



PRESS RELEASE

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New NM KIDS COUNT report: Education plays major role in poverty Public investment needs to begin in child's earliest years

ALBUQUERQUE—The connection between educational attainment and poverty is a strong one: the higher one's level of formal education the higher the wages they typically earn. That's one of the conclusions reached in the **2007 New Mexico KIDS COUNT** report, to be released at a press conference tomorrow, Jan. 17. The press conference will be part of New Mexico Voices for Children's KIDS COUNT Day at the Legislature. The report also cites numerous studies that indicate that the best investment in our children's education starts before they are even of school age.

"Certainly, we need to invest in every aspect of the educational spectrum," said Kids Count program director Lisa Adams-Shafer, "but the scientific evidence indicates that investment in the earliest years of life – from birth to age 3 – has the biggest long-term payoff. This is not just in terms of a child's personal success, but the payoff extends well into the community in the way of greater economic activity and a reduction in the costs associated with crime," she added.

The data book also discusses the link between dropping out of high school and lower earnings potential, as well as the cost barriers to higher education. The report also includes demographic information on New Mexico's children, broken down by county.

The child advocacy organization will also use KIDS COUNT Day to talk about the group's New Mexico Children's Charter and its policy agenda for the coming session. Staffers and volunteers will also visit with legislators, presenting them with facts sheets and other data that backs up the group's policy positions.

A pdf version of the report will be posted online at:
<http://www.nmvoices.org/kidscount.htm>

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New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities.
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