Child Maltreatment

In 2018, New Mexico had 39,228 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 20,980 were referred for investigation.¹

There were 8,024 child victims of abuse or neglect in New Mexico in 2018, at a rate of 16.6 children per 1,000. This translates to a 5.5% increase since 2014.²

Of the 8,024 children, 5,728 were first time victims.³

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 1,119 of the 8,024 cases.⁴

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2018

- 86% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2017 were parents on the child. 14% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.⁵

- 50% of New Mexico’s child victims in 2017 were female and 50% were male.⁶

Child Victims by Race or Ethnicity, 2018

- 65% African American
- 6% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 9% Asian
- 0% Hispanic
- 0% Multiple Race
- 9% White
- 5% Unknown

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2018, New Mexico reported 61 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.⁷

- New Mexico reported no plans of safe care for screened-in infants.⁸
Child fatalities decreased in 2018 from 16 in 2017 to 12 in 2018.xi

New Mexico did not report the numbers for sex trafficking victims

3,415 victims received post-response services while 3,018 non-victims received post-response services as well.xii

Foster Care and Adoptions

- 4,299 total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2018.
- 2,508 were in care on the day of September 30th, 2018.
- 1,679 children entered care during the 2018 FY while 1,793 exited during the same year.
- 297 of New Mexico’s children were adopted while 1,205 were waiting to be adopted.xiv

There was a 5.6% decrease in the number of children in care between 2017 and 2018. Adoptions from the system also decreased 4.5% from 2017.xv

80 children in New Mexico aged out and exited foster care in 2017. This is an increase from 66 in 2016 and represents a 21.2% increase.xvi

- Children in foster care in 2017 spent an average of 21.9 months in care. xvii
- The average length of stay in New Mexico for children waiting to be adopted from foster care in 31.3 months.xviii
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2017 was 7.7 years old.xix
- The average age of adopted children was 6.4 years old.xx
Data from 2017 shows that 1,515 children in foster care within New Mexico were living with non-relatives while 633 stayed with a relative.

173 children were staying in group homes while 43 children were classified as runaways.

5% of households in New Mexico in 2017 had a grandparent living with a grandchild.

The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 11.7 months.

Child Poverty
New Mexico had 174,000 children in 2017 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 36% of all children.

28% of New Mexico’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden.

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 29,364 in 2017 to 25,919 in 2018. This represents a 11.7% decrease.

The state spent $17,426,549 on WIC in 2019, serving 40,487 people. This represents a 12.3% decrease in total participants and a 17.8% decrease in spending.

324,000 people in New Mexico were food insecure in 2017, including 118,030 children who struggled with hunger.

44.2% of households in New Mexico with children received SNAP benefits in 2017.
Health

New Mexico had 2,250 low birth-weight babies born in 2017 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 9.5% of infants born in New Mexico in 2017.  

New Mexico had a total of 2,554 preterm births in 2018, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 9.1% of all white babies were born premature while 13.44% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2018. The total premature birth rate was 9.8%.  

There were 1,896 births to mothers aged 15-19 in New Mexico in 2017, representing a rate of 28 in every 1,000 teen girls.  

140 infants under 1 died in New Mexico in 2017, representing an infant mortality rate of 5.9 per 1,000.

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2018

- 5.3% of New Mexico’s children had no health insurance in 2018. This represents 27,000 children.  
- 409,834 children in New Mexico were enrolled in Medicaid in 2018. This represents 2.2% decrease from 2017.  
- 13,224 children in New Mexico were in the state Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2018. This represents a 3.5% decrease from 2017.
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 3,203 total arrests for children under 18 in New Mexico in 2018.
- 161 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 478 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 472 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.xxxviii
- 318 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in New Mexico in 2018. This is a decrease from 363 kids in 2015, representing a 12.4% decline.xxxix

Teens & Youth
- 12,000 (10%) of New Mexico’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2017.xli
- In 2017, New Mexico did not report any suicides for children aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 41 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.xlii
- 32 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in New Mexico in 2017.xlii

Child Welfare Services Funding
- New Mexico spent $94,166,880 on child welfare services in 2016. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families.
- $55,715,948 were allocated from the federal government and $38,450,932 came from state and local funds.xliii

Federal Funding Sources
- The breakdown of the $55,715,948 in federal funding received in New Mexico in 2016: New Mexico is a Medicaid expansion state.xliiv
  - $18,909,295 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
  - $20,147,169 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program xliv
- New Mexico’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2017 was $10,209,930 xlv
New Mexico’s Children 2020


xv Based on Calculations from the CWLA


xix Ibid.

xx Ibid.


xxii Ibid.


xxv Ibid.


xxix Ibid.


