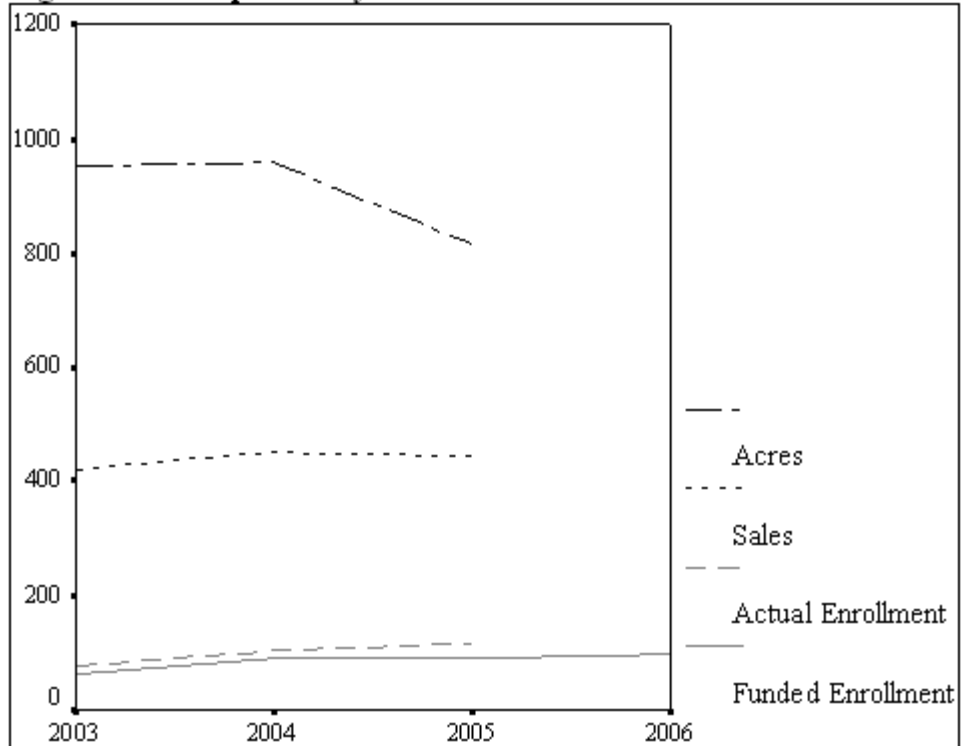
<sup>22</sup> Alex Pulaski, *Oregon's Shrinking Orchards*, August 1, 2006, The Oregonian.

<sup>23</sup> *Across the USA*, March 7, 2006, USA Today.



Figure 3.4 contains information on harvested acreage, total sales, and actual and funded enrollment in the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.<sup>24</sup> What is evident is that actual enrollment in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program mirrors total crop sales between 2003 and 2005. One possible explanation here is that Jackson County does not currently produce large quantities of agricultural commodities that can be easily mechanized. For the most part, tree fruit and wine grapes need to be hand picked. An interview conducted with one local grower for this assessment revealed that while tree fruit growers are continuing to explore options for leasing picking platforms to mechanize tree fruit production, the downside is that such technology is expensive and that orchards have to be redesigned in order to make additional room between rows.

**Figure 3.4 - Crop Sales by OCDC Enrollment**



Thus, for the time being, to the extent that tree fruit growers are able to maximize total sales, one might infer corresponding growth in the number of fruit trees planted and, ultimately, in the number of migrant and seasonal farmworkers required during peak harvest months. Of course, the opposite would also be true with flat or declining sales between 2004 and 2005. Thus, to follow this out logically, as shown in Table 3.1, the 16 percent decline in the estimated number of migrant farmworkers in 2005 would simply be a reflection of declining crop sales in 2005.

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 5 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.

## ▶ DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

<sup>24</sup> Note, the scale in Figure 3.4 has been adjusted. Harvested acres are in 0s and total sales are in \$00,000s. Additionally, crop outputs reflect the set of all crops in the Jackson County area, not just those typically employing migrant and seasonal farmworkers.



The 2000 Census reported the population of Jackson County to be 181,269 persons. From this, the Population Research Center at Portland State University estimated the population of Jackson County to be 194,515 as of July 1, 2005, demonstrating 7.3 percent

**Table 3.3 - Population<sup>25</sup>**

	Year		
	2000	2005	Percent Change
Jackson County	181,269	194,515	7.3
Ashland	19,522	20,880	7.0
Central Point	12,493	15,640	25.2
Medford	63,687	70,855	11.3
Phoenix	4,060	4,660	14.8
Talent	5,589	6,255	11.9

growth in the population over the five-year period. Table 3.3 displays these estimates for each of the major cities and towns in Jackson County.

Note the positive growth in each of the areas listed, with more explosive growth in Central Point, Oregon. According to a 1999 survey conducted by the Oregon Employment Department, the top three reasons for new residents electing to settle in Jackson County included (i) retirement, (ii) quality of life, and (iii) proximity to family and friends.<sup>26</sup> Of lesser importance were considerations of education and employment.

*“Since 1990, 90 percent of Jackson County’s population growth was due to net migration.”*

*-Guy Tauer  
Oregon Employment Department*

Accordingly, looking at the age distribution for Jackson County in Table 3.4, it is clear that retirees and individuals nearing retirement age currently make up roughly one-third of the population. The median age in Jackson County is nearly 40 years old, a figure that is significantly higher than other counties around the state.<sup>27</sup> What is more, this segment of the population continues to grow.

**Table 3.4 - Population by Age<sup>28</sup>**

	Age						
	0-4	5-9	10-17	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Jackson County	10,586	13,048	22,693	27,319	54,363	33,558	29,632

The percentage of children and teens in Jackson County is relatively similar to the state figure, with roughly 6 percent of the population under the age of 5. While between 1990 and 2000 this population grew by nearly 9 percent, in recent years this trend has reversed, declining by 2.6 percent between 2000 and 2003.<sup>29</sup> However, as will be discussed in a later section, Jackson County’s growing Hispanic population tends to be younger than the general population, with

<sup>25</sup> 2004 Oregon Population Report, March 2005, Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University.

United States Census Bureau, 2000 & 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 8*, 2005, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>27</sup> United States Census Bureau, 2000 & 2005.

<sup>28</sup> 2004 Oregon Population Report, March 2005, Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University.

<sup>29</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 8*, 2005, Oregon Employment Department.



estimates revealing that Hispanics and Blacks under the age of 5 will outnumber non-Hispanic Whites by 2050.<sup>30</sup>

What remains to be said is that, while Jackson County is increasingly a destination for many retirees and individuals nearing retirement age, the area is also popular with the segment of the population between the ages of 20 and 24.<sup>31</sup> This is due primarily to the location of Rogue Community College and Southern Oregon University in the area. Between 2000 and 2003, this segment of the population grew by nearly 3,500 persons, a figure that is 28 percent higher than that for the second fastest growing age cohort in Jackson County.

Oregon Housing and Community Services reports that the number of individuals living in poverty in Jackson County increased by 17.7 percent between 1990 and 2000, with the Oregon Department of Education reporting the poverty rate to be 21.0 percent as of January 2006.<sup>32</sup> Further, these two sources also estimate over 2,600 children under the age of 6 to be living in poverty each year, including 950 children between the ages of 3 and 4. These figures are important to note for the reason that poverty is often associated with health problems and access to health care, the need for food stamps and temporary assistance to needy families (TANF), and housing and shelter counts.<sup>33</sup>

During the 2004-2005 school year, 41 percent (n=11,980) of students in Jackson County were eligible for free or reduced lunch, the second highest figure in the state. As displayed in Table 3.5, relative to the previous academic year, this represents a less than 1 percent increase in the number of students receiving free or reduced lunch over the one-year period. This increase was felt especially in the Phoenix-Talent School District and the Rogue River School District.

**Table 3.5 - Free & Reduced Lunch Count<sup>34</sup>**

Jackson County	Academic Year	
	2003-2004	2004-2005
Ashland School District	767	691
Butte Falls School District	131	113
Central Point School District	1,737	1,672
Eagle Point School District	2,238	2,278
Medford School District	5,043	5,108
Phoenix-Talent School District	1,358	1,440
Pinehurst School District	11	7
Prospect School District	97	92
Rogue River School District	499	579
<b>Jackson County Total</b>	<b>11,881 (40.6%)</b>	<b>11,980 (41.4%)</b>

► **DATA ANALYSIS: ELIGIBLE, UNSERVED 3-4 YEAR OLD CHILDREN<sup>35</sup>**

<sup>30</sup> Ray Collins and Angela Willson-Quayle, *Hispanics and Childcare: The Changing Landscape*, 2004, National Child Care Information Center.

*The Larson Northwest Hispanic Market Report*, 2006-2007 Edition, Larson Northwest Research and Consulting.

<sup>31</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 8*, 2005, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>32</sup> *Estimated Number of Eligible 3 and 4 Year Olds Served and Unserved by Head Start and Oregon Pre-kindergarten*, 2003, Oregon Department of Education.

<sup>33</sup> *County Comparisons: Incidence and Distribution of Poverty*, 2004, Oregon Health and Community Services.

<sup>34</sup> *Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, 2003-2004 & 2004-2005*, Oregon Department of Education.



The Oregon Department of Education estimates there to be 4,505 children between the ages of 3 and 4 in Jackson County in 2006.<sup>36</sup> 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 Jackson County, 21.0 percent in 2006. Thus, *the total number of eligible Head Start children in Jackson County is 949 children*, as displayed in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 - Estimated Number of Eligible Children**

Jackson County	
Total Children	4,505
Percent in Poverty	21.0
<b>Eligible</b>	<b>949</b>

From this, the number of Head Start children currently being served in Jackson County by Head Start programs is subtracted. Head Start programs such as that operated by the Southern Oregon Child and Family Council (903 total slots in two counties) serves a total of 578 children in Jackson County between 3 and 4 years of age.<sup>37</sup> Thus, considering the number of eligible Head Start children currently being served, *the total number of unserved, eligible Head Start children is 371 children* as shown in Table 3.7. Thus, 60.9 percent of eligible Head Start children are currently being served in Jackson County.

**Table 3.7 - Estimated Number of Unserved, Eligible Children**

Jackson County	
Eligible	949
Served	578
<b>Unserved, Eligible</b>	<b>371</b>

In the sections that follow, the Oregon Child Development Coalition will further refine the estimate in Table 3.7 to provide estimates for the number of unserved, eligible Migrant Seasonal Head Start children in Jackson County.

## **RACIAL & ETHNIC COMPOSITION**

### **► POPULATION & ANCESTRY**

Table 3.8 displays the racial and ethnic composition of the population in Jackson County. It is noted that figures for individual cities and towns are taken from the 2000 U.S. Census, as more current figures for these areas are not available.

Overall, the Hispanic population in Jackson County has grown by 28 percent over the past 5 years, and currently comprises the largest ethnic group in the Rogue Valley.<sup>38</sup> Of the population in Jackson County, 94 percent were born in the United States, with 92 percent of the population as monolingual English speakers.<sup>39</sup> Of those born outside of the United States (n=8,849), 3 percent are currently not U.S. citizens, with 2 percent having entered the United States between 1990 and 2000, and 57 percent of those born outside of the U.S coming from Latin America.

<sup>35</sup> Note, estimates in this section are presented to highlight the need for Head Start services in the general low-income population. In a later section, additional estimates will be provided which estimate the number of unserved, eligible children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

<sup>36</sup> *Estimated Number of Eligible 3 and 4 Year Olds Served and Unserved by Head Start and Oregon Pre-kindergarten*, 2003, Oregon Department of Education.

<sup>37</sup> Total slot counts for individual Head Start programs include Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

<sup>38</sup> Guy Tauer, *Regional Profile: Population in Region 8*, 2005, Oregon Employment Department.

<sup>39</sup> *DP-2: Profile of Selected Social Characteristics*, 2000, United States Census Bureau.



Accordingly, aside from English and relative to other languages, nearly 6 percent of the population identified as primary Spanish speakers (n=9,574).<sup>40</sup> Of these, less than one-half self-identified as able to speak English less than “very well.”

**Table 3.8 - Population by Race, 2000-2005<sup>41</sup>**

Jackson County	One Race						Two or More Races	Hispanic
	White	Black	Native Indian	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Some Other Race	---	---
2000	166,125 (91.6%)	724 (0.4%)	1,980 (1.1%)	1,631 (0.9%)	322 (0.2%)	5,218 (2.9%)	5,269 (2.9%)	12,126 (6.7%)
Ashland	17,873	118	199	365	26	333	608	695
Central Point	11,743	31	110	91	24	158	336	527
Medford	56,834	313	677	720	163	2,442	2,005	5,841
Phoenix	3,652	35	44	27	7	183	112	361
Talent	4,879	30	59	20	6	442	153	693
White City	4,672	10	81	29	5	446	223	902
2005	184,523 (96.4%)	1,095 (0.6%)	4,768 (2.5%)	3,205 (1.7%)	1,396 (0.7%)	2,258 (1.2%)	5,489 (2.7%)	15,504 (8.1%)

► **PROFILE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS<sup>42</sup>**

In 2005, 108 children were enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program based on income eligibility or public assistance, up by 20 percent from the previous year. Table 3.9 displays the age distribution for children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program. Overall, 97 percent of program participants were of Hispanic or Latino origin, which includes persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South and Central American or other Spanish culture or origin. In 2005, the total number of primary Spanish speaking program participants was 115 children, with an additional an additional program participant was listed as a primary English speaker.

**Table 3.9 - Enrolled of Children by Age**

Age	Number of Children
<1	19
1	23
2	29
3	18
4	12
5	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

► **DATA ANALYSIS: ELIGIBLE, UNSERVED MIGRANT CHILDREN<sup>43</sup>**

<sup>40</sup> DP-2: Profile of Selected Social Characteristics, 2000, United States Census Bureau.

<sup>41</sup> Fact Sheet, 2000-2005, American Community Survey, United States Census Bureau.

Note, 2005 data from the U.S. Census Bureau is not available for all counties in Oregon.

<sup>42</sup> Data is taken from the Program Information Report, 2004 & 2005, Oregon Child Development Coalition.

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix C1.3



The Oregon Child Development Coalition has developed a method for estimating the number of children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Jackson County using Alice C. Larson’s 2002 estimates of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and family members as a base and agricultural information from the Oregon Agricultural Information Network through Oregon State University.<sup>45</sup> The estimates in Table 3.10 suggest that there were 143 migrant children and 286 seasonal children in Jackson County in 2005.

**Table 3.10 - Estimated Migrant and Seasonal Children**

Jackson County		
Age	Number Migrant Children	Number Seasonal Children
<1	48	51
1	19	47
2	19	47
3	19	47
4	19	47
5	19	47
<b>Total<sup>44</sup></b>	<b>143</b>	<b>286</b>

To estimate the number of unserved, eligible Migrant Seasonal Head Start children, the number of Migrant Seasonal Head Start children currently being served in Jackson County by the Oregon Child Development Coalition is subtracted from the estimates in Table 3.10. The Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County serves 96 Head Start eligible children through the Migrant Seasonal Head Start Program, 60 of which are migrant children and 36 of which are seasonal children. Thus, *the total number of unserved, eligible Migrant Seasonal Head Start children in Jackson County is 333 children* and is broken down in Table 5.11. Overall, roughly 22.3 percent of eligible Migrant Seasonal Head Start children are currently being served in Jackson County.

**Table 3.11 - Unserved, Eligible MHS Children in Jackson County**

Jackson County		
	Number Migrant Children	Number Seasonal Children
Eligible	~143	~286
Served	60	36
<b>Unserved, Eligible</b>	<b>~83</b>	<b>~250</b>

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 the section that follows, each program and related service area 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

<sup>44</sup> Totals vary due to rounding.

<sup>45</sup> Alice C. Larson, *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study: Oregon, 2002*, Larson Assistance Services.



the close of each section 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 Jackson County is some college, no degree, with 22 percent of the total population having earned a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>46</sup> Data from the Oregon Department of Education show total public school enrollment in Jackson County to be approximately 29,238 students annually, 19 percent of which are non-white.<sup>47</sup> Across all high schools in Jackson County, the total number of high school dropouts is 690 students with a 16.3 percent high school dropout rate over the past four years.<sup>48</sup> The Oregon Department of Education also reports that 18 students dropped out of high school during the 2003-2004 school year specifically because they did not speak English well enough, while another 49 students dropped out citing a lack of adequate parental support in pursuing their high school degree.

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. While this is a significantly higher figure relative to those in Oregon Child Development Coalition's other service areas, it remains that seasonal agricultural work and low wages tend to require that both parents work to make ends meet.<sup>49</sup>

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 provides 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.

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<sup>46</sup> DP-2: *Profile of Selected Social Characteristics*, 2000, United States Census Bureau.

<sup>47</sup> Oregon Department of Education, 2004-2005.

<sup>48</sup> Oregon Department of Education, 2003.

<sup>49</sup> *Program Information Report*, 2004, Oregon Child Development Coalition.



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 .

### Early Childhood Education

Other programs that serve the migrant population include Migrant Education. Seasonal and age-specific enrollment counts are displayed in Table 3.12 for the Southern Oregon ESD. Roughly 8 percent of migrant children continue to receive services during the summer months, thereby demonstrating the continued need for the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in this area.

**Table 3.12 - Migrant Education Enrollment<sup>50</sup>**

Jackson County	2004-2005	
	Southern Oregon ESD	
Regular Enrollment	1,373	
Summer Enrollment	119	
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>1,492</b>	
<1 year old	3	
1	15	
2	36	
3	43	
4	74	
5	29	
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>200</b>	

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 collaborative, native language preschool program that emphasizes school readiness, parent involvement and parent literacy.
- The Job Council plans to start a Spanish Early Literacy Mentor Program before the close of 2006 to assist early childhood and childcare providers in the community.
- The Southern Oregon Education Service District provides a range of education and support services to children, families and local providers.

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

<sup>50</sup> Oregon's Migrant Education Regional Programs, 2004-2005, Oregon Department of Education.



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.

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

Access to care is limited by Jackson County’s geographic isolation. In fact, the Health Resources and Safety Administration has identified Jackson County as a mental health professional shortage area due in large part to its geographic isolation.<sup>51</sup> Related to this, service providers - mental health and otherwise - emphasized the increasing use of methamphetamines among Jackson County residents over the past few years which currently ranks as the second most used illicit drug in Jackson County behind marijuana.<sup>52</sup> Accordingly, the Oregon Department of Corrections reports 1,032 persons incarcerated for drugs as of January of 2006, more than double the same figure for neighboring Josephine County.

Mental health disorders affect approximately 1 in 10 children in Oregon, with 30 percent of these children experiencing co-occurring disorders requiring dual diagnoses. The Office of Mental Health Services with the Oregon Department of Human Services estimates there to be approximately 3,113 children with some sort of mental health issue in Jackson County under the age of 18, of which 311 are estimated to suffer from co-occurring disorders.<sup>53</sup> Overall, approximately 3,772 adults and 1,670 children receive some form of community based mental health care in Jackson County each year.

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<sup>51</sup> *Oregon Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA): Mental Health Designations as of 2/28/03*, 2003, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Professionals.

<sup>52</sup> *Oregon Data Book*, 2003, Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

<sup>53</sup> *Oregon Data Book*, 2003, Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services.



Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information Report show that 7 children in Jackson County were provided mental health services in 2005, each of these children also receiving referrals for additional services. On average, mental health professionals spent 7 hours per month on-site. Likewise, *1 child was determined to have a disability, roughly 2 percent of enrolled migrant children and zero percent of enrolled seasonal children in 2005.* This child was determined eligible to receive special education and related services. The primary disability identified included autism.<sup>54</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.

In an interview with 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

In August of 2005, the Oregon Office of Rural Health released a report identifying healthcare shortages and underservice in throughout Jackson County, including the areas near Ashland, Oregon, and Medford, Oregon, an area currently served by the Oregon Child Development Coalition.<sup>55</sup> Of notable interest is that within Jackson County, the population of low-income residents was specifically highlighted as an underserved group.

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<sup>54</sup> *Program Information Report, 2004 & 2005*, Oregon Child Development Coalition.

<sup>55</sup> *Oregon Medically Underserved Areas/Populations (MUA/MUP)*, 2005, Oregon Office of Rural Health.



In 2005, there were 460 doctors in Jackson County, or just over 2 doctors for every 1,000 residents.<sup>56</sup> In Jackson County, approximately 13.5 percent of the population is without any form of health insurance, an estimate that somewhat less than figures provided from the Oregon Health and Sciences University, which received 4,404 visits from Jackson County residents in 2004, 52 percent of which were only partially or not reimbursable.<sup>57</sup>

In the preceding section, impediments to children's mental health were discussed. One such impediment includes low birth weight. Over the past several years, the number of live births with low-birth rate in Jackson County has increased slightly. In 2004, the rate of low birth was 56.7 (n=120), whereas in 2001 the rate of low birth had been at 55.7 (n=119).<sup>58</sup> A similar trend is noted for live births with *very* low birthweight, with the rate of very low birth increasing to 9.9 (n=21) in 2004 from 6.6 (n=14) in 2001.<sup>59</sup>

The increasing rate of low-birth may in part be due to efforts focusing on prenatal care. In 2004, 6.9 percent live births in Jackson County were also identified as lacking adequate prenatal care.<sup>60</sup> Since 2002, this figure represents a 21 percent increase in the number of live births with inadequate prenatal care and is higher than the percentage reported statewide (5.8 percent). Further, it is also noted that the percentage of live births with inadequate prenatal care among Hispanics (8.7 percent statewide) is generally higher than that of non-Hispanics.<sup>61</sup>

Data from the Oregon Child Development Coalition's Program Information Report show that 80 children entered the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program in Jackson County in 2005 with health insurance, up by 100 percent from 2004.<sup>62</sup> Those with health insurance were covered by the Oregon Health Plan, with a handful covered by private insurance. For those without health insurance, the Oregon Child Development Coalition worked with families to increase the number of children with some sort of coverage by 9 percent following enrollment. Most children (n=101) receive services through a migrant community health center and have an ongoing source of continuous, accessible medical care. Following dental screenings in 2005, 44 children were identified as needing continued dental care, a service that was in fact provided. Additionally, common health conditions included obesity, anemia, asthma, and hearing difficulties.

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

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<sup>56</sup> *Active and Practicing Physicians in Oregon by Geographic Region and per 100,000 Population, 2005*, Oregon Public Health Services, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>57</sup> *2004 Percentage Without Health Insurance by Region, 2004*, Oregon Office of Rural Health.

*OHSU and Jackson County Statistics, 2004*, Oregon Health and Sciences University.

<sup>58</sup> *Live Births with Low Birthweight by County, Oregon Residents, 2001-2004*, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>59</sup> *Live Births with Very Low Birthweight by County, Oregon Residents, 2001-2004*, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>60</sup> *Prenatal Care by Mother's County of Residents, Oregon Residents, 2004*, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>61</sup> *Prenatal Care by Mother's Race and Ethnicity, Oregon Residents, 2004*, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>62</sup> *Program Information Report, 2004 & 2005*, Oregon Child Development Coalition.



- The Oregon State WIC program serves 6,148 children under the age 5 and 2,735 pregnant women annually, with 68 percent of those served in Jackson County at or below the poverty level.<sup>63</sup>
- 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 and dental 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 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 program.
- 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 program.
- 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.
- Ashland Community Hospital provides a nutritionist to work with children and families enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.
- Local dentists - Dr. Dennehy, Dr. Cochran, Dr. Hampton and Dr. Shiskin - provide dental screenings for children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start Program.
- Melanie Breidenthal is a dental hygienist who works with children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start Program.
- In past years, support from the Walker Foundation provided a registered dental hygienist to examine, clean and apply fluoride polish to the teeth of Migrant Seasonal Head Start children.

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 way to reach out to vulnerable populations that may otherwise be inaccessible. While the growing number of

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<sup>63</sup> 2005 WIC Facts, 2005, Oregon WIC Program, Oregon Department of Human Services.



uninsured clients may not appear to invite a discussion of education, according to the Health Manager 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 of 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 Health Manager 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 program. 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

In 2004, the Oregon Department of Human Services released figures estimating the number of child abuse victims in Jackson County to be 737 children, a 21 percent increase from the previous year.<sup>64</sup> These figures amount to approximately 16 child abuse victims per 1,000 children. Additionally, shelter counts in Region 5 - an area that includes Jackson County - show that 196 children under the age of 6 spent one or more nights in shelter in 2005, with the total number of actual *child nights* equal to 7,673.<sup>65</sup> These regional figures are the second highest compared to all regions in Oregon, with over 20 percent of those receiving shelter services for 30 days or more. Additionally, during the 2004-2005 school year, there were a reported 1,535 homeless students across all school districts.

Food insecurity is also an important issue in Jackson County. Figure 3.5 displays Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and food stamps figures over time.<sup>66</sup> Over the past year, the number of TANF cases in this region of the state has declined by 2.7 percent, while the number of food stamps cases has actually increased by 1 percent, with areas such as west Medford showing a 5 percent increase in food stamps cases.

Approximately 34 percent of families served by the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County in 2005 identified as single parent families. In each of these families was the

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<sup>64</sup> *The State of Children in Oregon's Child Protective System*, 2004, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>65</sup> *Summary of Services Provided by Domestic and Sexual Violence Service Programs Funded by DHS*, 2005, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>66</sup> *Oregon Data Book*, 2003, Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

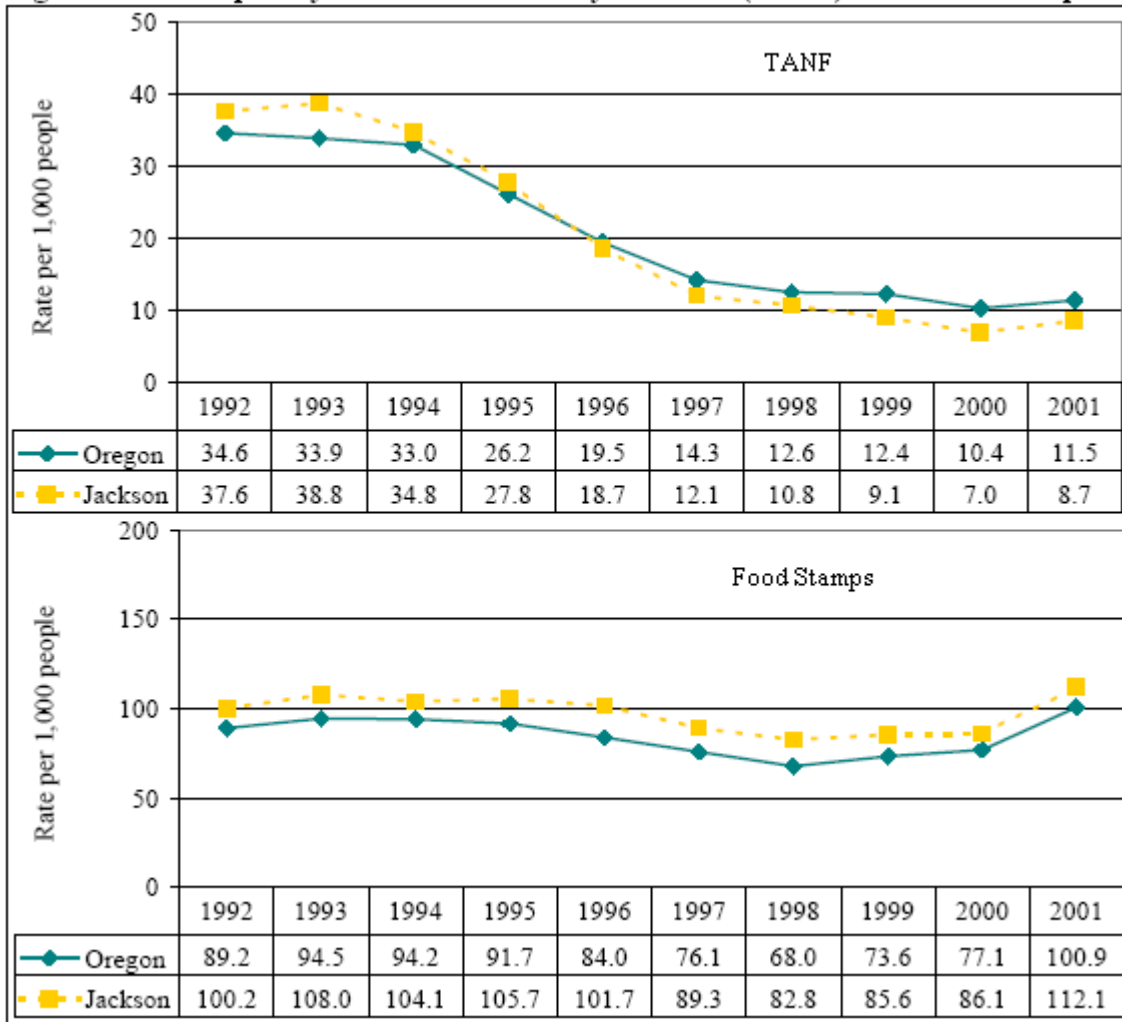
*Oregon TANF Caseload Flash*, May 20010, Oregon Department of Human Services.

*Oregon Food Stamp Caseload Flash*, May 20010, Oregon Department of Human Services.



parent or guardian employed; whereas, of the total number of two-parent families, 65 percent had both partners in the workforce.<sup>67</sup> In 2005, 3 families received benefits under the TANF program, an increase of 2 families from the previous year. In addition, the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County responded to a range of family needs, the most common being emergency and crisis intervention, ESL needs, parenting education, adult education, and transportation assistance.

**Figure 3.5 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Food Stamps**



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.

Figure 5.5 – Jackson County Data Book, 2002, Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Oregon Department of Human Services.

<sup>67</sup> Program Information Report, 2004 & 2005, Oregon Child Development Coalition.



- 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>68</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 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 were surveyed to determine the greatest family services needs of children and families in the Jackson County area. Primary needs identified focused on housing, energy and food assistance.<sup>69</sup> 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. One provider noted that some of their clients are paying nearly 70 percent of their monthly income on rent, leaving little for food, transportation and other household needs.

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

<sup>68</sup> *Regional Food Banks at a Glance*, 2005, Oregon Food Bank.

<sup>69</sup> These were also needs frequently addressed by early childhood providers.



altogether. Thus, what becomes clear is that families are in need of additional information and resources pertaining to their rights and those services that are available to them.

That the above paragraph speaks to the need to continue educating parents is also consistent with comments received from representatives from the Jackson County Circuit Court. According to respondents, there has been an increase in several types of cases involving Hispanics and, by implication, migrant and seasonal farmworkers. These include methamphetamine use, divorce, domestic violence, and driving without a license. However, what is more is that respondents indicated that the general community continues to remain divided as to how to deal with such issues. Evidently there are still some feelings of resentment among some in the community that are rooted in a belief that the community is being “overtaken” by Hispanics.

Accordingly, in an interview with the Family Service Manager for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County, emphasis was placed on the need to advocate for families by, first, growing visibility and representation in the community as a way to engage the community and educate the general public. 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**

The Oregon Childcare Research Partnership lists a total of 371 certified childcare providers in Jackson County, with approximately 4,980 childcare slots. These figures translate into 16 childcare slots for every 100 children, 9 slots short of the state benchmark of 25 childcare slots per 100 children.<sup>70</sup>

Depending on family type, the Oregon Childcare Research Partnership found that up to 42 percent of some families with children under the age of 13 use some form of paid childcare in Jackson County, with 24 percent of all children enrolled in some form of paid childcare. In addition, the report found that families use an average of 34 hours of paid childcare per week.

Childcare costs in Region C - an area that includes most of Jackson County - are the lowest in the state, with the median hourly and monthly costs listed in Table 3.13. Researchers from Oregon State University found a statistically significant difference in childcare costs between Region C and other regions of the state of Oregon, suggesting a unique childcare market in Jackson County due to its rural

**Table 3.13 - Childcare Costs by Type of Care**

	Family Childcare		Certified Family Childcare		Center Based Childcare	
	Hourly	Monthly	Hourly	Monthly	Hourly	Monthly
Infant	\$1.85	\$345	\$1.85	\$318	\$2.12	\$392
Toddler	\$1.60	\$318	\$1.85	\$318	\$2.12	\$392
Pre K	\$1.60	\$254	\$1.91	\$306	\$1.80	\$291

<sup>70</sup> *Estimated Supply of Childcare in Oregon as of July 1, 2004, April 23, 2005, Oregon Childcare Research Partnership.*



location.<sup>71</sup> Further, this research suggests that the childcare subsidy rate provided by the Oregon Department of Human Services is adequate to purchase only one-fifth of market rate childcare slots in Jackson County.

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
- Forty-three (43) certified childcare centers operate throughout Jackson County, most of which are located in Medford, Oregon.
- Approximately 259 family childcare homes operate throughout Jackson County, with many of these located in Medford, Oregon. Roughly, 46 of these providers are primary Spanish speakers.

An interview 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 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.

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<sup>71</sup> 2004 Oregon Childcare Market Rate Study, August 2004, Oregon State University Family Policy Program, Oregon Childcare Research Partnership.



## ► TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING

Transitioning from a discussion of childcare to one of transportation and housing, Appendix C3.2 contains a map which displays the locations of childcare providers relative to farmworker housing complexes, manufactured home parks and farm labor camps for illustrative purposes.

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

- At least two apartment complexes in Jackson County - 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. In the past five years, Jackson County's population has grown by over 7 percent. With exception of September 2006, the area's growing population has brought about skyrocketing housing prices, putting ownership out of reach for many low wage earners.<sup>72</sup> And, 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 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.

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<sup>72</sup> Robert Plain, *More Apartments Changed to Condos*, September 13, 2006.



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.

- Rouge Valley Transportation District provides public transportation 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 Rouge 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

A recent news article detailed how traffic in the area has doubled in the past decade.<sup>73</sup> However, as of recently, the Rogue Valley Transportation Authority has announced plans to discontinue several bus routes in the area given limited funding. In the Fall of 2006, Route 4 through east Medford is to be discontinued, no longer providing some 3,500 rides per month. To address this issue, the Rogue Valley Transportation Authority will be going for a payroll tax in 2008 that would not only bring discontinued routes back, but also expand services to weekends and after 7 pm, a need also identified by the Transportation Coordinator for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County.

In preparation for this effort, the Rogue Valley Transportation Authority is currently looking for ways to increase the number of fixed route riders through additional marketing. Currently, they are awaiting news of a grant that would make annual bus passes available to employers at a reduced price. 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.

## **DATA ANALYSIS: IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF ISSUES**

### **▶ SWOT ANALYSIS**

A SWOT analysis identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County in carrying out its mission to improve the lives of children and families.

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<sup>73</sup> Damian Mann, *Road Work Ahead*, September 13, 2006, Mail Tribune.



**Figure 3.3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Bilingual, bicultural staff are a resource in the community, with strong parent involvement recognized as a strength.</li> <li>* Expanded community partnerships have opened doors for additional resources and services, thereby benefiting children and families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Interviews with growers and service providers from across the spectrum reveal limited agency name awareness and knowledge of the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.</li> <li>* In general, service providers in the community acknowledge the need to address clients’ concerns around documentation, but currently lack the capacity to do so.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* There is an opportunity for the agency to speak to the current immigration issue in a way that build consensus and promotes understanding among all segments of the population.</li> <li>* There is a growing recognition in the community around the need for affordable family housing for farmworkers in Jackson County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Changes in agriculture (e.g., declining acreage, greater mechanization, and the prevalence of new commodities) threaten to change the composition of the migrant labor pool.</li> <li>* Jackson County’s growing population, and the development that accompanies it, threaten to disrupt agricultural operations in the area as urban growth boundaries continue to expand.</li> </ul>

**► KEY OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY SERVICE AREA**

The following observations and recommendations are provided to meet the requirements set forth by the Head Start Performance Standards, 45 CFR 1305, thereby providing a tool for the Oregon Child Development Coalition in Jackson County to (i) evaluate the program philosophy, and migrant and seasonal objectives, (ii) determine the most needed component services, (iii) specify the recruitment area(s) and related limitations, (iv) determine appropriate locations for centers, and (v) further establish recruitment and selection criteria for children and families. Note, these service area recommendations follow from the above SWOT analysis and are intended to compliment those recommendations provided in the state level assessment.

**Observations and Recommendations: OCDC in Jackson County**

**Observation:** Growers and service providers revealed limited knowledge about the agency and the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.

**Recommendation:** As has been done extensively in 2006, continue to cultivate strategic relationships with local growers and service providers in way that not only communicates valuable information about the agency and the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program, but also about the very issues (e.g., early childhood education, immigration and workforce development, etc.) that currently warrant the expertise of the agency.



### **Observations and Recommendations: Education**

**Observation:** Additional Migrant Seasonal Head Start services are needed in Jackson County for both migrant and seasonal children.

**Recommendation:** Continue to explore additional public and private support as a way to increase the number of available slots and children served.

**Observation:** There is currently a need for bilingual early childhood educators with degrees.

**Recommendation:** Continue to work with teacher training and development programs such as that provided by Southern Oregon University and Rogue Community College to promote the professional development of existing staff, as well as to identify and recruit new teachers.

### **Observations and Recommendations: Mental Health and Disabilities**

**Observation:** There is currently a need for bilingual speech therapists to work with children enrolled in the Migrant Seasonal Head Start program.

**Recommendation:** Continue to work with Asante Health Systems, involving the agency in their planning processes to recruit and retain qualified bilingual professionals.

### **Observations and Recommendations: Health and Nutrition**

**Observation:** In general, there is currently a need for targeted efforts focusing on educating parents about issues pertaining to the accessibility of medical and dental services.

**Recommendation:** Join internal efforts around disseminating additional health information to parents with those efforts in the community aimed at accessibility, documentation, etc.

### **Observations and Recommendations: Family Services**

**Observation:** While a number of needs were expressed by local service providers, each is premised on the need for community education to strengthen the base of community support and leverage additional resources.

**Recommendation:** As multiple providers stressed the need to speak to the current immigration debate, enlist the efforts of local growers and agri-businesses to speak about the issues, namely - the need for early childhood education and workforce development opportunities.

### **Observations and Recommendations: Childcare**



**Observation:** In general, there is a need to not only increase the stock of quality, bilingual childcare in the community, but also to support the development of existing providers in positioning themselves as professionals in the community.

**Recommendation:** Expand existing partnership efforts focus not only on referrals, but also on the identification and development of new and existing providers through joint trainings, etc.

### **Observations and Recommendations: Transportation and Housing**

**Observation:** The housing market in Jackson County is growing at a pace that is out of step with the wages of low-income families.

**Recommendation:** Continue to advocate for migrant families by engaging city and county government, planners, and the regional housing authority to ensure that families are not pushed out and relegated to outlying areas where services and amenities (e.g., transportation) are limited.

### **SUMMARY**

Jackson County has been undergoing a period of intense growth for the past 20 years or so that, arguably, has had a disproportionate effect on low-income and migrant and seasonal farmworker families. While the local industry structure continues to diversify, it remains that many new jobs continue to be in the service sector, with limited earnings potential. Likewise, falling tree fruit prices, greater competition, and the high cost of land have resulted in additional pressures put on growers to farm with greater efficiency and in areas that can resist encroachment by developers.

Despite these changes, many migrant and seasonal families call the Rogue Valley home, evidenced by the 68 percent increase in the estimated number of seasonal farmworkers between 2002 and 2005. Accordingly, continued collaborative efforts are needed to not only ensure the availability of and access to services during the harvest months, but increasingly to promote a more general understanding among former migrant families of the integration process into the larger community through greater collaborative and educational opportunities for parents and community members.

