

NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN 2010

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

New Mexico's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	1,984,356
Population, Children Under 18 ²	501,738
State Poverty Rate ³	19.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	25.9%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 ⁵	23.0%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	29.4%

*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, New Mexico had 30,130 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 14,853 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2007, 6,065 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Mexico, a rate of 12.1 per 1,000 children, representing a 2.3% increase from 2006. Of these children, 3,895 were neglected, 505 were physically abused, and 126 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2007, 7 children in New Mexico died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2007, 2,423 children in New Mexico lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,357 children in 2006. In 2007, 1,020 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 239 were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of New Mexico children in out-of-home care in 2007, 26.2% were white, 3.7% black, 57.7% Hispanic, 8.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.5% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,153 children exiting out-of-home care in New Mexico in 2007, 70.7% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2007, 365 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Mexico, a 8.0% increase from 338 in 2006.¹³
- Of the 2,423 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 963 or 39.7% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2008, approximately 23,943 New Mexico grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,423 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 19.4% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all New Mexico children in kinship care in 2007, 22.3% were white, 2.3% were black, 61.3% were Hispanic, 9.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.3% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Mexico increased from 33,531 in March 2008 to 41,221 in March 2009, an increase of 22.9%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 15,574, a 23.6% increase from March 2008.¹⁸
- 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 2007, New Mexico spent \$95,685,697 in TANF funds, including 61.5% on basic assistance, 6.2% on child care, <1% on transportation, and 32% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2008, New Mexico spent \$33,313,527 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 67,900 participants.²¹
- In 2008, New Mexico collected and distributed \$88,235,505 in child support funds, an increase of 11.9% from 2007.²²
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Mexico was \$671 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$12.90 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, New Mexico had a monthly average of 21,300 children served by subsidized child care; 21,600 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 23,100 in 2005.²⁴
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Mexico, a family of three could make no more than \$35,200, which is equivalent to 81% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2009, 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 2006, 298,900 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico—58.2% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2007, 5,287 children were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2007, of the 5,287 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 1,683 received Targeted Case Management services, and 63 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2008, New Mexico had 9,706 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 20.2% increase from 2007, when 8,072 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2008, New Mexico had 82,000 uninsured children, representing 16.1% of its child population.³²
- In 2006, 2,668 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving New Mexico a rank of 36 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2006, 173 infants under age 1 died in New Mexico, giving it a rank of 14 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in New Mexico was 36 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 108. This reflects a total rate of 64 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2007, 2,712 adults and adolescents, as well as 9 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Mexico.³⁶
- In 2007, an estimated 16,000 children ages 12–17, and 93,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in New Mexico.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 127 children aged out of out-of-home care in New Mexico.³⁸
- In 2008, 11,000 New Mexico teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2008, 12,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2007, 37,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2007, approximately 8,000 children ages 12–17 in New Mexico needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2007, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2006, 38 New Mexico children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 6.5 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 10 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Mexico, a 42.9% increase from 7 in 2005.⁴⁵
- In 2008, 9,587 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Mexico, a 7.6% decrease from 10,371 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 440 were for violent crimes and 211 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, 25% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$54,623,279 in federal funds received for child welfare, 58% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 9% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 9% was from Medicaid, 20% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 0% was from TANF, and 4% came from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 2,423 children in out-of-home care in New Mexico in 2007, only 1,404, or 57.9%, 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 that child and family.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 \$46,596.⁵⁴
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