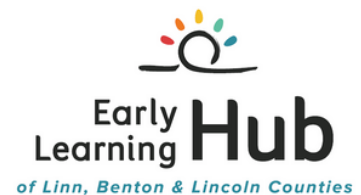




# Community Asset Mapping Report for Sweet Home

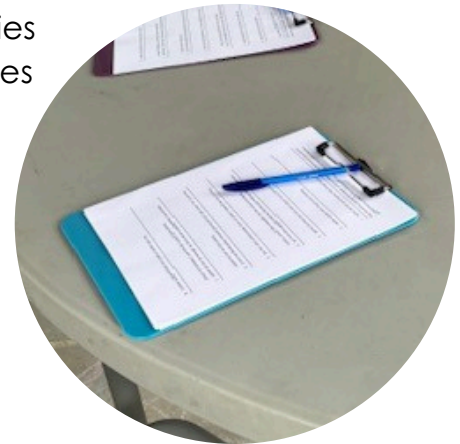
*in partnership with the*

Sweet Home Police Department



## Pollywog's Community Asset Mapping Project

The Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties is proud to support the families in our region with services and information about early childhood learning and development. We believe that by working together as a collective of agencies and service providers, we can increase family stability, improve kindergarten readiness, and ensure service coordination that is equitable, and culturally and linguistically competent.



A crucial component of our coordinated work is data about the families in our region and the social determinants of health, i.e. the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work, and age, that affect their lives. Quantitative community data from reliable sources is useful for understanding the context of social determinants of health, like the population of a town or the median household income of a city. But to understand how social determinants of health factor into the daily lives of families in our region, we must ask community members, and we must listen to their responses.

With this directive in mind, Pollywog and the EL Hub are conducting a regional Asset Mapping Project in 15 rural Linn/Benton/Lincoln communities. Asset Mapping is an innovative tool for community-based participatory research, and with this project, we seek to engage and center the voices and experiences of families raising young children in rural communities.

Rural communities, in particular, face deep disparities in the resources that families need to raise happy and healthy children, and this inequity isn't always related to geography. With each Asset Mapping session, we ask direct questions about families' experiences in accessing resources and services in their community and beyond. Their answers show where families encounter gaps in needed support and will translate into data that will inform program funding plans across our region.

The selected communities were chosen because they are similar in size (under 20,000 residents) and have two of these existing assets - a grocery store that sells fresh meats and produce, a library, and a health care clinic.

The 15 communities are: Brownsville, Halsey, Harrisburg, Lebanon, Mill City, Scio, and Sweet Home (Linn County); Alsea, Monroe, and Philomath (Benton County); Lincoln City, Newport, Siletz, Toledo, and Waldport (Lincoln County).

## What is Asset Mapping?

Asset Mapping, or the process of creating a map of community assets, is a hands-on experience that centers the participants' experiences and opinions. Over-sized aerial maps of a community are the canvas for community members to share their perspectives on their community and its resources. We hope to learn more about the community that we can't learn from just looking at a map ourselves.



Asset mapping is unique and valuable because it is strength-focused. We want to know about the places in a community that are valuable to families. To collect this information, we provide stickers with icons of various types of assets and participants are asked to place the stickers on the map to note the physical location. We also ask participants to write the name of the asset and any comments they have, positive or negative or neutral. If an asset doesn't exist in their town, we ask for stickers to be placed on the edge of the map, indicating that families must go outside their town for that asset.



After placing their stickers on the map, each participant is given a one-page survey that asks about other aspects of their community, like internet access, banking availability, and laundry facilities. We also ask what makes their community unique, what concerns they have, and what they love about their community. The survey questions are open and have space for answers in their own words.



Pollywog's Asset Mapping Project is funded through Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Equity Grant Program, which seeks to eliminate health inequities by 2030. Our work is funded by the Acute and Communicable Disease section, where we hope our gathered data can contribute to greater access to health care in rural communities. To that end, we have been tasked with collecting information about these additional community assets: Annual Exam Providers, Emergency Health Care, Sexual Health & Testing, and Vaccine Providers.

# Sweet Home, Oregon

Sweet Home, with a population of 9,852, is located on the South Santiam River and at the foothills of the Cascade Range, underscoring its motto of Gateway to the Santiam Playground. This area was originally home to a band of the Kalapuya people, who subsisted on plants, fish, and game. The Kalapuya used fire in agricultural management, a tradition developed over thousands of years. Unfortunately, this tradition was seen as destructive by settlers arriving in the area in the mid-1800s, only one reason why the Kalapuya were forced to relocate to the Grand Ronde reservation.

Sweet Home remained relatively small until the 1940's when demand for timber increased due to World War II and the construction of the Green Peter Dam and Foster Dam. Today, Sweet Home continues to grow at a moderate pace but remains a rural community where its residents enjoy a small town lifestyle.



## Community Partner in Sweet Home

Our community partner for our Asset Mapping project in Sweet Home was the Sweet Home Police Department. Data for this report was gathered at their annual Jim Bean Public Safety Fair, held at Sankey Park.



Although it was a rainy Saturday in Sweet Home on the day of the fair, Sweet Home's families showed up for raffles, games, safety education, a bike rodeo, and the kick-off of the Sweet Home Library's Summer Reading Program. We are grateful for the opportunity to connect with the Sweet Home community and learn about the resources they use and the services they need for their family.

## Community Strengths

What do you love about Sweet Home? What makes Sweet Home unique?



## Community Concerns

What concerns do you have about Sweet Home?



## Community Strengths and Concerns

Families in Sweet Home enjoy living in their home's beautiful and quiet location. There are plentiful recreation activities in town and in the natural areas surrounding Sweet Home. Most of all, Asset Mapping participants in Sweet Home find their close and connected community a strength. Some participants mentioned the logging culture in Sweet Home, which shaped their town and neighbors into what it is today.



Civic resources in Sweet Home were also mentioned as community strengths, including the Sweet Home Public Library and Jim Riggs Community and Senior Center. The community center was one of the most mentioned spots for the Place of Recreation sticker. Overall, Sweet Home residents enjoy their small, friendly, and quiet town.



**“It’s a close community, everyone is so connected.”**  
– Sweet Home Asset Mapping Participant

Sweet Home has many strengths for its residents but Asset Mapping participants expressed concerns as well. Some surveys stated there are few local resources for those in need, and although there are some services available, they are overwhelmed by the increasing need. This is due to higher rates of poverty, homelessness, and drug use, issues that are not specific to Sweet Home. Some participants related these concerns to the small size of Sweet Home and local politics.

Other concerns that participants expressed include the number of businesses closing in Sweet Home; that there are too few activities for younger children, especially when the weather isn't good for outdoor play; and the need to travel outside of Sweet Home for some resources.

## Opportunities for Learning in Sweet Home

The Sweet Home School District serves students in Sweet Home as well as the communities of Cascadia, Crawfordsville, Foster, Holley, Liberty, and Pleasant Valley. It includes Sweet Home High School, Sweet Home Junior High School, and four elementary schools with a total of 2,300 students registered. There is also the Sweet Home Charter School for kindergarten to sixth grade, operating in contract with the Sweet Home School District.



Although Sweet Home Asset Mapping participants did not mention the community schools on our surveys as either a strength or a concern, many used their Place of Learning stickers to mark their neighborhood schools.

The Sweet Home Public Library was mentioned on the survey and was marked by many participants with stickers to designate the library as a Place of Belonging, Place of Learning, Place of Recreation, and Other Place of Importance. The library is clearly a special part of the community of Sweet Home.

In fact, community volunteers initially funded it in 1942 and community members who fought to keep it open decades later, and have since passed regular levies to keep it open and funded.

## Child Care & Preschool

Concerns about child care and preschool were not mentioned by Sweet Home Asset Mapping participants. Child Care & Preschool stickers were placed on Kidco's Sunnyside Head Start location in Foster, Jim Riggs Community Center, Oak Heights Elementary School, and Little Promises Child Care and Preschool.



Other locations in Sweet Home for child care and preschool include the Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Santiam, Family Tree Relief Nursery, and one registered family day care.

## Health and Wellness in Sweet Home

Approximately 50% of families in Sweet Home report accessing health in their community. This is at the Samaritan Health Clinic in Sweet Home, which offers primary care including pediatrics, obstetric care, and behavioral health concerns. The health clinic also has a separate walk-in/urgent care facility to support Sweet Home residents.



Other Sweet Home Asset Mapping participants stated they seek medical care outside of their community, usually in Lebanon but also in Albany, Corvallis, and Eugene. This was the same for all medical services on our survey - from emergency care to annual exams, to vaccinations and sexual health care.

Sweet Home has two dental care clinics in the community. However, only 10% of participants placed their Dental Care stickers on these local offices. 90% of participants seek dental care outside of their community, usually in Lebanon but also in Albany, Corvallis, and Eugene.



## Other Health Care Needs

The percentages shown below demonstrate the services that residents seek outside of Sweet Home. (Note: Not all participants used every sticker category; these results are based on mapped assets.)



**Behavioral Health: 57%**



**Vaccine Provider: 57%**



**Annual Exam Provider: 55.5%**



**Emergency Health Care: 66.6%**



**Sexual Health and Testing: 71%**

## Survey Questions

**Do you have reliable internet service that supports video? If your home doesn't have cell coverage, do you have a landline?**

All participants but two stated they have reliable internet service at their home.

**Do you use a bank/credit union, a check cashing service, or both?**

85% of participants reported using a credit union or bank, and none use a check cashing service.

**If you use government services (Social Security, DHS, DMV, etc.) how and where do you access them?**

Of those participants who use government services, half said they access them outside of the community and online.

**Where do you do laundry, at your home or elsewhere? Is the laundry facility accessible? Is the laundry facility affordable?**

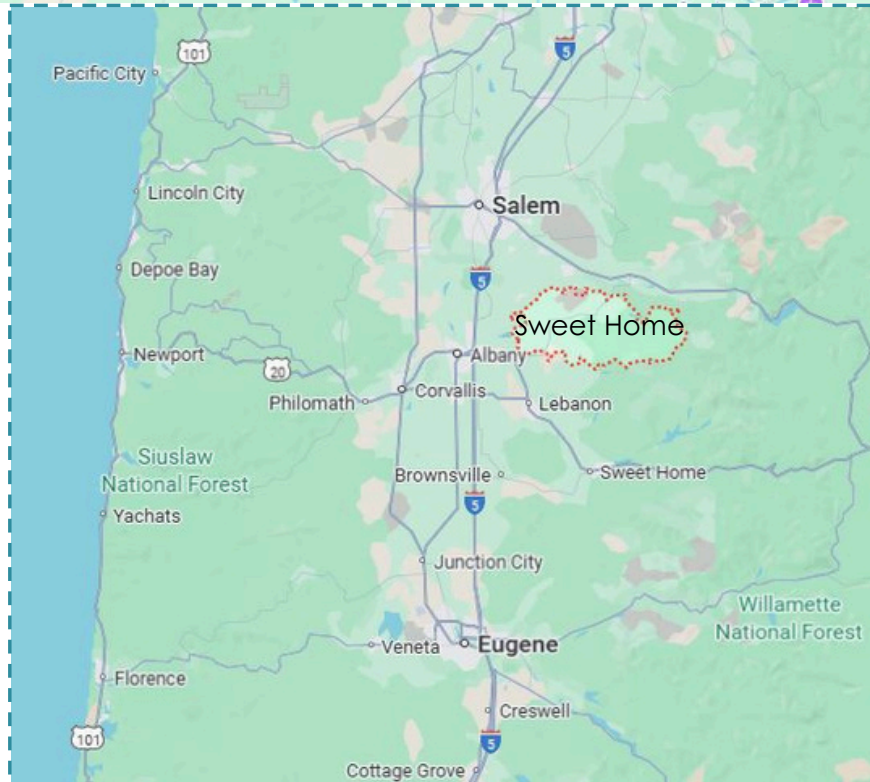
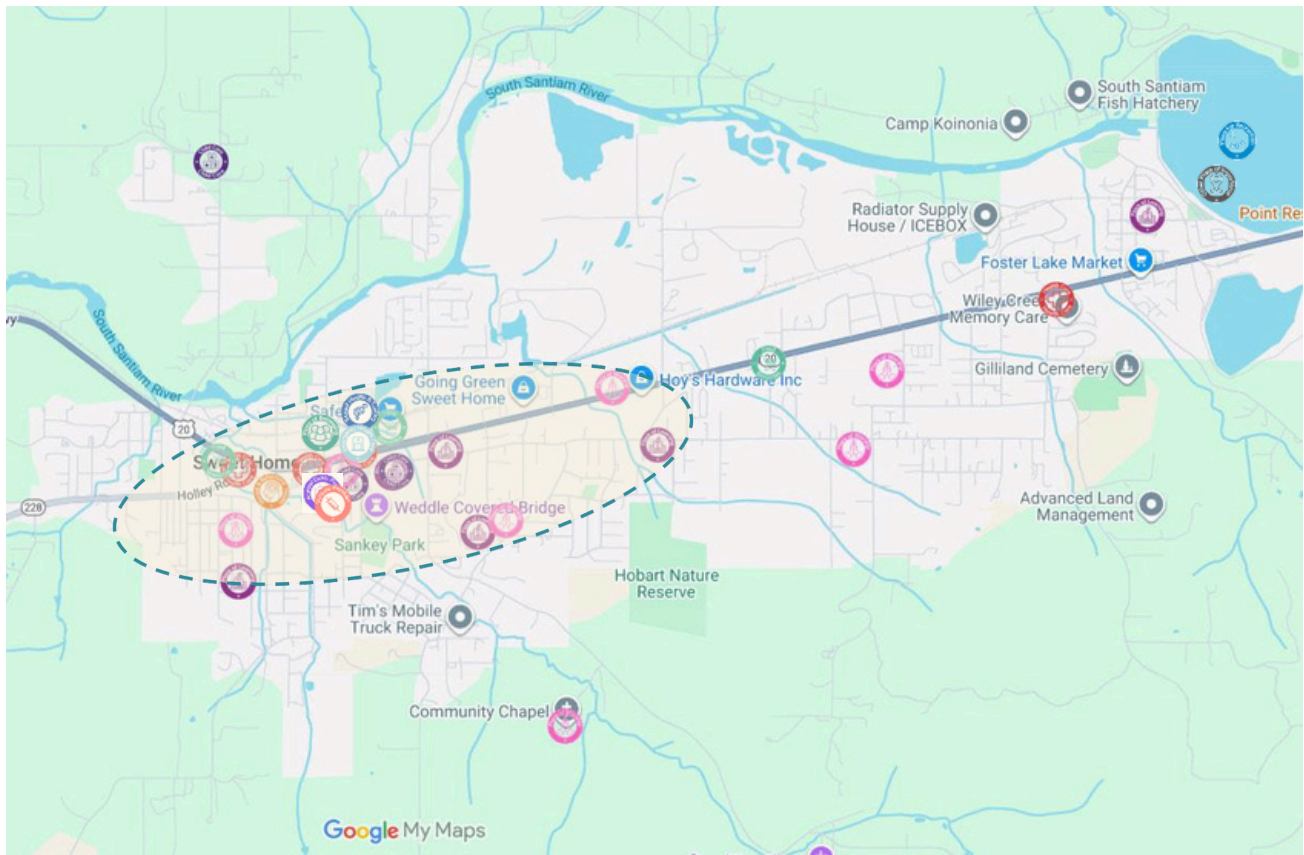
All participants do laundry at home. There is no laundry facility located in Sweet Home.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?**

No additional comments were shared on the surveys.



## Overview of Community Assets in Sweet Home

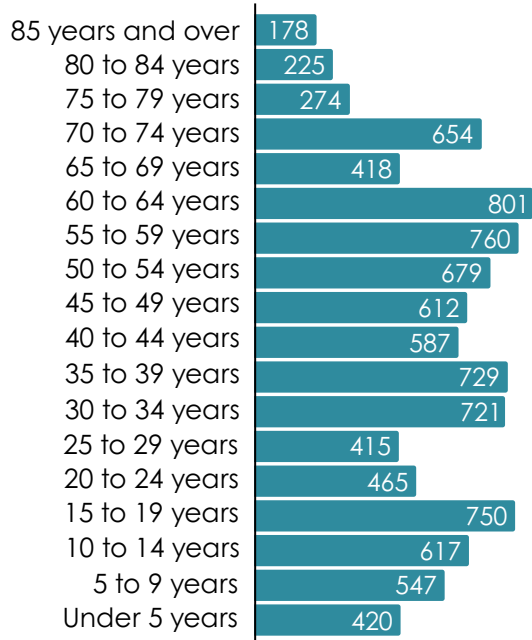


Sweet Home is a friendly, tight-knit small town surrounded by natural beauty, yet struggling with limited local services, declining businesses, and growing concerns about homelessness and poverty.

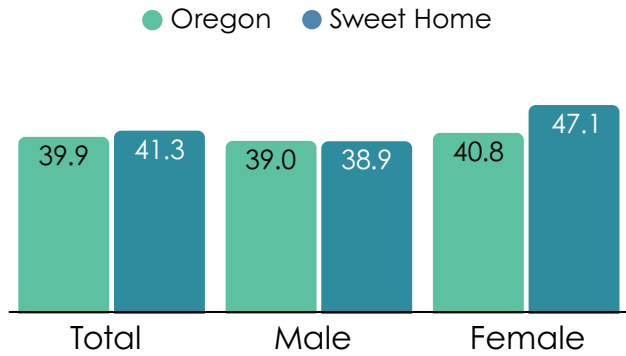
# Community Data

All data are from the 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, except data about Sweet Home's school district, which is from Oregon's Department of Education.

## Total Population: 9,852



## Median Age

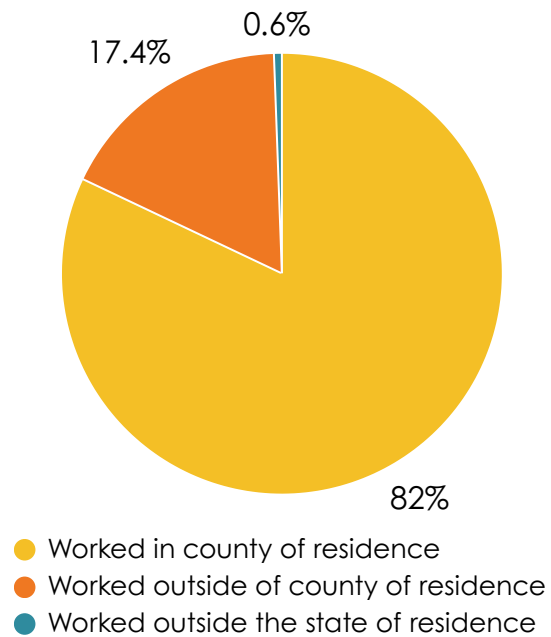


## Proportion of Population by Sex

Sex	Proportion
Male	50.9%
Female	49.1%

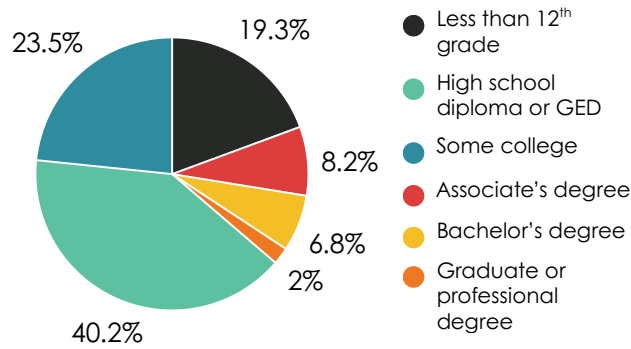
Population by Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone	88.9%
Black or African American alone	1.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.3%
Asian alone	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.1%
Some other race	4.0%
Two or more races	4.5%
Hispanic or Latino origin, of any race	6.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	87.1%

## Travel to Work

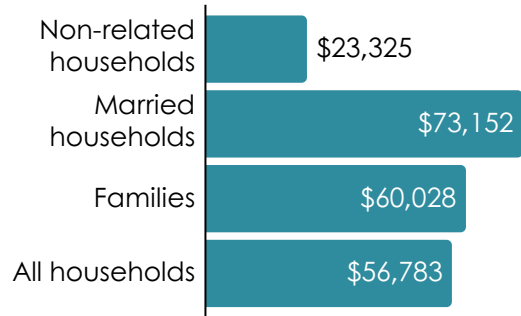


**Worked from home: 6.6%**  
**Mean travel time to work: 29.9 minutes**

### Educational Attainment

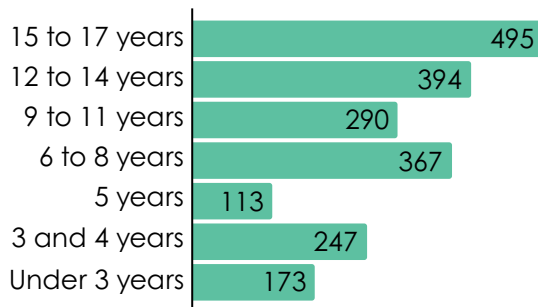


### Median Household Income



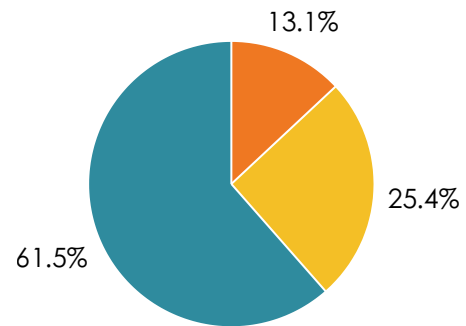
Total Households: 3,922  
 Average Home Price: \$342,639  
 (Zillow Home Values Index of March 31, 2024)

### Child Population



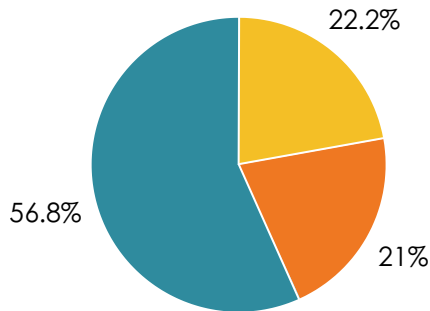
Total households with own children: 1,088

### Children in Households by Family Type



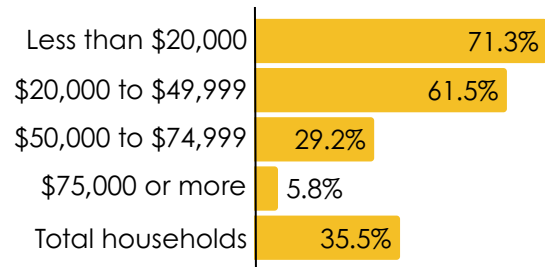
- Married couple household
- Female head of house, no partner
- Male head of house, no partner

### Households with Own Children by Age Group



- Under 6 years only
- Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years
- 6 to 17 years only

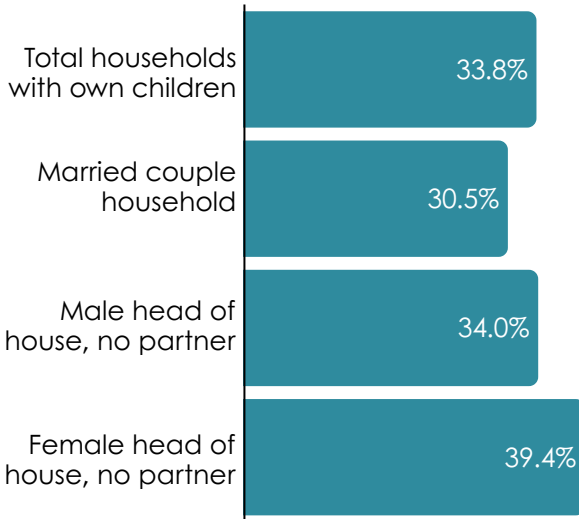
### Cost-Burdened Housing by Household Income



Note: Cost-burdened housing is defined as paying more than 30% of household income for housing (rent or mortgage plus utilities).

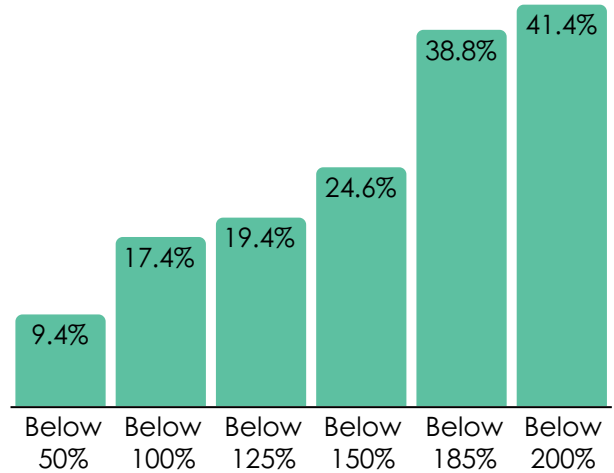
Median Monthly Housing Cost: \$1,047

### Households with Own Children Receiving SNAP/Food Assistance



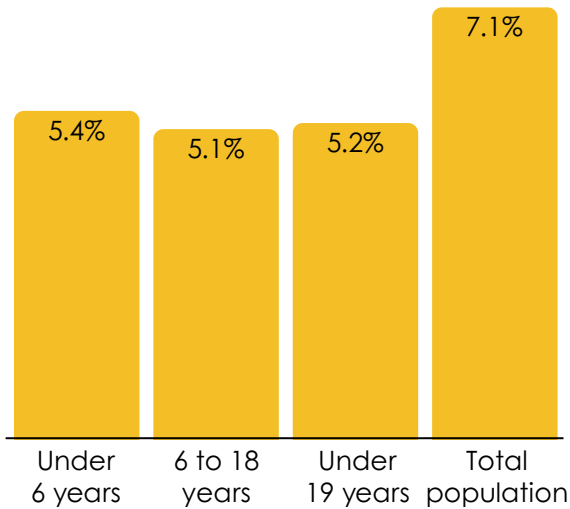
**Both parents in the labor force: 46.8%**

### People Living in Poverty, by Percentage of Poverty Level

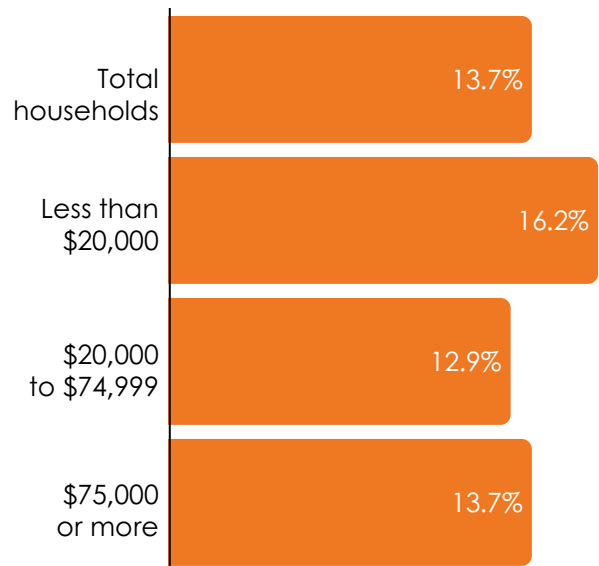


**10.6% of children under 18 years old are living below poverty level**

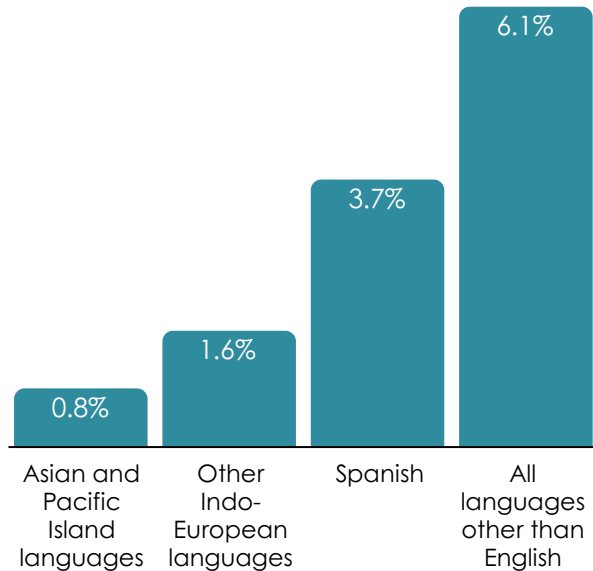
### Children Without Health Insurance by Age Group



### Households Without an Internet Subscription by Income



### Primary Language Spoken at Home



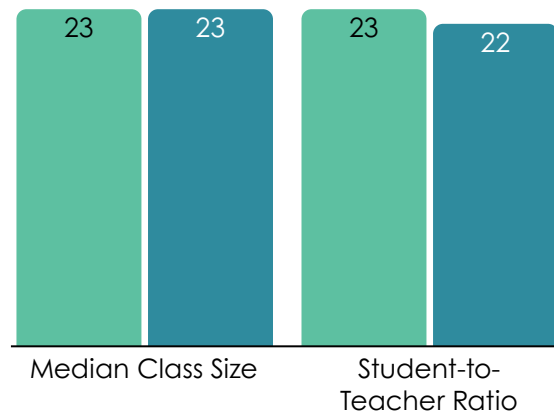
### Sweet Home School District At-A-Glance, 2022-2023

Student Enrollment	2,304
Ever English Learners	<5%
Students with Disabilities	20.0%
Mobile Students	14.0%
Free/Reduce Price Lunch	94.0%
Experienced Teachers	65.0%
Languages Spoken	7
Regular Attendees	58.0%
Grade 3 English Language Arts	35.0%
Grade 8 Mathematics	24.0%
On-Track to Graduate	87.0%
On-Time Graduation	88.0%
Five-Year Completion	90.0%

### Sweet Home School District Special Education At-A-Glance 2022-2023

Student Enrollment	2,304
Students in Special Education	427
% of Students in Special Education	18.53%
Regular Class	77.28%
Separate Class	13.11%
Separate Settings	0.23%
Graduation Rate (Oregon target: 81%)	50.0%
Dropout Rate (Oregon target: 12.17%)	50.0%

### Sweet Home School District Median Class Size & Student-to-Teacher Ratio, 2022-23



- All Subjects and Grade Levels
- Kindergarten



Prepared parents. Healthy families.

Pollywog was developed in 2017 to align health care, parenting education, and early childhood services for children and their families in Oregon's Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties.

As a program of the Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties, families trust Pollywog to connect them with the resources and services they need, including community-based organizations, medical services, and early childhood education and care. We also work closely with the Parenting Success Network, our local parenting education collaborative.



/PollywogFamily



/thePollywogFamily



@PollywogFamily

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**Early Learning Hub**

*of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties*

This project is made possible with support from Early Learning Hub staff. In addition, the following Hub staff contributed to this report:

Connie Adams -- Design and Text

Jinguang Lin -- Data Analysis and Data Visuals

Carmen Santacruz -- Spanish Translation

## Asset Mapping Project Updates

Follow the progress of our project as we hold asset mapping sessions throughout the Linn/Benton/Lincoln region. We invite you to join an asset mapping session in your town to share your opinions and experiences as a participant. You can find upcoming session locations and dates, reports from past sessions, and pictures of maps and sessions on the Pollywog website and the EL Hub website.