



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **New Mexico KIDS COUNT Report: More Children Struggling in Poverty State encouraged to invest in programs serving children and families**

ALBUQUERQUE—More New Mexico children have fallen into poverty as a result of the recession, according to the 2011 New Mexico KIDS COUNT report.

The annual report, released today, is published by New Mexico Voices for Children.

Even before the Great Recession, New Mexico had very poor national rankings in terms of the economic, health, and educational well-being of its children. The most recent data show the recession and the slow recovery have made things worse.

“Fewer families are economically secure now and more children—especially those living in families with income below the poverty level—live in homes where employment for parents is either not full-time, not year-round, or both,” said Christine Hollis, New Mexico KIDS COUNT director. “The chronic stress of living in such a situation has a negative impact on children and their ability to achieve future success.”

More than half of New Mexico’s children live in poverty or in low-income families that have trouble making ends meet. The percent of children living in single-parent families has increased from 33 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2010. Single-parent families are more likely to suffer economic hardship than two-parent families. Only three other states have higher percents of children in single-parent homes.

“After three years of deep state budget cuts, New Mexico needs to be reinvesting in programs that serve children—child care, early learning K-12 education, unemployment benefits, and other programs that help families that are struggling with the loss of income and other resources,” Hollis added.

The NM KIDS COUNT 2011 cites data on poverty and other indicators of child well-being. Where available, data are broken down by county and school district. The annual report was released today during a press conference in the Rotunda of the state Capitol.

The report is available online at: <http://www.nmvoices.org/nm-kids-count>

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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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