KIDS at the HEART of PUBLIC POLICY: Centering Children, Youth & Families for Transformational Change

New Mexico Voices for Children

August 18, 2022
Centering kids in public policy will build a brighter future for all of New Mexico. www.nmvoices.org
KIDS COUNT tells a story of opportunity.

www.nmvoices.org
What is your story?

www.nmvoices.org
Why I’m here.
Why we are all here.
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: 8.9%
- Child Poverty Rate: 25%
- Children Receiving Child Care Assistance Subsidies: 19,694

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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

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Providing early childhood care and education moving forward

VOTE YES FOR KIDS!

Hey, NM! Are you ready to Vote YES For Kids?

#VoteYESForKidsNM

www.voteyesforkidsNM.com

www.nmvoices.org/permanentschoolfund

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My View Jessica Cowdrey and Amber Wallin
New Mexico’s children are worth the investment

By Jessica Cowdrey and Amber Wallin
July 4, 2022 Updated July 4, 2022

Investing in high-quality early care and education is one of the best things that New Mexico can do to help all children thrive and reach their full potential. Despite what some might say (“N.M. should think twice about universal pre-K,” June 26), well-funded programs that support parents from before birth through age five are common sense ways to improve New Mexico’s future.
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

- Hispanic: 62%
- Black: <5%
- Native American: 10%
- White: 23%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: <1%
- Multiracial: <5%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 73%

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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
Affordable higher education & training for all students
Most NM financial aid is merit-based

2011

25%

75%

2019

23%

77%

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Higher Education Progress

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

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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 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%

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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

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Healthy environments to play, grow & thrive

Paige Knight, MPP
Senior Research & Policy Analyst
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
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

Uninsured Children

- 2008-2012: 75,000
- 2016-2020: 25,000
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

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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

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Moving Forward

- Continue rebuilding our behavioral health system
- Utilize the new Health Care Affordability Fund to reduce out-of-pocket 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

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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
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%)

[www.nmvoices.org](http://www.nmvoices.org)
Moving Forward
Stable, sustainable, and diversified revenue builds the foundation for a stronger New Mexico.
“The greatest truth must be the recognition that in every child is the potential for greatness.”

-Robert F. Kennedy
Thank you!

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datacenter.kidscount.org