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Commission on
Children & Families

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Cornelius



Cornelius Community Profile

The Cornelius community has shown significant growth in the past decade, growing by almost 80% in the 1990s, from 5,345 to 9,626. This compares with a county-wide growth rate of 43% during the same period. Cornelius continues to serve as a hub for the agricultural economic base of the area, which can be seen in the community profile.

There has been a significant shift in the ethnic and racial make up of Cornelius, since 1990, when 87% of the population was white. By 2000 just over 62% of the population was white. The Latino population in Cornelius, as in much of the county, showed tremendous growth in the decade of the 1990s, growing from just over 15% of the population to almost 38% of the population in 2000.

More than 32% of the population is under the age of 18, a higher percentage than for the county as a whole (26.8%). The vast majority of children live in 2 parent households, almost 84% compared to a county wide average of 78% of children.

Poverty

While the per capita income for Cornelius rose, from \$10,993 in 1990 to \$15,290 in 2000; it remained well below that for the county as a whole where per capita income had risen more than 50% to 24,969 by 2000. This coupled with poverty rates for residents, suggests that there is an increasing income divide.

Poverty indicators for Cornelius residents have gotten worse since 1990 reflecting the downturn in the economy. Poverty rates for Cornelius have almost doubled since 1990, and are substantially higher than for the county as a whole. The following chart also illustrates that children are disproportionately affected by poverty.

Poverty by Age	1990 Cornelius	2000 Cornelius	2000 County
Children under 5	9.0%	19.2%	10.2%
Children under 18	11.3%	19.6%	8.8%
All residents	9.9%	16.1%	7.4%

Children who live in single parent households are even more likely to live in poverty; with almost 35% of single parent household with children being in poverty in 2000. Among Latino children living in single parent households, the poverty rate climbs to almost 45%.

Free and reduced lunch rates provide additional insights into poverty. In the 2000-2001 school year, 37.5% of students in the Cornelius School District were eligible for assistance, and by the 2006-07 school year, the percentage had grown to 50.9% of children being eligible for the program.



Several schools are located in Cornelius, and they have among the highest participation rates for the district, with Cornelius Elementary having almost 78% of students in the free lunch program, and Echo Shaw with about 72% participating.

Education

Reflecting the agrarian background of the area, Cornelius residents have somewhat lower educational attainment levels than other parts of the county.

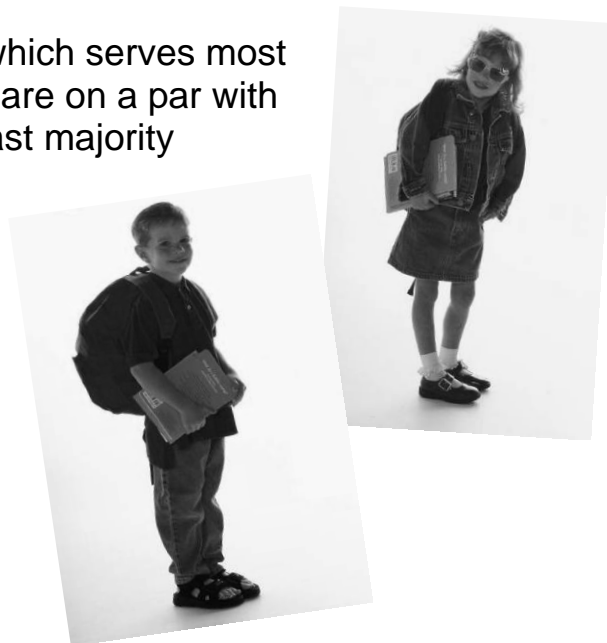
Almost a third of Cornelius residents over age 25 have not graduated from high school, compared with 11% of residents county-wide. Among white residents the number of high school graduates increases to 87%, compared to almost 95% county-wide; while among Latino residents only 28% have completed high school in Cornelius, compared to 50% county-wide.

Educational attainment levels are correlated with poverty levels. Cornelius residents are significantly less likely to have a college degree or a graduate degree than other county residents. Just under 9% of Cornelius residents had a Bachelor's degree in 2000, compared to almost 35% of residents county-wide. Among white residents in Cornelius 11% had a Bachelor's degree in 2000 compared to 36% of whites county-wide. Among Latinos, in Cornelius, 2.4% had a Bachelor's compared to 11% county-wide.

Test scores at the third and eighth grade are used as measures to determine general school performance of children and their schools.

In Forest Grove School District (which serves most Cornelius children), third graders are on a par with their peers state-wide, with the vast majority meeting or exceeding state standards in both reading and math.

Consistent with state data, performance among eighth graders falls off; with Forest Grove eighth graders performing below their peers state-wide, although they have shown faster gains than state-wide.



Education Cont.

Among children and youth, data suggests that while Latino youth are not doing as well educationally as their white peers, the gap is lessening. State test scores for third graders and eighth graders in the Forest Grove School District for the 2003-04 and 2005-06 school year illustrate:

	Language Arts – Latino	Language Arts – White	Math – Latino	Math – White
% meeting / exceeding 02-03 standard	32.4%	67.1%	35%	58.2%
% meeting/ exceeding 05-06 standard	46%	73.8%	57.3%	79%
% Increase	65.5%	23%	109%	61%

Similarly, the school drop-out rate for students in Forest Grove has been declining in recent years, although it remains above the rate for the county as a whole. The drop out rate for Latino students also continues to be above that for students as a whole, although it has shown significant improvement.

	2000-01 Drop Out Rate	2005-06 Drop Out Rate	Percent Improvement
Forest Grove Schools	5.8%	2.4%	142%
County	4.5%	3.4%	32%
Latino – Forest Grove	6.2%	3.3%	188%
Anglo – Forest Grove	5.7%	1.9%	300%

Census data suggests that the drop-out rate may be higher. In 2000, among 16 to 19 year olds in Cornelius, 26.4% were not enrolled in school and had not graduated. Among White youth, in 2000, 9.8% were not enrolled and had not graduated, and among Latino youth, 49.1% of the youth were not enrolled and had not graduated from high school.

