



KIDS at the HEART of PUBLIC POLICY:

Centering Children, Youth & Families for Transformational Change

New Mexico Voices for Children

August 18, 2022

A silhouette of a person holding a child up in the air, set against a dramatic sunset sky with orange and blue hues. The text is overlaid in the center.

**Centering kids in public policy
will build a brighter future for
all of New Mexico.**

A photograph of four diverse children sitting outdoors on the ground, surrounded by trees and foliage. They are all smiling and playing with bubbles. The child on the far left is a young boy with short brown hair, wearing a blue denim jacket over a dark t-shirt. The child next to him is a girl with long blonde hair, wearing a white t-shirt. The child in the center is a boy with short brown hair, wearing a plaid shirt. The child on the far right is a girl with curly dark hair, wearing a striped shirt and denim overalls. They are all reaching out towards the camera, and several bubbles are floating in the air around them. The text "KIDS COUNT tells a story of opportunity." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the upper middle of the image.

KIDS COUNT tells a
story of opportunity.

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a green and brown field in the foreground, a line of trees and shrubs in the middle ground, and dark, forested mountains in the background. The sky is bright blue with large, white, fluffy clouds. The text "What is your story?" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

What is your story?

[illegible]

ANGEL WINGS
of
NEW MEXICO
by
PAZ
Foreword by the
Honorable Governor
In Loving Memory of
Jennifer Riordan
Edited by Paz, The Honorable Governor Riordan
Dedicated to the People of New Mexico

A large group of children, many wearing yellow shirts and colorful masks, are sitting in a circle on a light-colored tiled floor. In the center of the circle is a large, light-colored mural of an eagle with its wings spread, perched on a banner that reads "CONSTITUTION". The children are looking towards the camera, some with their hands raised. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor setting like a school hallway or gym.

Why we are all here.

A photograph of a family consisting of a young girl, a man, and a woman, all smiling and giving each other high-fives. The girl is on the left, the man is in the center, and the woman is on the right. They are all wearing casual clothing. The background is a simple, brightly lit indoor space.

**And there's good
news too.**



**Policy matters, and
progress is possible.**

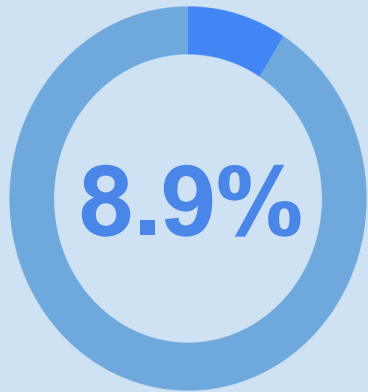


Strong foundations in the earliest years

Jacob Vigil, MSW
Senior Research & Policy Analyst

Early Childhood Outcomes

Babies Born at
Low Birthweight



Child Poverty Rate



Children Receiving Child Care
Assistance Subsidies



Early Care and Education Progress

- Establishment of a dedicated Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD)
- Expanded funding established and defended
- Expansion of child care eligibility and supports for providers
- New Child Tax Credit

**VOTE
YES
FOR KIDS!**

Paid for by New Mexico
Voices for Children
Authorized by Vote Yes for Kids

Providing early childhood care and education moving forward



www.voteyesforkidsNM.com

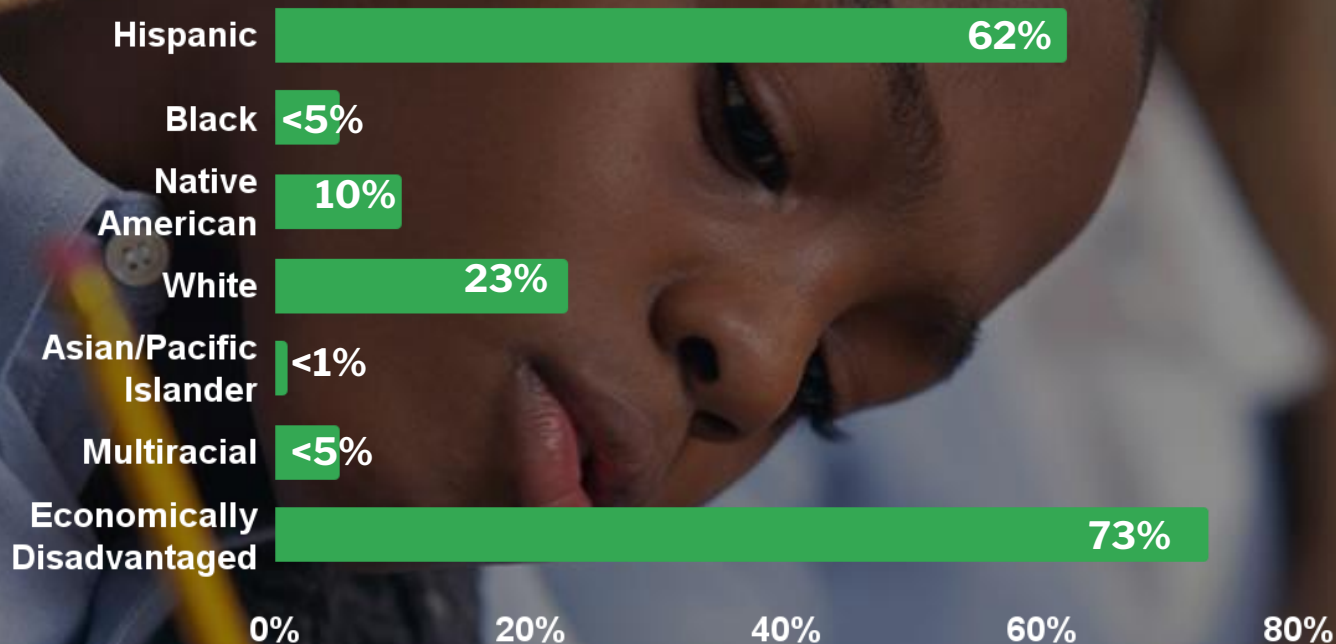
www.nmvoices.org/permanentschoolfund

A photograph of a man with grey hair and a blue shirt leaning over a young girl with glasses and a white shirt. They are sitting at a desk, looking at a book or paper. The man is pointing at something on the page. The girl is holding a blue pen. The background is dark, with a lamp visible in the upper right corner. The text "Education that serves every student" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Education
that serves
every
student**

Emily Wildau, MPP
*Research & Policy Analyst,
KIDS COUNT Coordinator*

Most NM K-12 students are students of color and low-income



K-12 Progress

- *Yazzie/Martinez* response led to significant K-12 funding since 2019
- Other critical responses include:
 - Passage of the Black Education Act
 - Passage of No School Discrimination for Hair Act
 - Updated social studies standards
 - Funding and support for the Tribal Remedy Framework

A photograph of two young women sitting on the floor in a classroom. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a white off-the-shoulder top. The woman on the right has dark hair with a pink flower in it and is wearing a white off-the-shoulder top and a blue skirt. They are both looking off to the side with thoughtful expressions. In the background, there are school lockers and a blue wall. A semi-transparent yellow box with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Affordable higher education & training for all students

Most NM financial aid is merit-based

2011

25%

75%

2019

23%

77%

0%

25%

50%

75%

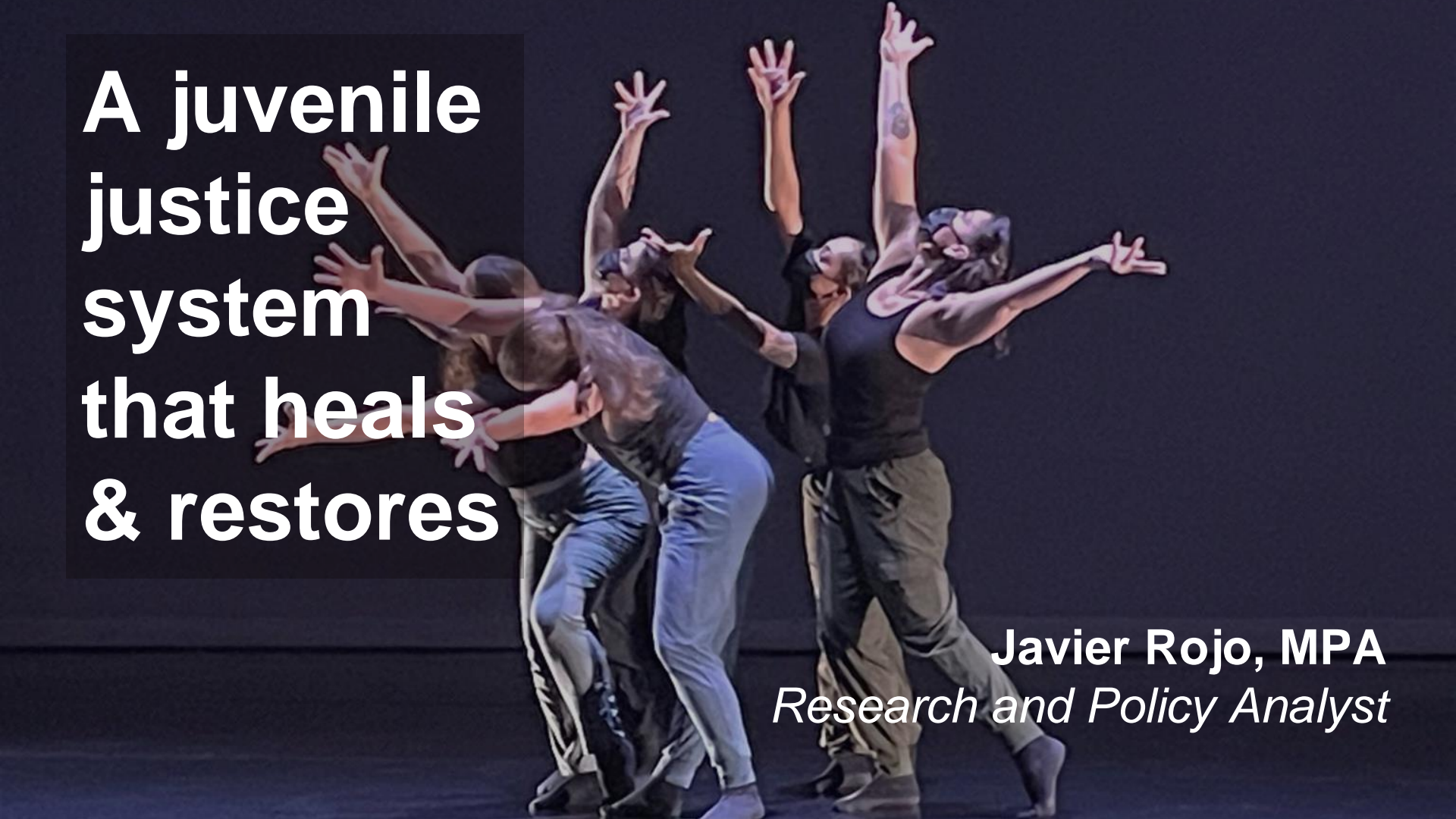
100%

Higher Education Progress

- Restored and increased College Affordability Fund
- Fully funded Lottery Scholarship
- Enacted the Opportunity Scholarship Act

Moving Forward in K-12 & Higher Ed

- Develop a comprehensive plan, including funding requirements, to cohesively respond to the *Yazzie/Martinez* lawsuit
- Continue and increase funding support for NM's education system, keeping public funds devoted to public schools
- Continue supporting tuition-free college and financial aid for NM college students

A photograph of four dancers in a dynamic, expressive pose. They are wearing dark tank tops and light-colored pants. Their arms are raised and extended in various directions, creating a sense of movement and energy. The background is dark, making the dancers stand out.

**A juvenile
justice
system
that heals
& restores**

Javier Rojo, MPA
Research and Policy Analyst



ACEs in New Mexico's Juvenile Population


- 18% of NM children have **3+** *adverse childhood experiences* (ACEs)
- 86% of NM incarcerated children have **4+** ACEs
- Abused and neglected youth are **11 times** more likely to get arrested than peers with fewer ACEs
- For every additional ACE, the odds of youth becoming seriously or chronically court-involved increases by **35%**

Progress Made

- 2021 Legislative Session: No Fines and Fees for Some Juvenile Crimes (HB 183)
- 2022 Legislative Session: The “second chance” bill (SB 43)
- Partnership with Keshet: *Art as An Alternative*

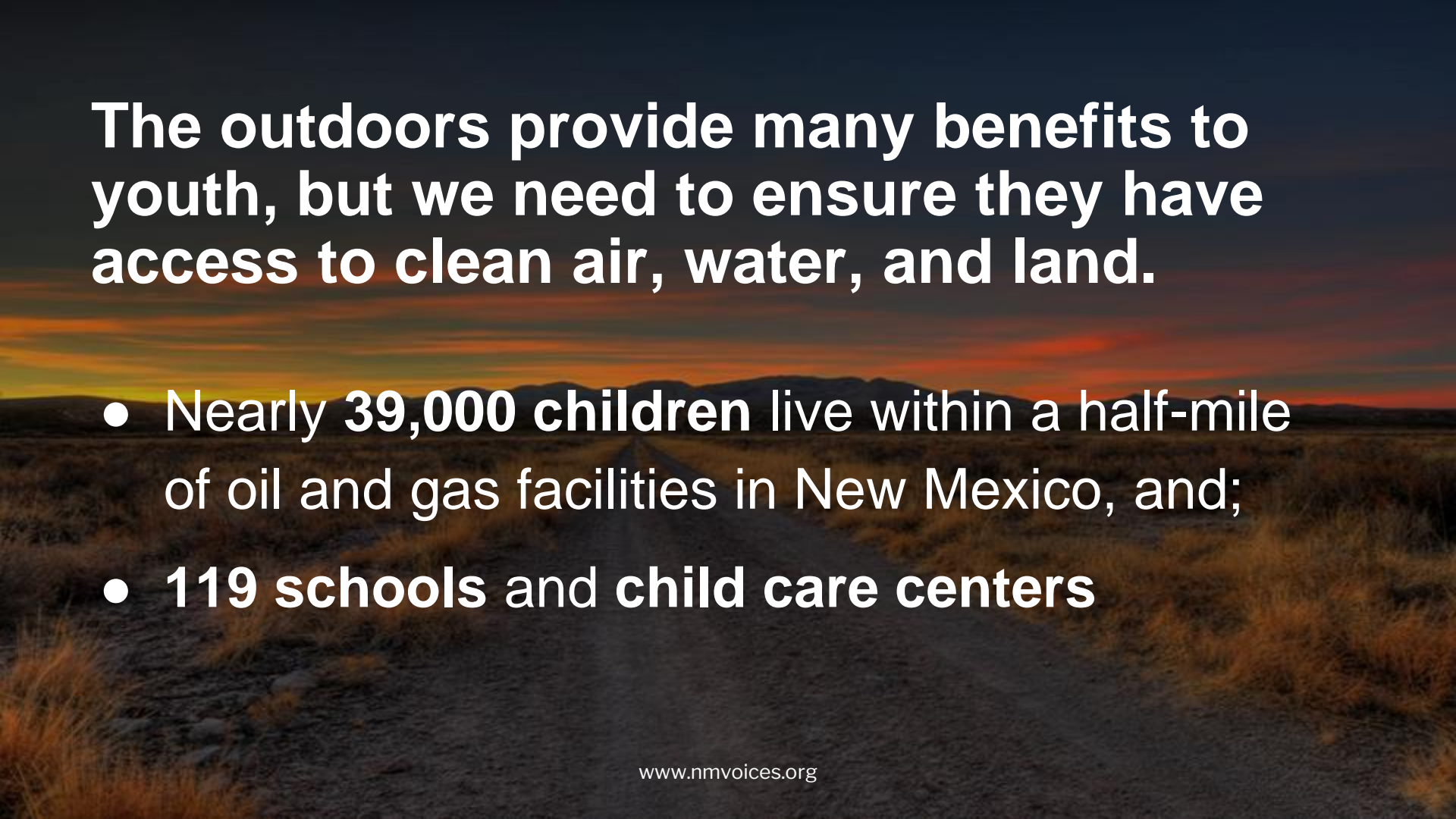
Moving Forward

- 2023 Legislative Session: The “second chance” bill
- Pilot Alternative Models (Keshet)
 - Informal diversions vs. incarceration and surveillance
 - Assets vs. liabilities
 - Rehabilitative vs. punitive



**Healthy
environments
to play, grow
& thrive**

Paige Knight, MPP
Senior Research & Policy Analyst

The background of the slide is a photograph of a desert landscape at sunset. A dirt road leads from the foreground into the distance, flanked by dry, yellowish-brown grass. In the far distance, a range of mountains is visible against a sky with horizontal bands of orange, red, and dark blue.

The outdoors provide many benefits to youth, but we need to ensure they have access to clean air, water, and land.

- **Nearly 39,000 children** live within a half-mile of oil and gas facilities in New Mexico, and;
- **119 schools and child care centers**

Environmental & Climate Policy Progress

- Improving environmental & community health with reduced emissions
- Improving energy efficiency & utility affordability
- Diversifying our economy with a just transition
- Increasing access to the outdoors for youth

A group of children and adults are participating in a tree-planting activity in a park. In the foreground, a young girl with long brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans, is crouching and using a small shovel to dig in the soil. She is wearing white gloves and has a joyful expression. To her right, a young woman with blonde hair, also in a white t-shirt and blue jeans, is crouching and holding a small tree sapling. In the background, other children and adults are visible, some holding shovels and others planting trees. The scene is set in a grassy area with trees and a building in the distance. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

Moving Forward

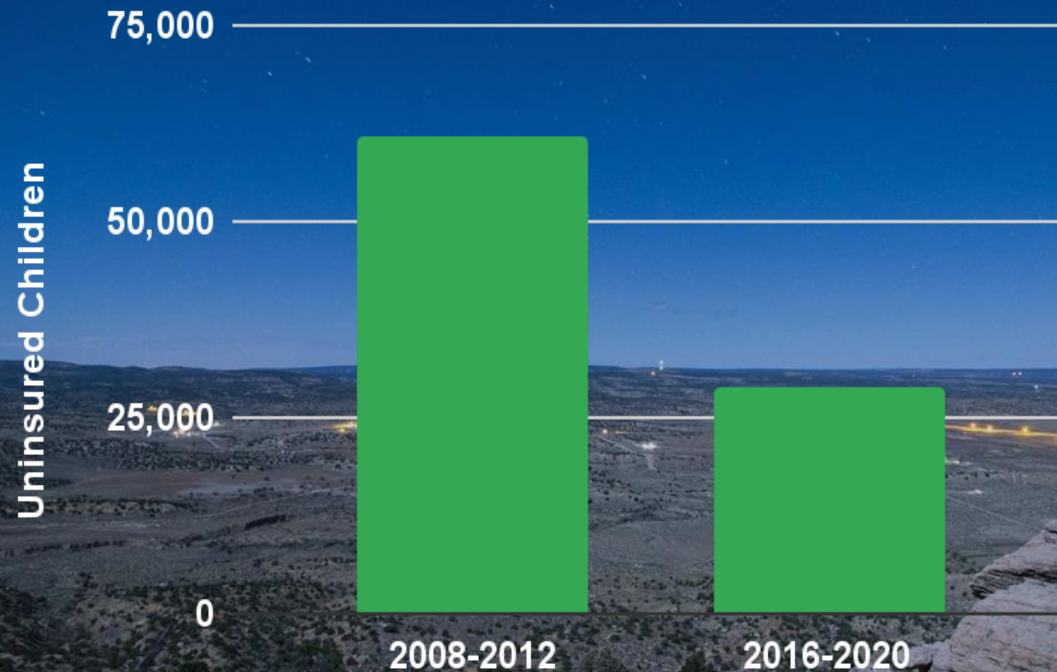
- Comprehensive climate legislation
- Fully funding environmental agencies
- Diversify away from the oil and gas industry



Keeping
our kids
safe &
healthy

Bill Jordan, MA
Government Relations Officer

New Mexico cut the uninsured rate in half for its kids



A healthcare worker, likely a nurse or doctor, is shown from the side, wearing teal scrubs and a stethoscope. They are examining a young child's chest. The child is shirtless and wearing brown shorts. The background is a solid teal color.

Health Care Progress

- Increased funding for Medicaid
 - \$242 million in new funding for Medicaid
 - Extend postpartum coverage
 - Eliminate the Developmental Disabilities waiver wait list over 3 yrs
- Increased access to Medicaid and the Marketplace
 - Easy Enrollment in Healthcare Coverage (HB 96)

Behavioral Health Care Progress

- Major expansions
 - **\$20 million** to the Human Services Department
 - **\$50 million** special appropriation to Higher Education for training the workforce
 - **\$4 million** to implement the new 988 phone system for behavioral health assistance

The background of the slide is a dense, close-up photograph of numerous bright red chili peppers. The peppers are oriented in various directions, creating a textured and vibrant red field. Some green stems and calyxes are visible at the tips of the peppers.

Public Health: Social Determinants of Health

- Cleaner air and water
- Reducing poverty
- Reducing food insecurity
- Record increases in affordable housing
- Gun safety
- **And...** a new School of Public Health at UNM & NMSU

Moving Forward

- Continue rebuilding our behavioral health system
- Utilize the new Health Care Affordability Fund to reduce out-of-pockets costs and expand coverage
- Promote state action on drug affordability
- Focus on public health to address racial disparities
- Be prepared for the next public health emergency
- Plan for the health impacts of climate change




Supporting economic opportunity for children & families

Amber Wallin, MPA
Executive Director

Pandemic impacts on well-being

- 23% of NM parents who rent are unable to make their housing payments on time
- 46% of NM parents have difficulty paying for basic household expenses
- 29% of parents reduced basic necessities in order to pay an energy bill
- 11% of parents with children under 5 saw child care disruptions

Source: US Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, July 2022

An aerial photograph of a deep, rugged canyon. A river flows through the bottom of the canyon, winding its way towards the horizon. The canyon walls are steep and rocky, with some sparse vegetation. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky with warm, orange and yellow hues, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is vast and dramatic.

**The health and economic
impacts of COVID-19 have
been highly inequitable
across lines of income,
race, and gender.**

Economic Opportunity Progress

- Minimum wage increases for **100,000 workers**
- Paid sick leave for **200,000 workers**
- Expansions & more than doubling of the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) & tripling of a tax rebate for low-income residents: **\$100 million** for **400,000 families**
- A new state Child Tax Credit: **\$75 million** for **500,000 kids**
- Economic relief for essential workers and immigrants
- Predatory lending **36% rate cap** (from 175%)

A full-page background image showing the silhouettes of a family—a man, a woman, and a young child—walking away from the viewer across a grassy field. They are positioned in front of a dramatic sunset sky with long, horizontal clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare effects. The overall mood is hopeful and forward-looking.

Moving Forward

www.nmvoices.org

A person is seen from behind, standing in a desert landscape with their arms outstretched towards a bright sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong glow and silhouetting the person. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds, and the foreground shows sparse desert vegetation.

**Stable, sustainable, and
diversified revenue builds
the foundation for a
stronger New Mexico.**

A photograph of three young children sitting together. The child in the foreground is a girl with long dark hair, wearing a white shirt with orange ruffles. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. Behind her are two other children, a boy and a girl, both smiling. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with warm lighting.

**“The greatest truth must be the
recognition that in every child is
the potential for greatness.”**

-Robert F. Kennedy



Thank you!



www.nmvoices.org
datacenter.kidscount.org