

NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN 2009

New Mexico's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	1,969,915
Population, Children Under 18 ²	500,276
State Poverty Rate ³	14.0%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	18.1%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	13.6%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	25.1%

*All statistics are for 2007.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2006, New Mexico had 31,453 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 16,565 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 5,926 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Mexico, a rate of 11.6 per 1,000 children, representing an 18.7% decrease from 2005. Of these children, 4,404 were neglected, 791 were physically abused, and 269 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, 14 children in New Mexico died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 2,357 children in New Mexico lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,316 children in 2005. In 2006, 40.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 10.9% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of New Mexico children in out-of-home care in 2006, 25.4% were white, 3.7% black, 57.8% Hispanic, 7.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 6.0% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,061 children exiting out-of-home care in New Mexico in 2006, 66% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 338 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Mexico, a 17% increase from 289 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 2,357 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 860 or 36.5% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 24,271 New Mexico grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,357 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 23.7% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all New Mexico children in kinship care in 2006, 20.4% were white, 2.9% were black, 62.4% were Hispanic, 8.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 6.1% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Mexico decreased from 35,048 in March 2007 to 33,531 in March 2008, a decrease of 4.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 12,600, a 10.1% decrease from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in New Mexico was at 40.0% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, New Mexico spent \$108,645,675 in TANF funds, including 67.7% on basic assistance, 2.66% on child care, 0.4% on transportation, and 29.2% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, New Mexico spent \$30,217,690 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 64,417 participants.²¹
- In 2007, New Mexico collected and distributed \$78,857,101 in child support funds, a 6.0% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Mexico was \$658 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.66 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, New Mexico had a monthly average of 21,600 children served by subsidized child care; 23,100 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 22,900 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Mexico, a family of three could make no more than \$28,330, which is equivalent to 70% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, New Mexico had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 7,279 New Mexico children, a 4.4% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 313,900 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico—59.4% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 4,803 children were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 4,803 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 1,841 received Targeted Case Management services, and 75 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, New Mexico had 8,072 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 23.8% decrease from 2006, when 10,598 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, New Mexico had 77,000 uninsured children, representing 15.5% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 2,460 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving New Mexico a rank of 15 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 177 infants under age 1 died in New Mexico, giving it a rank of 15 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in New Mexico was 37 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 97. This reflects a total rate of 62 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵



- Cumulative through 2006, 2,603 adults and adolescents, as well as 7 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Mexico.³⁶
- In 2006, an estimated 16,000 children ages 12–17, and 136,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in New Mexico.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 121 children aged out of out-of-home care in New Mexico.³⁸
- In 2007, 10,000 New Mexico teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 8% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 20% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 7,000 children ages 12–17 in New Mexico needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, 38 New Mexico children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 6.51 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, seven children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Mexico, a 13% decrease from eight in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 10,371 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Mexico, a 22.5% increase from 8,466 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 459 were for violent crimes and 293 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 471 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Mexico.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, New Mexico spent \$73,041,132 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 75% was from federal funds, and 25% from state funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$54,623,279 in federal funds received for child welfare, 58% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 9% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 9% from Medicaid, 20% from the Social Services Block Grant, and 4% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 2,357 children in out-of-home care in New Mexico in 2006, only 1,281, or 54.3%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



NEW MEXICO'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- A 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report documented that staff shortages, high caseloads, high worker turnover and low salaries impinge on delivering services to achieve safety, permanence, and well being for children.⁵¹
- The federal Child and Family Service Reviews have clearly demonstrated that the more time a caseworker spends with a child and family, the better the outcomes for those children and families.⁵²
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children; these high caseloads contribute to high worker turnover and insufficient services being provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have caseloads of 12–15 children.⁵³
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in New Mexico was \$29,473; the median income for a family of four in New Mexico was \$45,867.⁵⁴

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