



Bloom where you're planted.

In 2023, community-engaged researchers from OHSU & OSU-Cascades set out to measure community belonging to:

Learn what creates a sense of belonging among people living in Central Oregon.

Share the results to inform future public health policies, programs, and initiatives to promote sense of belonging and improve community health.

Responses were collected between January and July 2023 from people 18 years and older using a survey and focus groups.

Feelings of belonging can change over time and with life experience. We all deserve to be part of our community.

Here's what we learned from Older Adults in Central Oregon.

Belonging is...

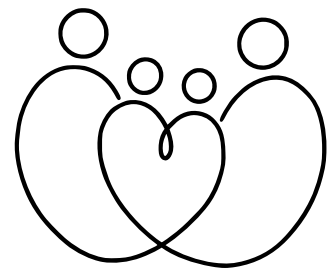
Caring * Listening * Helping
Being cared about and included.

“ **Family and community mean a lot to us.** ”

Nearly 3 out of 4 older adults say they prefer living in this community over others.

88% of older adults said **family** made them feel like they belong.

93% of older adults reported **where they live** as a place they feel they belong.



Learn more about the project results and resources at <http://belongingcentraloregon.org>

Connect with others in community spaces.

Senior centers and places of worship are particularly important.

73% of older adults reported feeling that they belong with people who share their **hobbies**.

- Older adults were more likely to say that they participate in recreational activities than people ages 18-64.
- Older adults say inviting others to join activities is one way we all can foster community belonging.

77% of older adults said they feel **safe** in public spaces in their community.



A "small-town feel" contributes to sense of safety.



Older adults reported feeling a sense of belonging among **people their age** and recognized the opportunity for **intergenerational activities** to strengthen communities.

About the Sample

- 1,019 total survey respondents
- **231 (23%)** identified as **65 years of age or older**.

What do older adults recommend to foster belonging?

- Technology can be a challenge for many older adults. Provide classes and resources to learn and navigate this changing environment.
- Older adults encounter challenges with basic needs. Transportation options, healthy food & physical activity resources, affordable housing, and companionship are areas of focus.
- Increase opportunities for connection with individuals without family nearby.
- Support activities, events, and resources that provide community gathering spaces for older adults and veterans.

Thank you to all the community partners who shared their perspectives on the study findings. Special thanks to the La Pine Activity Center for contributing to the creation of these materials.

Scan the QR code to learn more!

