

NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN 2004

New Mexico's Children At a Glance

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| State Population (2002) ¹ | 1,855,059 |
| State Population, Children | |
| Under 18 (2001) ² | 511,000 |
| State Poverty Rate (2002) ³ | 17.9% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Under 18 (2002) ⁴ | 24.4% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Ages 5-17 (2002) ⁵ | 23.2% |
| Poverty Rate, Children | |
| Birth to Age 4 (2002) ⁶ | 30.8% |

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2001, 13,889 children were reported as abused or neglected and referred for investigation in New Mexico, a rate of 27.2 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2001, 6,929 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Mexico, a rate of 13.6 per 1,000 children, representing a 10% increase from 2000. Of every 1,000 children, 8.7 were neglected, 4.4 were physically abused, and 0.9 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2001, five children died as a result of abuse or neglect in New Mexico.⁹
- On September 30, 2001, 1,757 children in New Mexico lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 1,912 children on September 30, 2000. In 2001, 29.1% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 12.6% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2001, 1,376 white children, 132 black children, 958 Hispanic children, 182 American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 66 children of other races and ethnicities were in out-of-home care in the state.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,754 children leaving out-of-home care in 2001, 73% were reunited with their families.¹²
- In 2001, 369 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Mexico, a 143% increase from 152 in 1997.¹³
- Of the 1,757 children in out-of-home care in 2001, 948 or 54% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- Of the 1,757 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2001, 18% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁵
- In 2002, more than 21,899 New Mexico grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁶

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The number of people receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Mexico declined from 47,952 in March 2002 to 42,999 in March 2003, a decrease of 10.3%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2003 was 16,284, a 4.8% decrease from March 2002.¹⁷
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and Food Stamp benefits in New Mexico was 36% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁸
- In 2002, New Mexico spent \$123,106,492 in TANF funds, including 66.7% on cash assistance, 0.3% on transportation and support activities, and 32.9% on nonassistance.¹⁹
- In 2001, New Mexico collected and distributed \$43,594,822 in child support funds, an increase of 10.2% from 2000.²⁰
- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Mexico was \$579 per month, or 70% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.²¹

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C H I L D C A R E A N D H E A D S T A R T

- In 2001, an estimated monthly average of 22,800 of New Mexico's children received subsidized child care, an increase from 17,600 in 2000 and 16,600 in 1999.²²
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 78% of New Mexico's median income, or \$29,256, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²³
- Due to the state budget shortfall, New Mexico reduced eligibility for child care assistance from 200% to 100% of the federal poverty level.²⁴
- In 2002, Head Start served 7,749 New Mexico children, a 1.7% increase from 2001.²⁵
- In 2000, 71% of all 18- to 24-year-olds in New Mexico had at least a high school degree or equivalent.²⁶

H E A L T H , M E N T A L H E A L T H , A N D S U B S T A N C E A B U S E

- In 2000, 257,750 children younger than 18 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico, representing 48.2% of New Mexico's total enrollees.²⁷
- In 2002, New Mexico had 19,940 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 92.7% increase from 2001, when 10,347 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2001, 79 babies in New Mexico were born to girls younger than 15. In 2001, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 4,529—a rate of 65 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 2,269 adults and adolescents, as well as 8 children younger than 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in New Mexico.³⁰
- In 2002, 24 New Mexico children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 4.29 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2001, an estimated 11,000 children ages 12–17, and 27,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E A N D D E L I N Q U E N C Y P R E V E N T I O N

- In 2001, 10 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Mexico, a 29% decrease from 14 in 2000.³³
- In 2002, 9,201 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Mexico, a 20% decrease from 11,431 arrests in 1998. Of the arrests in 2002, 2,181 were for violent crimes and 214 were for possession of a weapon.³⁴
- A 1999 census of juvenile offenders showed 855 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Mexico.³⁵

F U N D I N G C H I L D W E L F A R E S E R V I C E S F O R N E W M E X I C O ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2000, New Mexico spent \$63,652,498 for child welfare services—all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁶ Of this amount, 62% came from federal funds, and 38% from state funds; none came from local funds.³⁷
- In 2000, of the \$39,624,498 in federal funds received for child welfare, 61% came from the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program, 7% from the Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs, 20% from Medicaid, 9% from the Social Services Block Grant, and 2% from Supplemental Security Income.³⁸
- Of the 1,757 children in out-of-home care in New Mexico on September 30, 2001, only 708, or 40.3%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.³⁹

NEW MEXICO'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- The child welfare workforce is facing challenges in every state. A combination of high case-loads, high worker turnover, and low salaries impinges on the delivery of services to achieve safety, permanency, and child well-being.
- In 2000, the national average starting salary for child protective service workers was \$26,900; for direct service workers, \$27,500. The yearly turnover rate for these workers was 15.6% and 19.5%, respectively.⁴⁰
- In 2000, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in New Mexico was \$26,012.⁴¹
- In 2002, the median income in New Mexico for a family of four was \$47,314.⁴²

Additional child welfare statistics, references, and pertinent notes are available on CWLA's National Data Analysis System at <http://ndas.cwla.org>.

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