Turning Data into Action

McKinley County Workshop
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Bill Jordan, Senior Policy Advisor & Governmental Relations Officer
Jacob Vigil, Research and Policy Analyst

New Mexico Voices for Children

www.nmvoices.org
Introductions

• Name
• Organization
• In a few words, what’s the most important child well-being issue in your community?
NM Voices for Children

Our mission is to champion public policies that improve the well-being of New Mexico’s children, families, and communities in the areas of health, education, and economics through credible research and effective advocacy.
Agenda

1. Data overview
   • *What do the data say about McKinley County and New Mexico?*

2. Policy priorities
   • *How can improving policy improve outcomes?*

3. Legislative advocacy
   • *How can we advocate for issues that are important to our communities?*
Data Overview
Because all children, regardless of where they live, how much money their parents make, or the color of their skin should have the best possible shot at reaching their full potential.
Reports

A Health Impact Assessment
Food Tax in New Mexico

An analysis of the taxation of grocery
impacts on the health of the state’s communities

November 2015
Updated January 2016

2017 New Mexico Kids Count Data Book

Kids Count In New Mexico

At the Crossroads

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KIDS COUNT Data Center
Quiz

Q: What percentage of children in McKinley County live in poverty?

A: 39 percent

New Mexico: 27 percent
Quiz

Q: Which McKinley County school district has the highest rate of 4th graders meeting or exceeding English/Language Arts standards?

A: Gallup-McKinley, at 14 percent

New Mexico: 26 percent
Quiz

Q: What is the rate of children without health insurance in McKinley County?

A: 5.1 percent

New Mexico: 5.1 percent
Quiz

Q: What percentage of McKinley County children live in single parent families?

A: 44 percent

New Mexico: 38 percent
Social Determinants of Health

Health Outcomes:
• cancer
• diabetes
• asthma
• depression

Health Choices:
• diet
• exercise
• drinking
• smoking

Social, economic & environmental factors:
• education
• child care
• healthy food
• housing
• health care
• work environment
• wages & benefits
• transportation
• air & water quality
• A.C.E.S.
We are ranked 49th in child well-being

And some indicators are particularly alarming

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
DOMAIN RANK
48

EDUCATION
DOMAIN RANK
50

HEALTH
DOMAIN RANK
37

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY
DOMAIN RANK
49

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Most NM kids are in low-income households or living in poverty

New Mexico’s Children by Income Group

- Above 200% of FPL: 46%
- Low-income (200% FPL): 24%
- Poverty (100% FPL): 17%
- Deep poverty (50% FPL): 13%

* The federal poverty level in 2016 was $24,600 for a family of four.

Source: US Census, American Community Survey data, 2016
Income levels impact education

Fourth Graders Who Scored Below Proficient in Reading by Family Income

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013

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Too many NM kids don’t have enough to eat

25% of New Mexico’s Children are Food Insecure

That’s the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Highest Rate in the U.S.

Source: Map the Meal Gap, Feeding America, 2017

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Most NM children experience trauma

Percentage of Children Who Have Experienced at Least Two Traumas, Compared to the National Average

Source: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, National Survey of Children’s Health

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Disparities exist in most indicators

- Poverty
- Health insurance
- Early childhood education and care
- Hunger
NM is ahead of the demographic trend

Child Population by Race and Ethnicity

United States, 2030

- White: 45%
- Racial & Ethnic Minorities: 55%

New Mexico, 2016

- White: 25%
- Racial & Ethnic Minorities: 75%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
Nobody likes to hear the bad news, but there’s good news too: policy matters

- better reading & math scores
- lower rates of food insecurity
- better health outcomes
- higher grad rates
- lower remedial education costs
Benefits of Medicaid

- Covers 850,000 New Mexicans (including 325,000 children) with high-quality health insurance
- Over $5 billion in federal funds flow through NM's economy because of federal match
- Supports 50,000 jobs in health care sector
- Provides key payment source for NM providers
- Few premiums or co-pays
Benefits of Medicaid expansion

• Uninsured rate in NM cut in half
• 187,000 additional New Mexicans now eligible
• Billions in additional federal funds and thousands of additional jobs created
• State costs increased by only 5% while coverage increased by 80%
Tell Us Your Stories

• *How have you seen these statistics in your own work and communities?*

• *What are some challenges/barriers to accessing Medicaid and healthcare in general?*
  • *Interaction between IHS and Medicaid*
Progress IS possible

And we’re making some important gains

• 31,000 more NM kids have health insurance
• 4,100 more NM kids have access to pre-K
• 3,800 more NM families receive home visiting
• Big improvements in teen drug use and birth rates

Most indicators are improving

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; NM Legislative Finance Committee, Post Session Review, 2017
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How we got here

• 14% cut in per-pupil K-12 spending from 2008-2018.
• 35% cut in per-pupil higher education spending, leading to steep tuition increases.
• Cuts to special education funding, resulting in an even greater loss of federal dollars for special ed.
• Enrollment in child care assistance has dropped by 27% since 2010.
• Cut U.I. benefits, including the increment for children of unemployed workers.
• Underfunding of the Medicaid program by hundreds of millions in recent years.
• Tax cuts made our tax system even more regressive AND we have hundreds of millions of dollars less AND the tax cuts failed to create jobs.
State General Fund Budget = $6.3 billion

Medicaid

Other health and human services

K-12 education

Early education/care

Higher education

Public safety, courts

All other
Our tax system asks the most of those who can afford it least.

Those in NM with the Lowest Incomes Pay the Highest Rates in State and Local Taxes.

Improve our tax system

Child poverty is a longstanding pervasive issue and we need a set of targeted initiatives to end child poverty

• NM’s tax system is grossly unfair to working families.
• 75% of families pay more than double what the richest families pay in state and local taxes as a share of their incomes.
• Our tax policy has been driven by a false promise to create jobs, but it has come at the expense of our kids and families.
The Earned Income Tax Credit and NM’s Working Families Tax Credit

- EITC injects $500 million into NM economy.
- NM’s Working Families Tax Credit returns $50 million to working families.
- 97% goes to working families with kids.
- Without these two credits, 40,000 more NM families would be in poverty.
- If tax reform is debated, lawmakers should consider increasing the WFTC to at least 15% of the EITC.

“The best anti-poverty, the best pro-family, the best job creation measure to come out of Congress.”
- Ronald Reagan on the EITC

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Raise new revenue to avoid more harmful budget cuts

- Reverse the big corporate income tax cut.
- Enact combined reporting of all corporate taxes.
- Repeal the capital gains exemption.
- Enact a new PIT increase or surtax on high incomes.
- Enact a new health care provider assessment fee.
- Raise tobacco and alcohol taxes.
- Repeal ineffective or wasteful tax breaks.
- Tax all internet sales.
Big impact/no cost initiatives

*No cost to the general fund*

- Increase the minimum wage.
- Enact paid sick leave & expand family medical leave.
- End predatory lending practices like payday, car title, rent-to-own, and tax refund lending by capping interest rates at 36%.
- Invest a fraction of the Land Grant Permanent Fund in early care and education.

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Early care and education

• Current funding is serving only a fraction of our eligible children.
• Eligibility for child care assistance is below 2001 levels (child care costs more than tuition at UNM).
• Enrollment in child care assistance is 27% lower than it was in 2010.
• NM needs a strong commitment to ECE and a stable and robust source of funding.
Fully fund early childhood care and learning programs

Invest 1% of $18 billion LGPF

- To fund home visiting, child care assistance, NM pre-K, and workforce development.
- A dedicated, adequate, stable funding source.
- Does not raise taxes.
- LGPF will continue to grow.
- ECE provides better ROI than the stock market.
Fully fund child abuse prevention

• Prioritize early childhood care and education.
• Add ACEs screening to EPSDT.
• Reduce child protective services vacancy rate.
• Ensure adequate compensation and ongoing, extensive training for caseworkers.
• Restore and increase behavioral health services for families.
### Who is still uninsured?

#### Remaining uninsured in New Mexico (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid Eligible Adults</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid Eligible Children</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APTC Eligible</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineligible Income</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineligible Employer Offer</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineligible Citizenship</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Medicaid buy-in is a viable option to help many uninsured access affordable health care insurance.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

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If Medicaid buy-in was an option

• Medicaid-ineligible consumers could use premium tax credits to buy into Medicaid.
• Medicaid buy-in plans could be cheaper than what's available on the exchange.
• Would get more coverage for less.
• Medicaid buy-in plans could be offered to non-citizens and to employers.
How can you support the campaign?

If you support this initiative, contact Health Action NM on how you would like to support the campaign!

Colin Baillio
Health Action NM
(505) 331-8818
Colin@HealthActionNM.org
Medicaid and SNAP policy recommendations

- Fully fund Medicaid
- Maximize enrollment in all federally funded health and nutrition programs.
- Simplify enrollment and recertification.
- Implement express-lane eligibility.
- Expand outreach efforts especially to women of child-bearing age to assure healthy births.
- Do not institute Medicaid work requirements
Priorities Activity

• *Tell us what your budget priorities would be*

• *What are your policy recommendations?*
  • *What works? What doesn’t work?*
Legislative Advocacy
New Mexico’s Legislature

• Meets for a 60-day session on odd-numbered years to do *all* business.
• Meets for a 30-day session on even-numbered years for budget issues only, plus whatever the Governor wants.
• Meets between regular sessions for interim committee hearings to hear reports on past actions and to prepare for the next session.
Representation

- Senators represent about 50,000 people (or about 27,500 who vote), and are elected every 4 years (2 years after the Governor).
- Representatives represent about 30,000 people (or about 16,500 who vote), and are elected every 2 years.
- Governor and Lt. Governor are elected every 4 years.
Why Advocate?

• Your credibility, knowledge, caring.
• Constituents/Voters matter to elected officials.
• Elected officials need and want your expertise.
• You have a vote and a voice, children don’t.
• Policymakers do listen.
• The squeaky wheel gets the oil.
• When you advocate for change, you change.
How?

- Personal or group visits
- Personal letters
- Phone calls
- Emails
- **Letters to the editor and op-ed pieces**
- Editorial board meetings
- Press conferences, press releases
- Radio talk shows
- Testimony at committee hearings
Who?

- Your own elected officials (and candidates!)
- Committee members
- Committee chairs
- Legislative leadership
- Legislative staff and analysts
- Department officials and analysts
- General public (through the media)
When?

- During a campaign to influence the agenda.
- After the campaign to influence priorities.
- Before a legislative session… because they have time to listen.
- During a legislative session.
- After a legislative session… to thank them or express your disappointment with their votes.
Do’s

• Be *united* and well *organized*.
• Make an appointment.
• Be quick with gratitude, but slow to criticize.
• Be courteous and respectful.
• Use *both* data and personal stories.
• Be concise and to the point.
• Make it *simple*.
• Ask for what you want.
• Report back.
Don’ts

• Be late.
• Be argumentative, arrogant, condescending or threatening.
• Exaggerate.
• Overwhelm them with too much data.
• Take more time than you were offered.
• *Never* burn bridges. Leave the door open for further discussion, on this or other issues.
For Info on Bills and Legislators

www.nmlegis.gov

- To find a legislator, click on Legislators
- To find a bill, click on Legislation
- To find the schedule of committee hearings and the agenda for the Senate and House, click on What’s Happening
- To watch committees or floor sessions, click on Webcast
Legislative and Executive Contact

- Governor: 505-476-2200
  www.gov.state.nm.us
- Legislature (Capitol switchboard): 505-986-4300
  www.nmlegis.gov

Tracking Legislation

- NM Legislature: www.nmlegis.gov
- New Mexico Voices for Children: www.nmvoices.org
Legislative Advocacy Flowchart

1. Research & analysis ➞ Policy development ➞ Coalition work
2. Evaluation ➞ Lobbying ➞ Legislation enacted
3. Civic engagement ➞ Communications

www.nmvoices.org
Congressional Contact Info

- Sen. Martin Heinrich 202-224-5521
  www.heinrich.senate.gov
- Sen. Tom Udall 202-224-6621
  www.tomudall.senate.gov
- Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham 202-225-6316
  www.lujangrisham.house.gov
  www.house.gov/lujan
  www.house.gov/pearce
Advocacy Sharing

Share examples of advocacy you have been involved in

• What were your goals?
• Who did you partner with?
• What were the challenges?
• What were you able to accomplish?
• What did you learn from the experience?
Thank you!

NM Voices’ advocacy work is *not* to help kids beat the odds, but rather to *change* the odds.

*for more information:*

**New Mexico Voices for Children**

[www.nmvoices.org](http://www.nmvoices.org)
[www.datacenter.kidscount.org](http://www.datacenter.kidscount.org)

Jacob Vigil: jvigil@nmvoices.org
Bill Jordan: bjordan@nmvoices.org