The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

A KIDS COUNT Special Report

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new mexico kids count

NEW MEXICO VOICES FOR CHILDREN

New Mexico Office Of African American Affairs

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> "Our children are New Mexico's greatest assets and our links to a better future. It is our responsibility to ensure they have access to the quality of life they so deserve. Together we can help them overcome any obstacles in their way."
>
> –Yvette Kaufman-Bell
> Executive Director, NM OAAA

Introduction

Child poverty in New Mexico is among the worst in the nation and disparities exist within all indicators of child well-being for children of color. Our state's Black children face significant obstacles to success, much like their counterparts across the nation. With disparate access to the social supports and opportunities that all children need in order to thrive, outcomes for children of color in general—and Black children in particular—are too often not what they would be under more equitable circumstances.

Although the reasons behind this are well-known—centuries of discrimination and structural racism—data and statistics supply concrete evidence of the disparities, show trends, and illustrate geographical differences, while providing both a macro- and micro-scale picture. This report identifies some of the areas where Black families are facing the biggest challenges as well as highlights the strengths of Black children in New Mexico. Most indicators include a brief analysis that notes how Black children are doing compared to other racial and ethnic groups

Black children in New Mexico today are faring better than Black children nationally. The disproportionate discipline of students and the lack of a culturally-supportive education system are among the challenges New Mexico's Black children face. They are encouraged to assimilate into a society that overlooks their contributions to this state and nation's rich and complicated history, and fails to encourage Black youth to value themselves. We know that a positive self-image lays the foundation for all youth to grow and excel in society. In turn, that society must value the cultural history of Black people as well. Black children need an environment that acknowledges the difficulties they have faced—and will continue to face in the future—while drawing upon the strengths and assets shared by Black families.

The state of Black children in New Mexico is a reflection of the value we, as adults, place on them and our understanding of their unique challenges, needs, and strengths. Just as important, Black children deserve to feel a sense of pride in their culture and a belief in their own potential. They need to feel loved, protected, and uplifted, taught by example and history that they do matter.

About KIDS COUNT

KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, was predicated on the idea that advocacy is more powerful when it is backed by data and evidence. The Foundation launched KIDS COUNT in 1990 and has ranked the 50 states on their overall child well-being every year since. New Mexico, which has never ranked above 40th, has been stuck at 49th or 50th for the past several years. The Foundation tracks 16 indicators of child well-being, organized under four domains: Economic Well-Being, Health, Education, and Family and Community.

Over the last several years the Foundation has focused on the disparities in child well-being that fall along racial and ethnic lines. In 2014 they launched their first *Race for Results* report, which uses an index measuring children's progress on key education, health, and economic milestones, and across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state levels. In both the 2014 and the 2017 *Race for Results* reports, Black children in New Mexico fared better than Black children across the nation. While the data are critical for understanding children well-being, they do not always point us to the reasons.

About the New Mexico Office of African American Affairs

The New Mexico Office of African American Affairs (NM OAAA) was created in 1999 by the passage of HB 909. The NM OAAA studies, identifies, and provides solutions to issues of concern relevant to the African American community. It is a go-to source in New Mexico for methods of improving the quality of life for African Americans, providing resources for constituents, the Governor, legislators, educators, health care professionals, parents, and many others throughout the state. Among the areas of its work are community development, economic empowerment, the advancement of education and health care, advocacy and policy.

Acknowledgements

Population

People of color have been the majority population in New Mexico for many years. Nowhere is that diversity more apparent than in our child population. In relative terms, there are a small number of Black children living in New Mexico. Approximately 10,500 Black children younger than age 18 live in New Mexico. This represents 2.5 percent of the state's total child population, although 5.2 percent of children in New Mexico identify as two or more races and, therefore, may also be Black.

While our diversity is unique, when we look at child population by county we find there is still significant segregation along racial and ethnic lines. Black children, like all races and ethnicities in our child population, are not evenly spread across all communities. In Curry County, for example, 6.7 percent of the child population is Black, while in San Miguel County the share is 4.9 percent. In Bernalillo, Lea, Luna, Otero, Quay, Sandoval, and Union, the Black child population is higher than the state average but no higher than 3.5 percent.

In terms of the total population of Black children, some 5,100, or about half (48.9 percent) live in Bernalillo County. The next largest numbers are 900 (8.6 percent) in Curry County and 774 (7.4 percent) in Doña Ana County.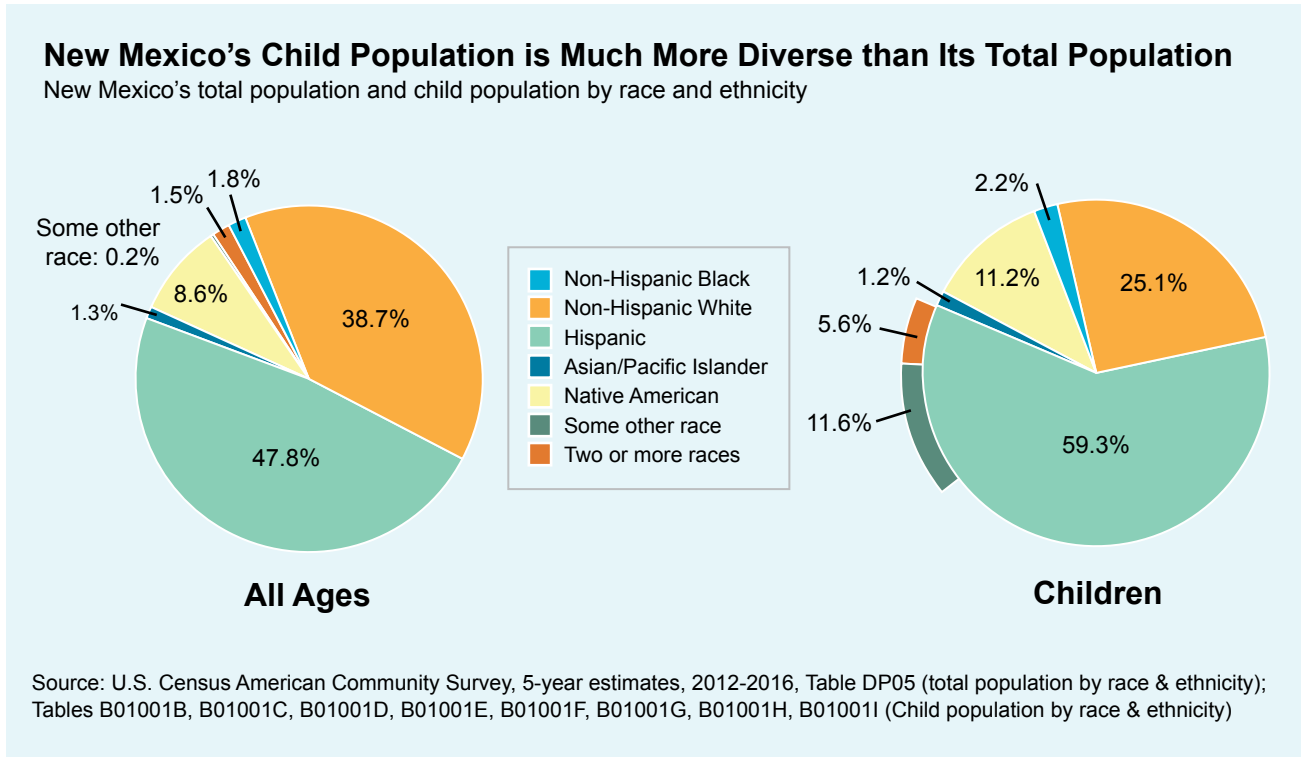 As the data show, while Black children live in most communities across the state, they make up a larger share of the child population in Curry and San Miguel counties, and the largest numbers are primarily concentrated in metro areas like Las Cruces and Albuquerque.

Race and Ethnicity

Many of the charts and graphs in this report rely on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and its categories for race and ethnicity. The Census Bureau considers Hispanic to be an ethnicity—meaning those who identify as Hispanic may also identify as a race. However, in most of the data presented in this report, Hispanics are shown separately from the White, Black, Native American, and Asian races, because these populations have been identified by the Census Bureau as "non-Hispanic."

Unfortunately, data for the races of those individuals who identify as "two or more races" or "some other race" do not exist. Individuals who identify as Afro-Latino would likely be included in one of these categories rather than as Hispanic or Non-Hispanic Black.

Because of the way the Census Bureau defines race and ethnicity, the numbers for New Mexico's child population by race and ethnicity exceed 100 percent. In order to keep the ratios of the pie chart visually accurate, we have shown the "two or more races" and "some other race" categories separately.

New Mexico's Child Population is Much More Diverse than Its Total Population

New Mexico's total population and child population by race and ethnicity

Legend:
- Non-Hispanic Black
- Non-Hispanic White
- Hispanic
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Some other race
- Two or more races

All Ages
- Some other race: 0.2%
- 1.3%
- 1.5%
- 1.8%
- 8.6%
- 38.7%
- 47.8%

Children
- 2.2%
- 1.2%
- 5.6%
- 11.6%
- 11.2%
- 25.1%
- 59.3%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2012-2016, Table DP05 (total population by race & ethnicity); Tables B01001B, B01001C, B01001D, B01001E, B01001F, B01001G, B01001H, B01001I (Child population by race & ethnicity)

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

New Mexico's Black Child Population Varies Significantly by County
Number of Black children living in New Mexico by county and age group (with margins of error), 2016

County	Number of Black children in the age range of:								
	0-4 years	Margin of error	5-9 years	Margin of error	10-14 years	Margin of error	15-17 years	Margin of error	0-17 years
Bernalillo	1,189	150	1,679	193	1,352	210	924	90	5,144
Catron	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Chaves	32	39	44	41	72	73	113	50	261
Cibola	53	51	14	22	0	21	0	21	67
Colfax	6	18	5	18	1	18	14	22	26
Curry	449	149	222	79	133	79	103	34	907
De Baca	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Doña Ana	222	78	218	58	287	64	47	32	774
Eddy	11	27	33	41	139	60	28	30	211
Grant	22	36	22	36	11	21	13	25	68
Guadalupe	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Harding	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Hidalgo	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Lea	184	135	116	80	153	95	49	53	502
Lincoln	0	18	0	18	33	70	0	18	33
Los Alamos	0	18	0	18	18	32	0	18	18
Luna	30	34	0	21	91	34	43	33	164
McKinley	0	27	13	27	77	84	47	67	137
Mora	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0
Otero	183	65	179	63	94	46	25	33	481
Quay	59	80	0	16	0	16	0	16	59
Rio Arriba	20	12	35	25	11	9	0	24	66
Roosevelt	21	26	10	8	12	18	12	18	55
Sandoval	125	67	170	65	317	111	154	31	766
San Juan	44	23	28	29	60	79	0	27	132
San Miguel	107	73	35	57	37	25	107	66	286
Santa Fe	18	27	93	93	23	28	31	26	165
Sierra	0	18	0	18	0	18	0	18	0
Socorro	0	18	0	18	0	18	0	18	0
Taos	0	24	0	24	0	24	0	24	0
Torrance	0	18	0	18	0	18	0	18	0
Union	9	13	0	11	17	14	0	11	26
Valencia	64	72	18	27	44	34	51	39	177
State totals									
New Mexico	2,848		2,934		2,982		1,761		10,525

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Economic Well-Being

Children Living in Poverty

According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, about 15 million children in the United States—or about 21 percent of all children—live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL),[1] or $20,090 for a family of three in 2016 (the year these data were collected). Poverty thresholds are updated yearly by the Census. In order to compute poverty status, the Census takes into account (before taxes) income received through working, social security, public cash assistance, as well as many other income sources.

Even though poverty thresholds are federally designated, families need an income of roughly double the poverty level to cover basic expenses like rent, utilities, and food. Intergenerational equity is determined by what opportunities parents had when they were young and what opportunities children have now. Children who live in poverty have access to fewer of the resources that all children need to help them thrive, succeed, and achieve their full potential. Children of color, including Black children, experience disproportionately higher rates of poverty compared to their White counterparts.

Black Children are Less Likely to Live in Poverty than Hispanic and Native American Children

Number of New Mexico children by parental income in past 12 months and percent of children living below the poverty level by race and ethnicity, 2016
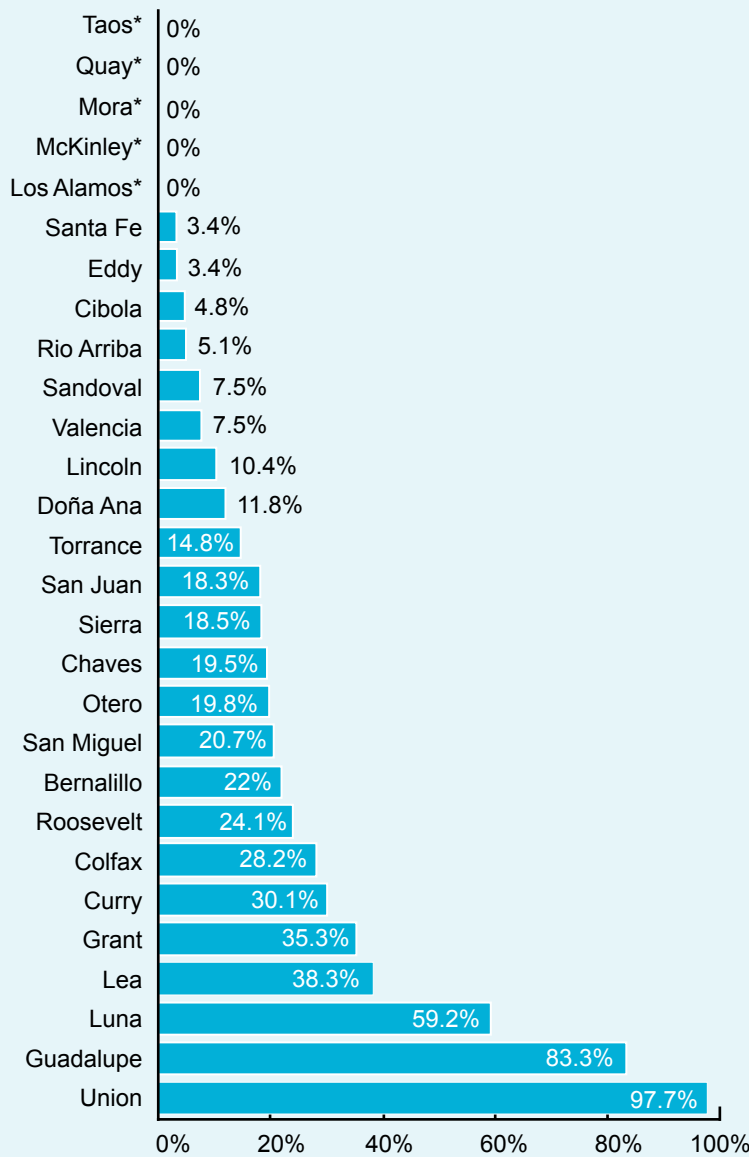
Race or ethnicity	Children with parents whose income in the past 12 months was:		Percent of children living below the poverty level
	Below the poverty level	Above the poverty level	
Black	2,194	7,226	23.3%
White	16,917	100,700	14.4%
Hispanic	100,882	190,421	34.6%
Asian	580	5,699	9.2%
Native American	23,485	31,147	43%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2016

With 29 percent of our children living in families at or below the poverty level, New Mexico is second worst in the nation for childhood poverty. Although Hispanic and Native American children experience high childhood poverty rates, Black children in New Mexico have a childhood poverty rate that is one-and-a-half times the rate for White children. In many counties across the state—including Curry, Grant, and Lea—Black children experience poverty at higher rates than the state average. The counties with the highest rates of poverty among Black children are Union County, where nearly every Black child (97.7 percent) is living in poverty, and Luna County with well over half (59.2 percent) of its Black children living in poverty. Compared to the rest of the country, Black children in New Mexico, on average, experience poverty at lower rates (23.3 percent) than Black children in the United States (37.1 percent).

Poverty for Black Children Varies Significantly by County

Percent of Black children living in poverty in New Mexico by county, 2016

County	Percent
Taos*	0%
Quay*	0%
Mora*	0%
McKinley*	0%
Los Alamos*	0%
Santa Fe	3.4%
Eddy	3.4%
Cibola	4.8%
Rio Arriba	5.1%
Sandoval	7.5%
Valencia	7.5%
Lincoln	10.4%
Doña Ana	11.8%
Torrance	14.8%
San Juan	18.3%
Sierra	18.5%
Chaves	19.5%
Otero	19.8%
San Miguel	20.7%
Bernalillo	22%
Roosevelt	24.1%
Colfax	28.2%
Curry	30.1%
Grant	35.3%
Lea	38.3%
Luna	59.2%
Guadalupe	83.3%
Union	97.7%

*Due to margin of error, 0% does not mean 0 black children live in poverty in the given county

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Economic Well-Being for Black Children Varies Significantly by County

Black children living at or below and above 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL) in New Mexico by county (with margins of error), 2016

County	Number of Black children below 100% FPL	Margin of error	Percent of Black children below 100% FPL	Number of Black children above 100% FPL	Margin of error
Bernalillo County	4,750	193	22%	16,861	181
Catron County	0	11	NA	0	11
Chaves County	233	41	19.5%	962	74
Cibola County	12	21	4.8%	236	22
Colfax County	11	18	28.2%	28	22
Curry County	1,029	145	30.1%	2,390	72
De Baca County	0	11	NA	0	11
Doña Ana County	425	51	11.8%	3,188	86
Eddy County	30	27	3.4%	840	57
Grant County	54	21	35.3%	99	36
Guadalupe County	10	11	83.3%	2	11
Harding County	0	11	NA	0	11
Hidalgo County	0	11	NA	0	11
Lea County	818	78	38.3%	1,319	57
Lincoln County	16	18	10.4%	138	70
Los Alamos County	0	18	0%	109	32
Luna County	222	37	59.2%	153	21
McKinley County	0	27	0%	447	84
Mora County	0	11	0%	5	11
Otero County	436	62	19.8%	1,769	60
Quay County	0	16	0.0%	227	16
Rio Arriba County	14	24	5.1%	258	25
Roosevelt County	76	18	24.1%	239	18
San Juan County	99	27	18.3%	442	29
San Miguel County	99	25	20.7%	380	65
Sandoval County	251	39	7.5%	3,117	98
Santa Fe County	37	27	3.4%	1,055	87
Sierra County	12	18	18.5%	53	18
Socorro County	0	18	NA	0	18
Taos County	0	24	0%	93	24
Torrance County	38	18	14.8%	218	18
Union County	43	14	97.7%	1	11
Valencia County	58	50	7.5%	712	28

NA = Population size too small

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Household Income

Household income is defined as income of the householder and the income of all other people aged 15 and older in the household, whether or not they are related to the householder. The median household income is the standard benchmark against which comparisons of the economic health of the middle class are made. It is an important indicator to examine as the state continues to recover from the Great Recession. Household income is closely related to levels of employment, education attained, as well as opportunities people have in their community. Higher household incomes are generally associated with more access to quality resources.

In New Mexico, the median household income for Blacks is $41,306 which is nearly $20,000 less than the nationwide average of about $59,000. White households have a median income of $55,647. Asian households in New Mexico are the only households with median incomes higher than the national average at $60,458. Compared to their White counterparts, racial and ethnic minorities fare worse here as well. The household median income for Blacks is about 74 percent of the median for Whites. Native American and Hispanic households fare worse still, with incomes at about 69 percent of that of Whites.

Among households with children, racial and ethnic minorities also fare worse than their White counterparts. In New Mexico, Black families with children living in the home have incomes on average of $45,400, or only about 63 percent of White families with children. These data highlight severe racial income inequality between racial and ethnic minorities and Whites. When looking at racial disparities in income over generations, some studies have shown that in virtually all neighborhoods in the United States, Black boys earn less in adulthood than White boys who come from similar socioeconomic backgrounds.[2] Because New Mexico's recovery from the recession has been flat, income inequality has worsened over time, disallowing families, particularly those of color, to better their economic circumstances.

Median Incomes for Black Households Lag Behind White and Asian Households

Median income among all households and households with children in New Mexico by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	All Households		Households with Children	
	Median household income	Percent of White median household income	Median household income	Percent of White median household income
Black	$41,306	74.2%	$45,400	62.9%
White	$55,647	100%	$72,200	100%
Hispanic	$37,961	68.2%	$38,400	53.2%
Asian	$60,458	108.6%	$64,600	89.5%
Native American	$38,663	69.5%	$26,400	36.6%
2 or more races	NA	NA	$75,200	104.2%
New Mexico			$47,700	66.1%

NA = Population size too small

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016 (all households); Population Reference Bureau analysis of ACS, 2016 (households with children)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the single largest provider of nutrition assistance to children in struggling families across the country serving 55 percent of all New Mexico households with children. In New Mexico almost half of all children, about 206,000 kids, receive SNAP benefits. In New Mexico, fewer than 2 percent of Black households receive SNAP despite the fact that 20.3 percent of Black families in New Mexico live in poverty. In contrast, nearly 70 percent of White families in poverty receive SNAP, even though just 13.4 of all White families live in poverty.

White Families are More Likely to Receive Food Benefits Even Though Whites Have the Second Lowest Rate of Poverty

Number and percentage of Households receiving SNAP benefits and percent of all families living in poverty by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	Number of families receiving SNAP	Percent of all families receiving SNAP	Percent of all families living in poverty
Black	2,458	1.9%	20.3%
White	88,463	69.2%	13.4%
Hispanic	75,840	59.3%	21.8%
Asian	899	0.7%	9%
Native American	15,003	11.7%	31%
Some other race	17,979	14.1%	24.2%
2 or more races	3,030	2.4%	13%

Sources: SNAP Quality Control sample USDA 2018 report (SNAP usage); U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016, FY 2016 (poverty)

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Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF), formerly known as welfare, provides some cash assistance to eligible families with children so they can better afford basic necessities. While data do not provide information on children enrolled in TANF by race, it is known that only 23,432 children (or about 17 percent of all children living in poverty) were served by TANF in 2015 and even fewer (21,354) children were served in 2016. About 3 percent—-or 662—of all children who receive TANF in New Mexico are Black. Although this seems like a small percentage, this figure is slightly larger than the share of Blacks in the state. Nationwide, about 28 percent of children who received TANF benefits were Black. The overwhelming majority of TANF recipients are Hispanic and White children, accounting for more than 90 percent of the state's enrollment. Below are the number of TANF recipients broken out by race and ethnicity for parents and their children in 2018 and child recipients in 2016.

Individuals receiving TANF	
Race or ethnicity	Number
Black	1,187
White, including Hispanic	25,485
Hispanic alone	20,670
Asian	269
Native American	2,482
2 or more races	453
Race unknown	264

Hispanic Children Make Up the Largest Share of Children Receiving TANF

Number of all individuals (including parents) receiving TANF in New Mexico (2018), and number of just children receiving TANF in New Mexico (2016) and that population's makeup by race and ethnicity

Children receiving TANF		
Race or ethnicity	Number	Percent
Black	662	3.1%
White	3,652	17.1%
Hispanic	15,588	73%
Asian	21	0.1%
Native American	1,431	6.7%
2 or more races	S	S
Total		100%

S = Data suppressed due to small sample size

Sources: New Mexico Human Services Department, 2018 (individuals receiving TANF); U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Family Assistance FY2016 (children receiving TANF)

Health

Children without Health Insurance

Children without health insurance are less likely to get well-baby and well-child visits, less likely to receive immunizations, and are more likely to deal with untreated developmental delays and chronic conditions that can hinder healthy growth and learning. Health insurance is one of the bright spots for Black children in New Mexico, who have the second lowest rate of being uninsured— just 1.8 percent. In line with national trends, New Mexico has seen decreases in the number of children without health insurance, dropping from about 14 percent in 2008, to 5 percent in 2016. Thanks to the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), New Mexico has seen some of the biggest improvements in the nation in the percentage of the child population without health insurance and this is especially true for Black children. There are only two counties in New Mexico that have lower child insurance rates for Black children than 98 percent which are Lea County and Santa Fe County, with uninsured rates of 74.1 percent and 87.9 percent respectively.

Black Children Have the Second Highest Rate of Health Insurance Coverage
Number and percent of New Mexico children who have and do not have health insurance by race and ethnicity (with margins of error), 2016

Race or ethnicity	With health insurance			No health insurance		
	Estimated number	Margin of error	Percent	Estimated number	Margin of error	Percent
Black	9,464	1,333	98.7%	128	195	1.3%
White	114,515	2,255	96%	4,818	1,681	4%
Hispanic	280,631	3,249	95.3%	13,749	1,967	4.7%
Asian	6,335	1,100	99.1%	55	195	0.9%
Native American	48,439	2,456	87.4%	7,013	1,126	12.6%
Some other race	48,364	4,468	95.4%	2,338	1,284	4.6%
2 or more races	24,495	2,739	96%	1,010	395	4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Black Children have Excellent Rates of Health Insurance Coverage Except in Lea and Santa Fe Counties

Number and percent of Black children in New Mexico who have and do not have health insurance by county, 2016

County	Number younger than 18 years	Number with health insurance	Percent with health insurance	Number with no health insurance	Percent with no health insurance
Bernalillo	5,139	5,021	97.7	118	2.3%
Catron	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Chaves	261	261	100%	0	0%
Cibola	67	67	100%	0	0%
Colfax	25	25	100%	0	0%
Curry	904	904	100%	0	0%
De Baca	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Doña Ana	771	747	96.9%	24	3.1%
Eddy	211	211	100%	0	0%
Grant	68	68	100%	0	0%
Guadalupe	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Harding	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hidalgo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lea	502	372	74.1%	130	25.9%
Lincoln	33	33	100%	0	0%
Los Alamos	18	18	100%	0	0%
Luna	164	164	100%	0	0%
McKinley	133	133	100%	0	0%
Mora	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Otero	480	480	100%	0	0%
Quay	59	59	100%	0	0%
Rio Arriba	66	66	100%	0	0%
Roosevelt	41	41	100%	0	0%
Sandoval	766	766	100%	0	0%
San Juan	132	126	95.5%	6	4.5%
San Miguel	281	281	100%	0	0%
Santa Fe	165	145	87.9%	20	12.1%
Sierra	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Socorro	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Taos	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Torrance	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Union	26	26	100%	0	0%
Valencia	177	177	100%	0	0%

NA = population size too small

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Medicaid Enrollment

New Mexico expanded Medicaid to low-income adults in 2013 under the ACA but variations in Medicaid eligibility across the country still vary. While some states have significantly expanded their eligibility for children through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which enrolled 9 million children in 2016, eligibility and insurance options are much stricter for their parents. CHIP provides low-cost health coverage to children in families that earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid. Medicaid and CHIP benefits in New Mexico cover routine check-ups, immunizations, doctor visits, prescriptions, dental and vision care, as well as emergency services. There are currently 7,725 Blacks, ages 21 or younger, enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP in New Mexico, this accounts for 2.1 percent of all enrollees younger than 21. This is commensurate with the size of the child population in the state.

Medicaid is the Single Largest Insurer of Children in New Mexico

Estimated number of children younger than 21 enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP in New Mexico by race and ethnicity, 2018

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number enrolled
Black	7,725
White, including Hispanic	290,875
Asian	4,507
Native American	57,577
Some other race	2,913
2 or more races	547
Race unknown	5,285
Total	369,429

Estimated number of children younger than 21 enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP in New Mexico by county, 2018

County	All children enrolled in Medicaid	Black children enrolled in Medicaid
Bernalillo	99,415	3,439
Catron	264	4
Chaves	14,043	242
Cibola	5,960	35
Colfax	2,166	30
Curry	8,858	637
De Baca	624	28
Doña Ana	48,132	559
Eddy	10,037	99

Continued on next table

County	All children enrolled in Medicaid	Black children enrolled in Medicaid
Grant	4,210	50
Guadalupe	866	4
Harding	25	0
Hidalgo	788	11
Lea	14,703	610
Lincoln	3,089	22
Los Alamos	356	1
Luna	6,777	76
McKinley	18,995	47
Mora	502	2
Otero	8,900	365
Quay	1,667	48
Rio Arriba	9,296	33
Roosevelt	3,573	56
Sandoval	25,880	169
San Juan	4,769	62
San Miguel	21,319	406
Santa Fe	23,321	343
Sierra	2,706	9
Socorro	3,323	48
Taos	5,264	30
Torrance	3,889	38
Union	288	3
Valencia	14,418	166
Unknown	753	53
State totals		
New Mexico	369,176	7,725

Source (both tables): NM Human Services Department, Medicaid report, March 2018

Black and Multi-Racial Babies are More Likely to be Born at a Low Birthweight

Babies born in New Mexico at a low birthweight* by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number born at low birthweight	Percent born at low birthweight
Black	55	11%
White	576	8%
Hispanic	1,285	9%
Asian	40	8%
Native American	273	9%
2 or more races	54	11%
Total	2,227	9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Babies Born at a Low Birthweight

Babies born at a low birthweight, defined as weighing less than 5.5 pounds, are at greater risk for developmental delays, disabilities, chronic conditions, and early death. Mothers who live in poverty, give birth at a young age, use drugs and alcohol during pregnancy, receive late or no prenatal care, or do not have enough to eat during pregnancy are at the highest risk for giving birth to low-birthweight babies. At 11 percent, Black babies in New Mexico experience low birthweight at the highest rates among all racial and ethnic groups. Counties that have larger populations of Black children also have higher rates of low-birthweight Black babies including Bernalillo, Curry, Doña Ana, Lea, and Sandoval County.

The Rate of Black Babies Born at a Low Birthweight Varies by County

Black babies born in New Mexico at a low* or very low* birthweight, 2016

County	Number of live births	Number of low- or very low-birthweight infants	Percent of low- or very low-birthweight infants	County	Number of live births	Number of low- or very low-birthweight infants	Percent of low- or very low-birthweight infants
Bernalillo	201	23	11.4%	Luna	4	0	0%
Catron	NA	NA	NA	McKinley	1	0	0%
Chaves	NA	NA	NA	Mora	NA	NA	NA
Cibola	1	0	0%	Otero	40	0	0%
Colfax	NA	NA	NA	Quay	4	0	0%
Curry	56	10	17.9%	Rio Arriba	NA	NA	NA
De Baca	NA	NA	NA	Roosevelt	2	0	0%
Doña Ana	39	5	12.8%	Sandoval	27	5	18.5%
Eddy	NA	NA	NA	San Juan	NA	NA	NA
Grant	2	0	0%	San Miguel	2	0	0%
Guadalupe	NA	NA	NA	Santa Fe	NA	NA	NA
Harding	NA	NA	NA	Sierra	1	0	0%
Hidalgo	NA	NA	NA	Socorro	NA	NA	NA
Lea	24	4	16.7%	Taos	1	0	0%
Lincoln	NA	NA	NA	Torrance	3	0	0%
Los Alamos	1	0	0%	Union	NA	NA	NA
Continued on next table				Valencia	NA	NA	NA

*Babies born weighing less than 5.5 pounds are considered low birthweight. Babies born weighing less than 2 pounds, 3 ounces are considered very low birthweight.
NA = Population size too small

Source: NM Department of Health, Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS) 2016

Infant Mortality Rates

The infant mortality rate is viewed as a robust measure of health because it can be more broadly used as an indicator of community health status, poverty status levels, and availability and access to quality health services in a given area.[3] Although advances in medicine and medical technology have brought down infant mortality rates to record lows across the world, there has been less success in eliminating the racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality in New Mexico and the rest of the country. Despite many young Black children being enrolled in health insurance programs in the state, Blacks have the highest infant mortality rate in New Mexico with 12.9 deaths occurring for every 1,000 live births. This is two-and-a-half times the rate of Whites and more than double the rate of Hispanics. Studies have shown that this disparity is not simply a result of socioeconomic inequity. White and Hispanic women who delay childbearing until their twenties experience lower infant mortality rates than those who give birth in their teens. However, the opposite is true for Black women. One hypothesis for this pattern is called "weathering," which is essentially the cumulative impact of living with racism.[4]

Black Babies Have the Highest Infant Mortality Rate
Infant mortality numbers and rates* in New Mexico by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	Number of live births	Number of deaths	Infant mortality rates*
Black	2,319	30	12.9
White	36,801	187	5.1
Hispanic	70,843	444	6.3
Asian	2,676	11	4.1
Native American	15,877	82	5.2

*The infant mortality rate is the number of infants who die in their first year per 1,000 live births.

Source: NM Department of Health, Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS) 2016

Teen Birth Rates

Teen mothers are less likely to graduate high school, to receive adequate prenatal care, and to be economically secure. Babies born to teen mothers are more likely to face developmental delays, do poorly in school, and become teen parents themselves. The teen birth rate for New Mexico is 30 births to teens aged 15 to 19 per every 1,000 female teens in that age cohort. In New Mexico, the teen birth rate for Blacks is similar to that of Whites with teen birth rates of 22 per 1,000 and 19 per 1,000, respectively. By county, Curry and Lea have significantly high rates of births among Black teens with 53.2 per 1,000 and 71.1 per 1,000, respectively.

Black Teens have a Lower Birth Rate than the State Average

Estimated number of teen births and teen birth rate* by race and ethnicity, 2015

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number	Teen birth rate*
Black	41	22
White	315	19
Hispanic	1,409	35
Asian	S	S
Native American	267	31
2 or More Races	40	16
Total	2,019	30

*The teen birth rate is the number of births to teens ages 15 to 19 per 1,000 female teens in that age group.
S = Data are suppressed due to small sample size

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2015

Youth Smoking and Drug Use

Tobacco use is started and established primarily during adolescence. In the United States, nearly 9 out of 10 cigarette smokers first tried smoking by age 18, and nearly all smokers first tried smoking by age 26, according to the Centers for Disease Control.[5] The most recent data for New Mexico indicate that Black youth smoke at rates almost twice as high as the state average for New Mexico use with 32.2 percent of Black teens reporting that they currently smoke.

Black High School Students are Much More Likely to Smoke than Students of Other Races and Ethnicities

High school students in New Mexico who smoke by race and ethnicity, 2013

Race or ethnicity	Sample size	Respondents who smoke	Percent of respondents who are frequent smokers
Black	135	34	32.2%
White	6695	938	15.9%
Hispanic	3911	649	17.7%
Asian	90	12	17.3%
Native American	1124	114	14.2%
Total	11,955	1,794	17.1%

Source: NM Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey, NM Department of Health and Public Education Department, with technical assistance and support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In October 2017, President Trump declared the opioid crisis a public health emergency and has since pledged resources to address it. New Mexico's Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey reported that in 2015, 14.3 percent of high school students have used prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription and 3.5 percent have used heroin. Although drug use is not commonly reported at the state level by race and ethnicity, one proxy that can be used to estimate drug use is drug overdose deaths. In New Mexico, Black youth younger than 25 years old experience the highest drug overdose death rate at 7.7, per 100,000. White and Hispanic youth have drug overdose rates that are similar to the state average of 5.7 deaths per 100,000.

Black Youth Have the Highest Rate of Death by Drug Overdose

Estimated rate of drug overdose deaths for New Mexico youth ages 0 to 24 by race and ethnicity, 2016

Black	7.7
White	5.7
Hispanic	6.1
Asian	3.8
Native American	3.2
Total	5.7
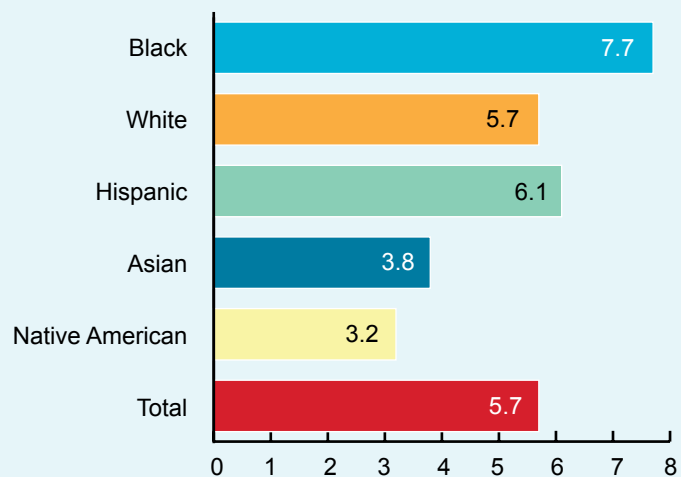
*The death rate is the number of deaths of children and youth ages 0 to 24 per 100,000 children and youth in that age group.

Source: NM Department of Health, Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health 2016

Education

Early Childhood Education

The early years in a child's life, namely the first three to five years, are the most important to that child's future. During these years the brain is developing rapidly and laying the foundation for the social, emotional and intellectual success later in life. This brain development occurs within an environment of verbal exchange between the child and her caregivers as well as in environments where children are safe to explore, play, and learn with others.[6] Investing in education, particularly during their first five years, is one of the best ways we can improve outcomes for children. New Mexico funds pre-K for 4-year olds and has a pilot early pre-K program for 3-year olds. For the 2016-2017 school year, 265, or about 2.6 percent of all children who were enrolled, were Black children. Because no data exist on how many 3- and 4-year olds live in the state of New Mexico, it is difficult to estimate where these children reside and how many are currently being underserved. The largest cohort in state-funded early pre-K and NM pre-K in New Mexico are Hispanic (58.6 percent), while about a quarter are White children.

Enrollment in Pre-K by Race and Ethnicity is in Line with Child Population

Number and percentage of children enrolled in NM Early Pre-K and NM Pre-K by race and ethnicity, 2016-2017

Race or ethnicity	Number enrolled	Percent enrolled in NM Early Pre-K and NM Pre-K
Black	265	2.6%
White	2,639	25.4%
Hispanic	6,081	58.6%
Asian	158	1.5%
Native American	1,236	11.9%
Total	10,379	100%

Sources: NM Pre-Kindergarten Annual Report 2017, US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Math and Reading Proficiency

The data published here are a compilation of results from New Mexico's Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test as well as other standardized exams, like the Standards Based Assessment, that are used by the state to measure proficiencies such as reading and math.

Statewide, of the 6,720 Black students tested, only 34 percent are proficient or better in reading. Of the 5,015 Black students tested in math, 15 percent are proficient or better. Both of these rates are lower than the overall state average for all children for reading and math at 37 percent and 20 percent, respectively. As the table on the next page shows, More Black students are proficient in both reading and math in the Los Alamos school district. Conversely, fewer Black students are proficient in reading in Las Vegas, Socorro, and Tucumcari school districts, where reading proficiency rates are less than or equal to 20 percent. Gallup-McKinley schools have the lowest rates for math proficiency, at less than or equal to 10 percent.

Asian and White Students are More Likely to Reach Reading and Math Proficiency

Number of New Mexico students tested in reading and math, and percent of proficiency among students by race and ethnicity (2017)

Race or ethnicity	Reading		Math	
	Number tested	Percent of all students tested who are proficient	Number tested	Percent of all students tested who are proficient
Black	6,720	34%	5,015	15%
White	72,213	52%	52,021	33%
Hispanic	181,770	33%	134,690	16%
Asian	4,416	61%	3,226	50%
Native American	31,397	26%	23,398	11%
New Mexico	296,516	37%	218,350	20%

Source: NM Public Education Department, Proficiency Webfile 2017

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

Reading and Math Proficiency Rates for Black Students Vary by District

Number of New Mexico Black students tested in reading and math, and percent of proficiency among students in both cohorts, 2017

School district*	Reading		Math	
	Number of Black students tested	Percent who are proficient	Number of Black students tested	Percent who are proficient
Alamogordo Public Schools	432	46%	317	21%
Albuquerque Public Schools	2,442	29%	1,805	12%
Artesia Public Schools	23	52%	15	40%
Aztec Municipal Schools	28	36%	17	≤ 20%
Belen Consolidated Schools	49	33%	35	20%
Bloomfield Schools	24	33%	20	25%
Carlsbad Consolidated Schools	123	33%	93	8%
Clovis Municipal Schools	574	36%	426	18%
Cobre Consolidated Schools	14	36%	12	≤ 20%
Deming Public Schools	74	28%	45	9%
Española Public Schools	16	38%	10	≤ 20%
Farmington Municipal Schools	109	38%	96	22%
Gadsden Independent Schools	70	46%	51	24%
Gallup-McKinley County Schools	42	38%	30	≤ 10%
Grants-Cibola County Schools	22	50%	17	≤ 20%
Hobbs Municipal Schools	393	30%	289	8%
Las Cruces Public Schools	560	34%	427	14%
Las Vegas City Public Schools	14	≤ 20%	11	≤ 20%
Los Alamos Public Schools	41	61%	35	43%
Los Lunas Public Schools	75	29%	63	13%
Lovington Municipal Schools	49	29%	39	13%
Moriarty-Edgewood Schools	27	52%	21	24.0
Portales Municipal Schools	67	48%	48	17%
Rio Rancho Public Schools	582	39%	441	19%
Roswell Independent Schools	204	28%	151	14%
Santa Fe Public Schools	106	56%	79	20%
Silver City Consolidated Schools	27	56%	15	≤ 20%
Socorro Consolidated Schools	17	≤ 20%	15	≤ 20%
Texico Municipal Schools	15	47%	10	≤ 20%
Tucumcari Public Schools	18	≤ 20%	15	≤ 20%
State totals				
New Mexico	6,720	34%	5,015	15%

*Although there are 89 school districts in New Mexico, many school districts are not included due to data availability from New Mexico's Public Education Department.

Source: NM Public Education Department, Proficiency Webfile 2017

Dual Credit Enrollment and High School Graduation Rates

Dual credit courses in New Mexico effectively enroll students in college courses while they are still in high school, allowing them to satisfy graduation requirements while earning college credit. Young adults who have completed higher levels of education are, on average, more likely to have better paying jobs, lower unemployment rates, and steady employment, as well as report being in better health compared to those with lower educational attainment levels. In New Mexico, it's difficult to know if enrollment in dual credit courses reflects any disparities along racial and ethnic lines because no race or ethnicity was reported for 14 percent of these students in the 2016-2017 school year.

In New Mexico, just 71 percent of all high school seniors graduated at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. This is the worst rate in the country, falling well below the national average of 84 percent. One reason for this is that children raised in poverty need a higher level of support in school, and while the state recognizes this through its school funding formula, more resources must be allocated to our schools, particularly those in low-income areas.

Black children have the lowest graduation rate amongst all racial and ethnic groups in the state, at 61 percent. This is also lower than the national average for Black youth. Asian children perform the best in this indicator with a graduation rate of 81 percent, but this is also lower than the national average for Asian students.

Dual Credit Enrollment and Graduation Rates by Race are Not Aligned

New Mexico dual credit enrollment (2016-2017) and high school graduation rates (2015-2016) by race and ethnicity

Race or ethnicity	Dual credit enrollment	Graduation rate
Black	1.2%	61%
White	23%	76%
Hispanic	46.9%	71%
Asian	1.3%	81%
Native American	10.8%	63%
2 or more races	1.6%	NA
Race unknown	14.1%	NA
All students		71%

NA = Population size too small

Sources: NM Public Education Department, 2017 (dual credit enrollment); NM PED, 2016 (graduation rates)

Looking at graduation rates for Black students at the district level is hindered somewhat by a lack of data. Still, graduation rates for Black students appear to vary significantly across the state. Black students are performing the best in Las Cruces Public Schools, with a graduation rate of 87.2 percent—which is higher than the state and national averages—and performing the worst in Farmington Municipal Schools, where Black students have less than a 50–50 chance of graduating on time.

High School Graduation Rates for Black Students Vary Significantly by District
Percent of New Mexico Black students who graduate in four years by district, 2016

School district*	Graduation rate
Alamogordo Public Schools	61.5%
Albuquerque Public Schools	65.2%
Artesia Public Schools	NA
Aztec Municipal Schools	NA
Belen Consolidated Schools	67.8%
Bernalillo Public Schools	S
Bloomfield Schools	S
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	S
Central Consolidated Schools	NA
Clayton Municipal Schools	S
Cloudcroft Municipal Schools	NA
Clovis Municipal Schools	83.4%
Cobre Consolidated Schools	S
Deming Public Schools	S
Elida Municipal Schools	NA
Española Public Schools	NA
Estancia Municipal Schools	NA
Farmington Municipal Schools	46.9%
Fort Sumner Municipal Schools	NA
Gadsden Independent Schools	53.3%
Gallup-McKinley County Schools	S
Grady Municipal Schools	NA

Continued on next table

School district*	Graduation rate
Grants-Cibola County Schools	NA
Hobbs Municipal Schools	77.6%
Las Cruces Public Schools	87.2%
Las Vegas City Public Schools	NA
Logan Municipal Schools	NA
Los Alamos Public Schools	S
Los Lunas Public Schools	60.2%
Lovington Municipal Schools	77.1%
Moriarty-Edgewood Schools	S
Mountainair Public Schools	NA
Pecos Independent Schools	NA
Peñasco Independent Schools	NA
Pojoaque Valley Public Schools	NA
Portales Municipal Schools	S
Rio Rancho Public Schools	73%
Roswell Independent Schools	59.3%
Ruidoso Municipal Schools	S
Santa Fe Public Schools	51.1%
Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools	NA
Socorro Consolidated Schools	NA
T or C Municipal Schools	S
Tucumcari Public Schools	S
Tularosa Municipal Schools	NA

*Although there are 89 school districts in New Mexico, many school districts are not included due to data availability from New Mexico's Public Education Department.

NA = Data for this indicator are not collected
S = Data are suppressed due to small sample size

Source: NM Public Education Department, 2016

Suspension and Expulsion Rates

One reason for overall lower high school graduation rates for Blacks may be the fact that Black students are targeted for suspension and expulsion at disproportionately higher rates than all other students. In New Mexico, Black students were expelled from schools at a rate four times higher than the rate for White students. Multi-racial students were expelled at similarly high rates. Time spent at school and receiving instruction is critical for learning. Students who are spending less time in the classroom because they were expelled from school or suspended receive less instruction and naturally fall behind their peers and perform worse on standardized tests and subject-specific exams.

Black Youth are More Likely to Be Suspended or Expelled than Youth of Any Other Race or Ethnicity

Rate of expulsion* and percent of students suspended in New Mexico by race or ethnicity, 2013-2014

Race or ethnicity	Expulsion rate*	Percent of youth in in-school suspension	Percent of youth in out-of-school suspension
Black	124	7%	10%
White	36	4%	5%
Hispanic	69	4%	7%
Asian	29	2%	3%
Native American	29	5%	6%
2 or more races	113	3%	9%
New Mexico	58	4%	6%

*The expulsion rate is the number of students expelled per 10,000 students

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Civil rights data collection, 2014

Educational Attainment

When it comes to rates of post-secondary education, nationwide trends show that gaps exist between people of color and Whites. While Black high school students have the second lowest on-time graduation rates, Blacks as a whole have the second highest high school education attainment rate, with 90.3 percent having at least a high school education or equivalency.

Less than a third of Blacks (29 percent), however, have at least a bachelor's degree. New Mexicans of two or more races have a similar rate (28.7 percent) but, along with Blacks, they are still more likely to have a college degree than Hispanics, Native Americans, and those who identify as some other race. These three groups also fare the worst in terms of having a high school diploma or equivalency.

New Mexico's Black Population is Fairly Well Educated

Number and percent of New Mexicans who have at least a high school diploma and a bachelor's degree by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	At least a high school diploma		At least a bachelor's degree	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Black	22,346	90.3%	7,175	29%
White	587,431	94.5%	24,5331	39.5%
Hispanic	434,474	74.5%	86,010	14.8%
Asian	18,203	86.7%	10,324	49.2%
Native American	91,313	79.4%	12,340	10.8%
Some other race	97,437	71.7%	15,143	11.1%
2 or more races	27,166	88.4%	8,826	28.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Union County Has the Lowest Rate of Blacks with a High School Diploma

Number and percent of Blacks in New Mexico who have at least a high school diploma and number with bachelor's degree or higher by county, 2016

County	High school graduate or higher	High school diploma or equivalent or higher	Bachelor's degree or higher	Margin of error
Bernalillo	10,933	90.6%	3,544	472
Catron	30	100%	0	58
Chaves	580	87%	149	93
Cibola	106	67.5%	22	56
Colfax	29	90.6%	0	24
Curry	1,377	85.8%	199	167
De Baca	NA	NA	NA	11
Doña Ana	1,934	95.1%	866	167
Eddy	468	91.4%	158	75
Grant	39	70.9%	0	40
Guadalupe	58	86.6%	9	49
Harding	NA	NA	NA	11
Hidalgo	6	100%	0	11
Lea	1,163	82.1%	301	171
Lincoln	29	93.5%	0	36
Los Alamos	73	100%	73	59
Luna	100	78.1%	0	74
McKinley	211	94.2%	89	78
Mora	5	100%	2	6
Otero	1,126	89.4%	240	112
Quay	67	100%	28	45
Rio Arriba	131	100%	42	34
Roosevelt	207	100%	67	90
Sandoval	1,778	96.4%	579	153
San Juan	317	98.8%	178	101
San Miguel	63	66.3%	5	40
Santa Fe	737	88.9%	390	115
Sierra	45	100%	1	56
Socorro	18	90%	0	26
Taos	102	97.1%	17	96
Torrance	141	81.5%	27	96
Union	16	48.5%	0	18
Valencia	457	90.9%	189	134

NA = Population size too small

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

Family and Community

Household Composition

Children growing up in homes with two parents who have been married continuously are less likely to experience a wide range of academic, social, and emotional problems, not only in childhood but later in adulthood as well.[7] Children in two-parent families are more likely to have more economic resources and opportunity, and may receive more attention because two parents can share the duties of the parenting. Two-parent families may also have the option of two income sources or of having one parent stay at home and care for the children. In New Mexico, 60 percent of children live in a married-couple family home. The majority of Black children in New Mexico, however, live in a single-parent household at 54.3 percent. The nationwide average for Black children is 66 percent. The only children who live in single-parent households in New Mexico at a higher rate are Native American children at 59.2 percent.
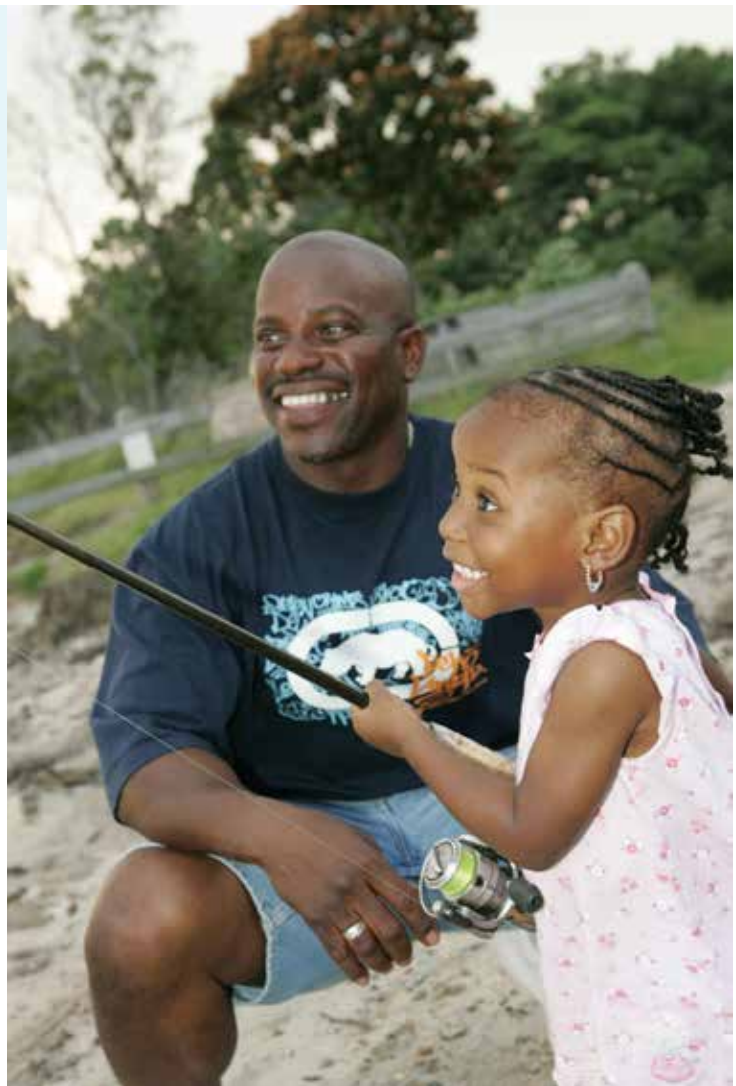
Native and Black Children are More Likely to Live in Single-Parent Households

Number of New Mexico children living in households with a male or female parent (no spouse present) and married-couple families, and percent of children living in single-parent families, by race and ethnicity, 2016

Race or ethnicity	Children living with single male parent	Children living with single female parent	Children living in married-couple family	Children living in single-parent households
Black	1,165	4,512	4,775	54.3%
White	31,117	92,053	215,769	36.3%
Hispanic	30,486	93,708	172,197	41.9%
Asian	243	902	4,178	21.5%
Native American	7,039	26,322	22,979	59.2%
Some other race	6,311	18,501	32,828	43%
2 or more races	2,621	8122	17,906	37.5%
New Mexico	48,544	150,414	298,435	40%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016

Parental Incarceration

Black parents in New Mexico are incarcerated at far higher rates than any other race or ethnicity. Black incarceration rates are more than two-and-a-half times greater than the rate for Native Americans, who have the second highest rate of incarceration, and about four times higher than White incarceration rates. Having a parent incarcerated is a traumatic experience for children, creating a tremendous vacuum in a child's life and financial instability. More than 50,000 New Mexico children (or about 10 percent) have a parent who has been incarcerated. This puts New Mexico among the five worst states for this statistic.[8]

Incarceration brings a host of consequences that threaten the amount and quality of economic and community resources people have, including restricted employment opportunities, housing instability, social stigma, and disenfranchisement. Evidence suggests that some individuals are incarcerated not solely because of their crime, but because of racially disparate policies, beliefs, and practices, rendering these consequences all the more troubling.[9]

Black Parents are Overrepresented in the Corrections System

Rate of incarceration of parents with children in New Mexico, per 100,000 residents, by race and ethnicity, 2010
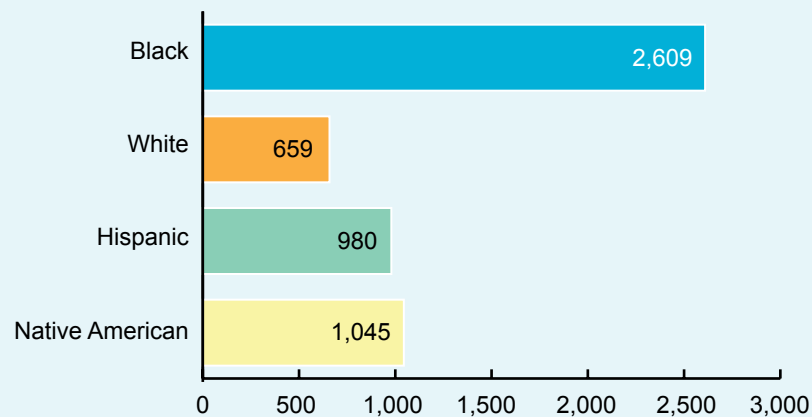
Source: Calculated by the Prison Policy Initiative from US Census 2010, Summary file 1

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

Youth Incarceration

The disparities seen in the criminal justice system for adults is also present for youth. Across the nation, Black youth are five times more likely than White youth to be detained or committed to youth facilities.[10] The rate in New Mexico is worse. Black youth are 5.5 times more likely than White youth to be detained in correctional facilities. Black youth in New Mexico have the highest rate of incarceration of any racial and ethnic group, outranking the next highest rate, that of Hispanic youth, by more than 2 to 1.

Black Youth are Significantly Overrepresented in the Juvenile Justice System

Number and rate* of youth residing in juvenile detention, correctional and/or residential facilities in New Mexico by race and ethnicity, 2015

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number of youth	Rate* of youth residing in juvenile detention, correctional and/or residential facilities
Black	24	472
White	51	86
Hispanic	267	204
Asian	0	0
Native American	15	64
Some other race	6	NA
Total	363	164

The rate is the number of youth residing in juvenile detention, correctional and/or residential facilities per 100,000 youth.
NA = Population size too small

Source: Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement analysis of Office of Juvenile Justice Department data, 2015

Substantiated Child Abuse

Children who are abused or neglected, including those who witness domestic violence, are more likely to experience cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems.[11] Historically in the U.S., rates of child maltreatment referral reports were disproportionately high for Black children. Across the country, and especially in New Mexico, childhood poverty rates and child abuse rates are often linked. In New Mexico, Black children make up just 2 percent of all substantiated child abuse cases, Hispanics account for the most confirmed child maltreatment cases with 61 percent of all mistreated children in New Mexico. These rates are both commensurate with the share of both races within the total child population.

photo by NaturalNews.com

Substantiated Child Abuse by Race and Ethnicity is in Line with Child Population

Estimated number and percent of New Mexico children who are confirmed victims of child abuse by race and ethnicity, 2015

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number of mistreated children	Percent of all mistreated children
Black	210	2%
White	1,783	21%
Hispanic	5,264	61%
Asian	25	<.5%
Native American	740	9%
2 or more races	181	2%
Race unknown	428	5%
Total	8,631	100%

Source: U.S. HHS, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2015

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

Children in Foster Care

Child welfare systems set in place by state and federal law allow courts to remove a child from their homes and be placed in the care of a foster home when evidence of abuse or neglect is substantiated. Due to their maltreatment, children often enter the foster care system with medical, behavioral, and emotional problems. Foster children are also more likely to do poorly in school and have physical and mental health problems than children who are not in foster care. When young adults age out of the foster care system at 18, evidence suggests that they are at higher risk for experiencing homelessness, and substance abuse, and are likely to reach lower educational and career attainment levels.[12]

While Black children do not appear to be over-represented among children who are victims of substantiated abuse,

this does not appear to be the case with foster care, as 4 percent of all foster kids in New Mexico are Black while only 2 percent of all New Mexico children are Black. In contrast, nearly 60 percent of kids in foster care are Hispanic—a rate more in line with their share in the child population. In addition, Black and multi-racial children in New Mexico are aging out of foster care at disproportionately higher rates than the other race cohorts.

Since the share of Black children who have been the victims of substantiated abuse or neglect is commensurate with their share in the total child population, their disparate entrance into foster care are likely linked to factors other than abuse rates. Some studies have suggested that racial bias among individuals who are involved in the child welfare and foster care process, like caseworkers, may be one of the reasons for this disparity.

Black Children are Placed in Foster Care and are Waiting for Adoption at Rates Disproportionate to Their Share in the Population

Estimated number and percent of New Mexico children who are in foster care and are waiting for adoption by race and ethnicity, 2017

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number in foster care	Percent in foster care
Black	100	4.1%
White	579	23.5%
Hispanic	1,463	59.3%
Asian	1	0%
Native American	222	9%
2 or more races	88	3.6%
Race unknown	15	0.6%
Total	2,468	100%

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number waiting for adoption	Percent waiting for adoption
Black	65	5.7%
White	279	24.6%
Hispanic	656	57.8%
Asian	NA	
Native American	99	8.7%
2 or more races	35	3.1%
Race unknown	NA	
Total	1,134	100%

NA = Population size too small

Source: Child Trends analysis of data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, 2017

Black Children are Entering and Exiting Foster Care at Rates Disproportionate to Their Share in the Population

Estimated number and percent of New Mexico children who are entering and exiting foster care by race and ethnicity, 2017

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number entering foster care	Percent entering foster care
Black	53	3%
White	441	24.6%
Hispanic	1,024	57.1%
Asian	6	0.3%
Native American	194	10.8%
2 or more races	51	2.8%
Race unknown	23	1.3%
Total	1,792	100%

Note: The number of youth exiting foster care (center table) and the number discharged (bottom table) differ because the data come from two different sources and refer to different time periods. Also, 'exit' and 'discharge' may have slightly different definitions.

Race or ethnicity	Estimated number exiting foster care	Percent exiting foster care
Black	53	3.2%
White	401	24.2%
Hispanic	961	58.1%
Asian	8	0.5%
Native American	181	10.9%
2 or more races	41	2.5%
Race unknown	10	0.6%
Total	1,655	100%

Source: Child Trends analysis of data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, 2017

Multi-Racial and Black Youth Exit Foster Care by Aging Out at Higher Rates than do Children of Other Races and Ethnicities

Number of New Mexico foster children discharged from foster care and number and percent of youth who age out of foster care by race and ethnicity (April 2017-April 2018)

Race or ethnicity	Number of all discharges	Number emancipated or aged out	Of those children exiting the system, the percent who aged out
Black	114	5	4%
White	639	20	3%
Hispanic	1,578	48	3%
Asian	NA	NA	NA
Native American	190	5	3%
Some other race	18	0	0%
2 or more races	77	4	5%
Total	2,616	81	3%

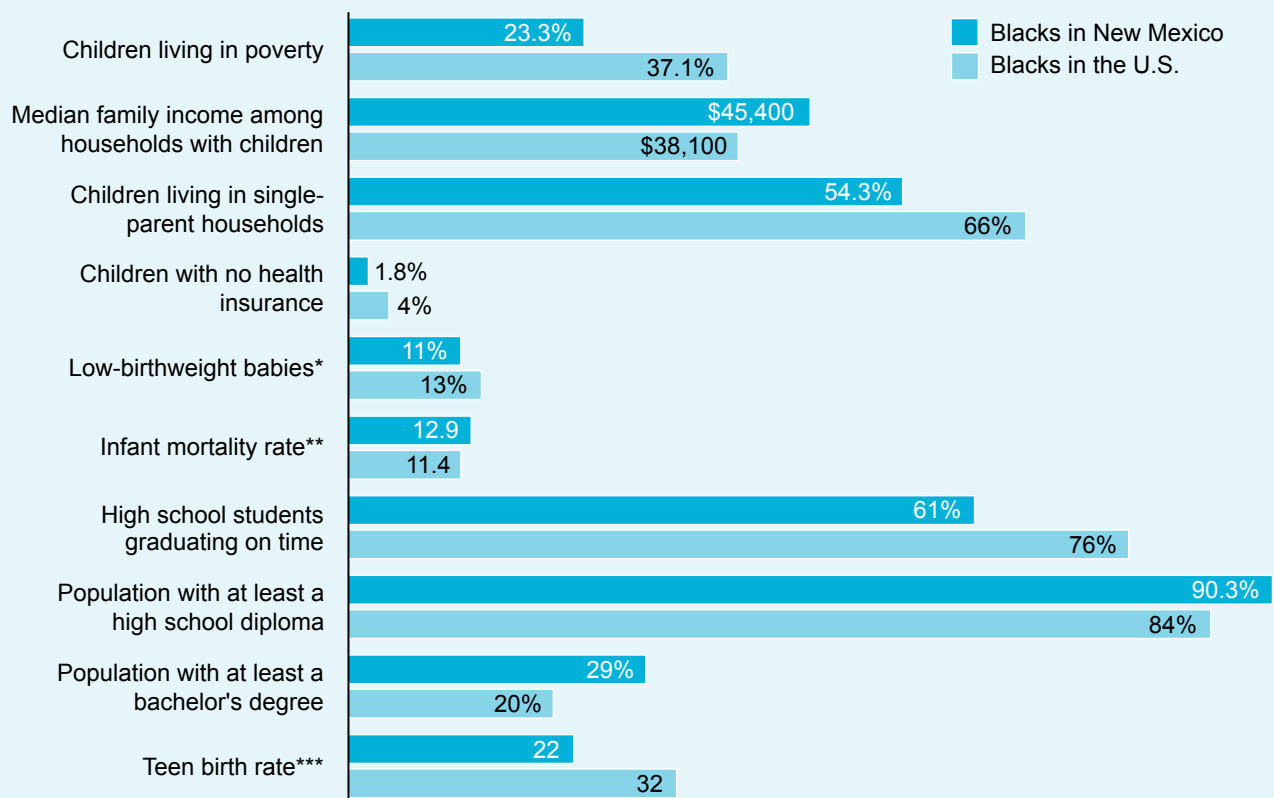Source: NM Children, Youth and Families Department, 2018

A National Perspective

As we have seen, Black children in New Mexico, along with other children of color, suffer disparities in many indicators of child well-being. The same is true for Black children across the nation. However—and despite the fact that New Mexico ranks poorly against the rest of the nation for child well-being—our Black children fare better than the national average for Black children on several indicators. This table offers a summary of some of these indicators, spanning a wide range of issues from family economic security to health outcomes and teen birth rates. In all but two—infant mortality and on-time graduation rates—Black children in New Mexico perform better than the nationwide average, most notably in child poverty rates. Because children do best when their families have the economic security that comes from having good jobs that pay family-sustaining wages, it is good news that Black children in New Mexico have lower rates of poverty than the nationwide average for all Black children. Black families here have higher median family incomes and are less likely than their counterparts in the rest of the country to live in single-parent households. In terms of health, Black children in New Mexico have higher insurance rates and are more likely to be born at a healthy birthweight than Black children across

New Mexico Blacks Fare Better than Blacks Across the U.S. on Many Indicators

How Blacks living in New Mexico fare on various indicators compared to the national average for Blacks

Legend:
- Blacks in New Mexico
- Blacks in the U.S.

Indicator	Blacks in New Mexico	Blacks in the U.S.
Children living in poverty	23.3%	37.1%
Median family income among households with children	$45,400	$38,100
Children living in single-parent households	54.3%	66%
Children with no health insurance	1.8%	4%
Low-birthweight babies*	11%	13%
Infant mortality rate**	12.9	11.4
High school students graduating on time	61%	76%
Population with at least a high school diploma	90.3%	84%
Population with at least a bachelor's degree	29%	20%
Teen birth rate***	22	32

*Babies born weighing less than 5.5 pounds are considered low birthweight.
**The infant mortality rate is the number of infants who die in their first year per 1,000 live births.
***The teen birth rate is the number of teens (ages 15-19) who give birth per 1,000 teens in that age group.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2016; NM Department of Health, Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS) 2016; NM Public Education Department 2016, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics 2015

the country. Blacks living in New Mexico, on average, have higher rates of graduation from high school and more postsecondary education.

Although Black children in New Mexico are doing better than other Black children across the nation in many indicators, this does not mean that our work to improve outcomes for our Black children is done. Far from it. The state still needs to make better, more targeted investments in all of our children of color, including our Black children. When all children have equal access to the support systems and opportunities they need to thrive and reach their potential, the whole state benefits.

The Well-Being of Black Children in New Mexico

Methodology Notes

State and National Data

Data availability varies by how agencies collect and report information. The data used in this report come from a mix of sources that are either reported at the state level, typically by state agencies like the New Mexico Department of Health, or the national level through the Census Bureau, for example. State data are used where available in this report. Some indicators have comparisons to national-level data but no such comparisons are made for all indicators because the data are not available at either the national or the state levels.

Margin of Error

Much of the data presented in this report comes from the American Community Survey (ACS), a survey product of the United States Census Bureau. Yearly, more than 3.5 million housing unit addresses are contacted to participate in the ACS. Estimates are derived from the survey of this 3.5 million unit sample of the population. Being taken from a relatively small sample size, the data estimates have an inherent uncertainty. In order to mitigate uncertainty, data on the margins of error are supplied by the Census. A margin of error is a measure of the possible variation of the estimate around the population value. The Census uses a standard 90 percent confidence interval, meaning that 90 percent of the time, the estimate given by the Census and the actual population value will differ by no more than the value of the margin of error.

It is important to note that in New Mexico, the Black population is relatively small, when compared to other racial and ethnic groups, comprising only 2.5 percent of the state's population. It is common when deriving estimates from small populations for large margins of errors to exist. Margins of error will accompany estimates provided by the Census when available in this report.

Endnotes

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