Searchlight New Mexico is a non-partisan, nonprofit news organization dedicated to investigative reporting and innovative data journalism. In a landscape of shrinking media resources, our mission is to spur reform by exposing abuses of power by government, business and other institutions through high-impact investigative journalism on topics of local, regional and national interest. We believe great reporting empowers people to demand honest, effective public policy.
The Child Well-Being Project
KIDS IN CRISIS
New Mexico’s Other Bomb

The Coalition For Children
Ona Lara Porter, Editor
One in seven New Mexico Families lives below the poverty line: A 24% increase since 1980

BUT WHAT IS POOR?

-A family of four with an annual income that is less than $10,990 is considered “poor” by Federal guidelines.

-A family of four with one person working full time at minimum wage makes only about $7,000 a year, and, therefore, falls more than $3,600 below the poverty line.

-Approximately 172,000 children in New Mexico are poor. 67% of them receive no cash assistance at all, either federal or state.

-92% of the poor households of New Mexico have an annual income of less than $5,000.

-New Mexico spends only 7.75% of its State budget on social welfare programs ranking us 42nd among all of the states in the percentage spent for such programs.
## N.M. at bottom in child poverty

The top and bottom states in percentage of children in poverty:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 states</th>
<th>% in poverty</th>
<th>Bottom 5 states</th>
<th>% in poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Utah</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46 S. Carolina</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Maryland</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>47 Alabama</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 N. Hampshire</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>47 Louisiana</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Wyoming</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>49 Mississippi</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Minnesota</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td><strong>50 New Mexico</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: NATION KIDS COUNT DATA
New Mexico in Kids Count Rankings

1997  44th
2010  46th
2017  49th
So What can Investigative Journalism Do?

SEARCHLIGHT
NEW MEXICO
• Identify Problems

• Define Needs

• Search for Solutions, Opportunities

• Demystify

• Raise Public Awareness

• Hold Accountable
Our Funders

- Knight Foundation
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