



Children in the States

NEW MEXICO

September 2015

Child Population

501,949 children lived in New Mexico in 2014; 75 percent were children of color.

- 25 percent were White
- 59 percent were Hispanic
- 2 percent were Black
- 1 percent were Asian
- 3 percent were two or more races
- 10 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native
- <1 percent were Pacific Islander

Child Poverty

Nearly 3 in 10 (29.5 percent) of New Mexico's children were poor in 2014, a total of 145,966 children.¹

- New Mexico ranked 50th in child poverty among states.²
- Nearly 1 in 7 children lived in extreme poverty at less than half the poverty level.
- The youngest children were the poorest age group. More than 1 in 3 children under age 6 were poor; nearly half of the poor children were extremely poor.

Children of color in New Mexico are disproportionately poor.

- Nearly 3 in 10 Black children, more than 1 in 3 Hispanic children, and more than 2 in 5 American Indian/Alaska Native children were poor in 2014, compared to more than 1 in 7 White children.

Child Hunger and Homelessness

Child poverty in New Mexico leads to unacceptable child homelessness and hunger.

- More than 11,600 New Mexico public school students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year.
- In 2014, 2 full-time minimum-wage jobs were necessary to be able to afford a fair market rent two-bedroom apartment in New Mexico and still have enough left over for food, utilities and other necessities.
- More than 28 percent of children lived in households that lacked access to adequate food in 2013. Nearly 33 percent of children ages 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2011-2012. New Mexico ranked 48th of 50 states in child food security and 35th in percent of children overweight and obese.
- Nearly 40 percent of New Mexico children relied on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their nutritional needs on an average month in FY2013.
- 63 percent of New Mexico children receiving a free and reduced-price lunch during the school year did not participate in Summer Nutrition Programs in 2014 – ranking New Mexico 1st of 50 states in ensuring that children have adequate summer nutrition.

Child Health

Although the majority of New Mexico's children have access to health coverage, that does not guarantee enrollment in coverage or access to care, which can jeopardize their education and their future.

- In 2013, 89.8 percent of eligible children participated in Centennial Care or New MexiKids/MexiTeens, New Mexico's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In FY2013, a total of 380,290 New Mexico children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Centennial Care, and 9,368 in New MexiKids/MexiTeens.

¹ A family of four was poor if it was living on less than \$23,834 a year, \$1,986 a month, \$458 a week and \$65 a day, and extremely poor if living on less than \$11,917 a year, \$993 a month, \$229 a week and \$33 a day.

² The state ranked 1st is the best for children for that outcome and the state ranked 50th is the worst for children.

- More than 43,000 New Mexico children ages 0-17 (8.5 percent) were uninsured in 2013. The state had the 11th highest rate of uninsured children among states.
- In 2012, 30,000 uninsured children ages 0-18 were eligible for Centennial Care or New MexiKids/MexiTeens but not enrolled.

Early Childhood and Education

Lack of early childhood investments deprives children of critical supports in the early years and reduces school readiness.

- In 2013, the average annual cost of center-based child care for an infant was \$7,523 – 25.7 percent more than the average annual in-state tuition and fees at a public four-year college in New Mexico.
- New Mexico had 259 children on a waiting list for child care assistance in early 2014.
- On average, 38 percent of New Mexico's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in public or private preschool from 2011-2013. Only 34 percent of children from families with incomes under 200 percent of poverty were enrolled.
- New Mexico's state-funded preschool program met 8 of the 10 quality benchmarks set by the National Institute for Early Education Research in 2013-2014.

New Mexico's schools fail to educate all children, closing off a crucial pathway out of poverty.

- In 2013, 79 percent of New Mexico's fourth grade public school students were unable to read at grade level and 69 percent were unable to compute at grade level.
 - 76 percent of Black fourth graders could not read at grade level and 76 percent could not compute.
 - 83 percent of Hispanic fourth graders could not read at grade level and 74 percent could not compute.
- Nearly 3 in 4 New Mexico public high school students graduated on time in 2012, placing New Mexico 44th among states. 68 percent of Black students and 73 percent of Hispanic students graduated on time compared to 76 percent of White students.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 13 percent of New Mexico public secondary school students received at least one out-of-school suspension, placing New Mexico 37th among 48 ranked states. For Black and Hispanic students, the percentages were 17 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

Children Facing Special Risks

Many vulnerable children need treatment, services and permanent families.

- In New Mexico, 6,530 children were abused or neglected in 2013 – 12.9 out of 1,000 children.
- On the last day of FY2013, there were 2,110 New Mexico children in foster care.

Too many New Mexico children are involved in the juvenile justice system.

- 11,067 children were arrested in New Mexico in 2012 – a rate of 4,880 out of 100,000 children ages 10-17.
- 522 children and youth were in residential placement in 2011. 3 percent of the children in residential placement were Black, 70 percent were Hispanic, and 17 percent were White.
- No New Mexico children were in adult jails in 2013.
- New Mexico spent 4.5 times as much per prisoner as per public school student in FY2012.

New Mexico ranked 26th out of 41 ranked states in preventing child and teen gun deaths.

- A total of 20 children and teens were killed by guns in New Mexico in 2013 – a rate of 3.5 out of 100,000 children and teens.

For sources please visit www.childrensdefense.org/cits