

County says children doing better

Officials cite 5038 skewed data as one possible problem

Children First for Oregon, a non-profit, private organization in Portland, released its 1999 Report Card. The report card details the state of welfare for Oregon's children.

The report card this year rates the well-being of Oregon's children at a "C" level for the third consecutive

year. According to the private group, despite the current period of economic growth in the state, "this below average grade for the well-being of our children reflects a lack of investment in our most important resource."

County officials overall disagree with some of the report's figures, citing omission of some data and possible skewing of other data presented.

"The historical problem with this report card has been that it includes only pieces of data or misinterpreta-

tion of data by different people," said Jan Kenna, Director of the Columbia County Commission on Children and Families (CCCCF).

"In one report one time, we were given a poor grade in a particular category, but in a different report from a different state agency, we were given a good grade on the very same category."

Kenna said when people read these reports and report cards, they must be very careful how they interpret the

data and understand where the data came from.

The report card details declining trends in three categories including "Investment in Families, Early Childhood" care, and "Education."

Despite the downward trends reported in the Children First for Oregon's report card, Kenna said Columbia County is doing a much better job of taking care of their children than what the statewide report card claims.

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