

NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN 2008

New Mexico's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	1,954,599
Population, Children Under 18 ²	489,482
State Poverty Rate ³	16.9
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	23.2
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	21.6
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	29

All statistics are for 2006.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2005, New Mexico had 30,845 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 20,225 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2005, 4,637 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in New Mexico, a rate of 14.9 per 1,000 children, and representing a 16.1% increase from 2004. Of these children, 70.4% were neglected, 14.5% were physically abused, and 5.3% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2005, 12 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in New Mexico.⁹
- In 2005, 2,316 children in New Mexico lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,150 children in 2004. In 2005, 41.8% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 11.5% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care in 2005, 28.2% were white, 4.4% black, 57.7% Hispanic, 5.8% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.8% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 2,039 children exiting out-of-home care in 2005, 72.4% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2005, 289 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in New Mexico, an 8.3% increase from 265 in 2004.¹³
- Of the 2,316 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 711, or 30.7%, were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

KINSHIP SUPPORT

- In 2005, approximately 22,054 New Mexico grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,316 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 24.7% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all New Mexico children in kinship care in 2005, 27.1% were white, 2.5% were black, 60.9% were Hispanic, 6.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.3% were other races.¹⁷

CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in New Mexico decreased from 41,009 in March 2006 to 34,243 in March 2007, a decrease of 14.5%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2007 was 13,716, a 20.4% decrease from March 2006.¹⁸

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- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in New Mexico was at 40% of the federal poverty level.¹⁹
- In 2006, New Mexico spent \$108,645,675 in TANF funds, including 67.7% on basic assistance, 2.7% on child care, 0.4% on transportation, and 29.2% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2006, New Mexico collected and distributed \$74,411,789 in child support funds, an increase of 8.7% from 2005.²¹
- In 2006, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in New Mexico was \$648 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$12.45 per hour working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2005, New Mexico had an estimated monthly average of 23,100 children served by subsidized child care; 22,900 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 22,100 in 2003.²³
- In 2007, to be eligible for subsidized child care in New Mexico a family of three could make no more than \$25,730, which is equivalent to 60% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2007, New Mexico had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2006, Head Start served 7,451 New Mexico children, the same as in 2005.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2004, 310,100 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico, representing 60.6% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2004, 25,807 children were enrolled in Medicaid in New Mexico on the basis of being in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, New Mexico spent \$227,536,994 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$8,817 per foster care enrollee on Medicaid services.²⁹
- New Mexico reported spending \$43,890 of its total Medicaid spending in 2004 for children in foster care on targeted case management services.³⁰
- New Mexico reported spending \$61,084,328 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2004 for foster children on rehabilitative services.³¹
- In 2006, New Mexico had 25,155 children enrolled in its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a 3.36% increase from 2005, when 24,310 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2004, 2,306 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving New Mexico a rank of 26 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2004, 179 infants younger than age 1 died in New Mexico, giving it a rank of 20 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴

- In 2004, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in New Mexico was 38.3 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 93.5. This reflects a total rate of 60.8 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2005, 2,077 adults and adolescents, as well as 3 children under the age of 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in New Mexico.³⁶
- In 2005, an estimated 17,000 children ages 12–17, and 91,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in New Mexico.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2005, 106 children aged out of out-of-home care in New Mexico.³⁸
- In 2005, 11,000 New Mexico teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2005, 17% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2005, approximately 9,000 children ages 12–17 in New Mexico needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2005, approximately 11,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2004, 43 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 7.64 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2004, 11 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in New Mexico, a 38% increase from 8 in 2003.⁴⁴
- In 2006, 8,466 children younger than 18 were arrested in New Mexico, a 12.69% increase from 9,696 arrests in 2005. Of the arrests in 2006, 399 were for violent crimes and 294 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 606 children in juvenile correction facilities in New Mexico.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR NEW MEXICO'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, New Mexico spent \$93,287,365 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 56% was from federal funds, and 44% was from state funds.⁴⁷
- In 2004, of the \$51,794,865 in federal funds received for child welfare, 51% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 10% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 16% was from Medicaid, 19% came from the Social Services Block Grant, and 4% was from TANF.⁴⁸
- Out of 2,316 children in out-of-home care in New Mexico in 2005, only 1,353 children, or 58.4%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

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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.⁵⁰
- 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.⁵¹
- 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 case-loads of 12–15 children.⁵²
- 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 was \$45,867.⁵³

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