



## **Marion County**

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### OREGON

**For immediate release:** January 3, 2008  
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### **Marion County Approves Two-Year Contract for Healthy Start Program**

The Marion County Board of Commissioners approved a two-year agreement with Catholic Community Services for Healthy Start. The agreement, totaling \$1,810,159, will provide the funding for Healthy Start through June 30, 2009.

Through regular home visits, Healthy Start staff coach first-time parents through the challenges of parenting. "Some first-time parents see their baby as a burden. I get to help them see the baby as a gift," says Peggy Carson, a Healthy Start Family Support Worker.

"I receive positive feedback in association with our Healthy Start programs," explained Marion County Commissioner Sam Brentano. "Giving out parenting advice to those when it is most needed is vital. It plays an important role in the lowering of neglect and abuse risks to our children in Marion County," he said.

Healthy Start is Oregon's largest child abuse prevention program, screening over 7,500 families and providing home visiting services to over 3,300 children at risk for maltreatment statewide in FY 2005-06. Children in Healthy Start families are less likely to be victims of abuse or neglect than other children, even though they have more risk factors.

In Marion County, the Marion County Children and Families Commission provides oversight of this program.

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*The Marion County Children and Families Commission was created to mobilize the community to support children and families. The volunteer commission is appointed by the Marion County Board of Commissioners and funded primarily by the Oregon Legislature.*