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Child Well-Being in New Mexico at a Glance ***2006 KIDS COUNT New Mexico Fact Sheet***

New Mexico ranks 48th among all states in a new state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children. The 2006 *KIDS COUNT Data Book* shows that New Mexico improved in five out of 10 measures that reflect child well-being, but experienced setbacks in five indicators. This year's report highlights the early childhood experiences of young children, including a special focus on children under age six who are in family-based childcare.

One-third of New Mexico children under age 6 are in family-based childcare outside their home

In 2003, 49,000 New Mexico children (or 31 percent) under age six were in family-based childcare. This is higher than the 27 percent of children nationwide in family-based childcare and indicates a strong need for affordable childcare that offers early childhood education.

Child death rate increases

Between 2000 and 2003, New Mexico experienced a 45-percent increase in the rate of child deaths, compared to a 5 percent decrease nationwide over the same time period. In 2003, there were 29 child deaths per 100,000 children, up from 20 per 100,000 children three years earlier. New Mexico ranked 45th in the nation for this indicator in 2003.

Infant mortality rate declines

New Mexico has always had a low infant mortality rate, ranking 15th in the nation in 2003, its best ranking among the 10 indicators. The state saw another 12 percent decrease in the infant mortality rate during 2000 to 2003, compared to no change nationwide. In 2003, 5.8 infants died per every 1,000 births, down from 6.6 in 2000.

Percentage of children in single-parent families increases

The state ranked 45th in the nation for children living in single-parent families in 2004, up 15 percent from four years earlier. In 2004, 38 percent of children fell into this category, compared to 33 percent in 2000. The national percentage for 2004 was 31 percent, unchanged from 2000.

Increase in percentage of children living in poverty

New Mexico ranked 48th in child poverty with 56 percent of children living in low-income families. That represents an 8 percent increase over 2000. Of children under the age of six, 35 percent live in working poor families.