



Focusing on Young Children's Learning & Supporting Families

FOCUS

New Mexico's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

How Early Childhood Research-Based Quality Practices are implemented in
New Mexico's Child Care

August 24, 2018 – Legislative Finance Committee Meeting

Lessons Learned

- Programs had a difficult time to maintain quality after “graduating” from AIM HIGH Consultation
- Consultation was focused on working in classrooms with teachers only
- High turnover rate of teachers
- 5 STAR Accreditation was not consistent
- 2013 LFC Study indicated no significant gains for child outcomes
- System was based on meeting Environmental Rating Scales criteria only
- Aim High ended 12-31-2017 and was the foundation for FOCUS



1997 – 1999

Gold – Silver – Bronze

No financial Incentives

No onsite consultation

No access for low income children

1999 – 2017

Aim High

Differential subsidy

Onsite Consultation

Access for low income children

FOCUS

*New Mexico Tiered
Quality Rating
and Improvement
System*



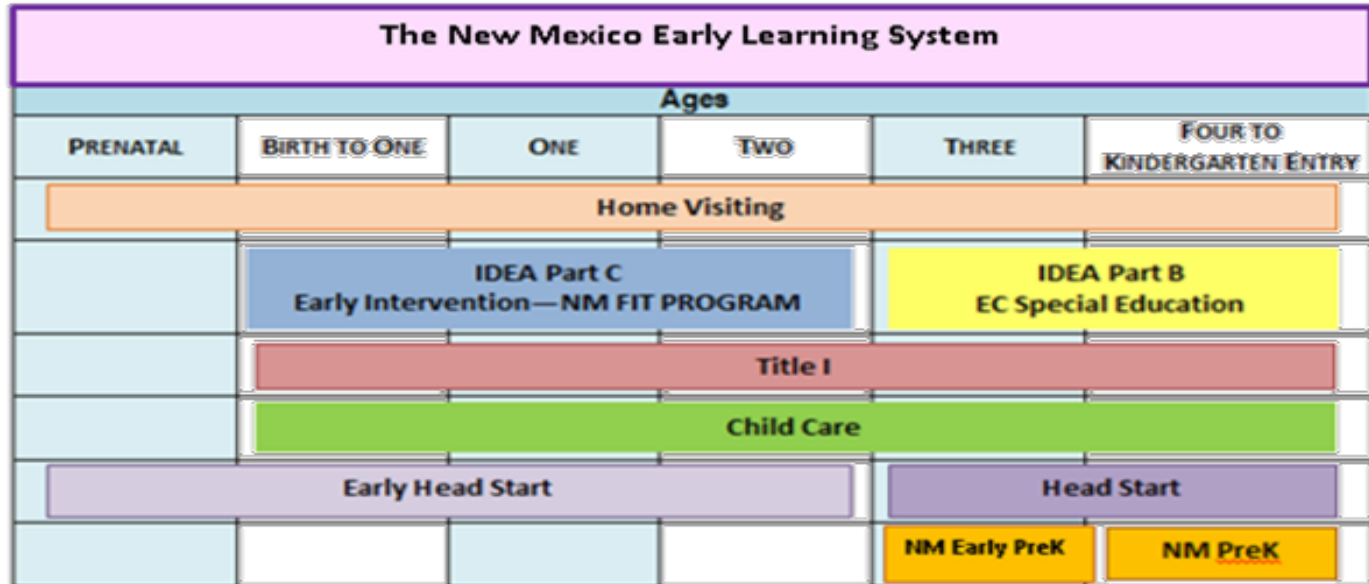


New Mexico's third-generation Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) is called *FOCUS on Young Children's Learning* (FOCUS).

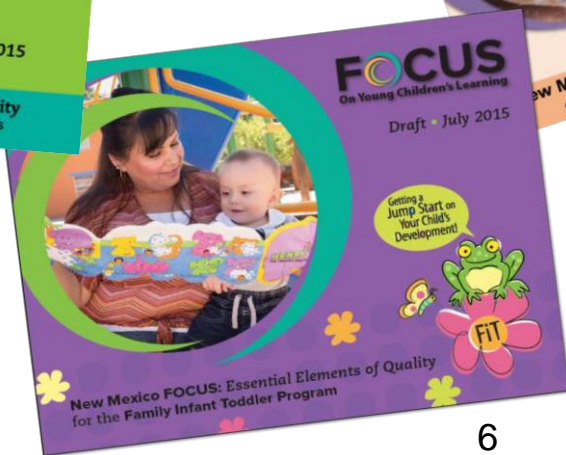
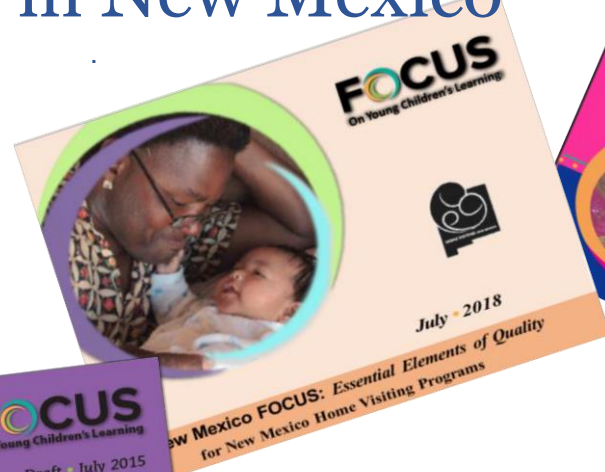
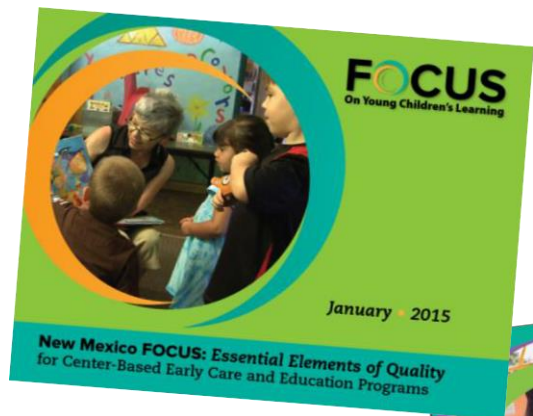
Based on intentional use of experiences, interactions, and curriculum to promote child development and learning using the *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines*.

FOCUS is a process to promote quality for all of New Mexico's Early Learning programs.

Formerly referred as the “System of Systems”, the New Mexico Early Learning System connects strategies and initiatives with one-another for the overall goal of a seamless cohesive and aligned system for children prenatal to age five.



FOCUS TQRIS has expanded to all early learning programs in New Mexico



*The mission of
FOCUS is to
support positive
outcomes for all
young children
and their families*

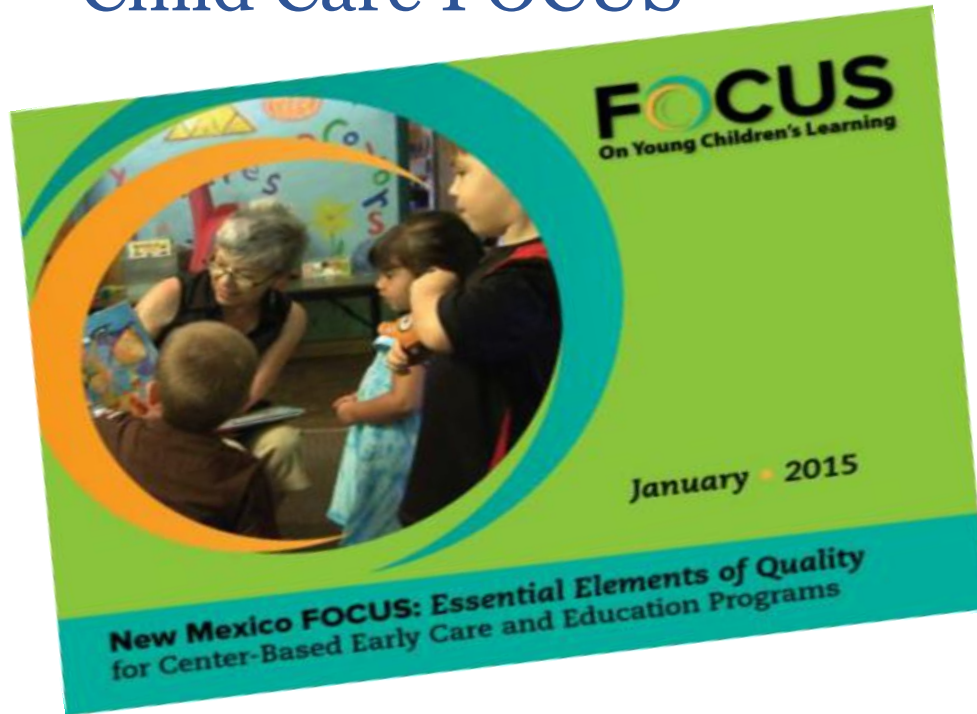
*With the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines as a base,
FOCUS utilizes the New Mexico Authentic Curriculum and
Assessment Process to meet individual children at their
developmental level on the learning continuum and
scaffold their learning*



Main Components of FOCUS Process

- Key Elements: Standards - 5-tier Criteria
- Training Consultation
- Accreditation Approval process
- Verification

Child Care FOCUS

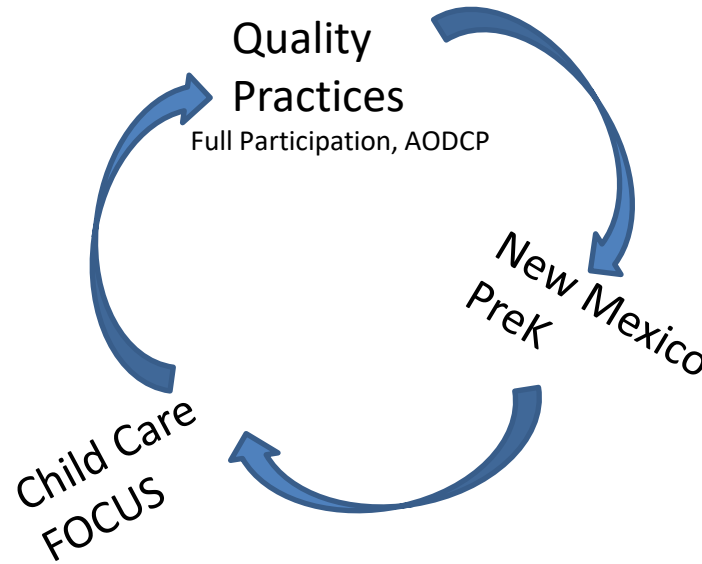


FOUNDATIONS OF QUALITY		
Full Participation of Each Child		
Family Engagement		
<p>Definition: Family engagement is essential for enhancing children's learning and family well-being. Family engagement occurs when there is an ongoing, reciprocal, strengths-based partnership between families and their children's early childhood education programs (Halgunseth et al. 2009).</p> <p>Rationale: Positive family-program connections have been linked to greater academic motivation, grade promotion, and socioemotional skills across all young children, including those from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds (Christenson, 2000; Mantzicopoulos, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004).</p> <p>The following continuum of examples is provided as a reference or guide to be used in the <i>Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Process</i>. Programs are encouraged to use other recommended self-assessment tools for this purpose as well.</p>		
Beginning	Intermediate to Advanced	High Quality
<p>The center and classrooms reflect a welcoming environment for families. Greeting families as they drop off and pick up their children, displaying family and child photographs throughout the classroom at child's and families' eye level, and ensuring that posters and signs are clear and in families' home language.</p>	<p>There is evidence in the Lesson Plan and assessment information that the program encourages and validates family knowledge and participation in decision-making related to their child's education by obtaining crucial background information and setting up learning goals for their child.</p> <p>Lesson Plans reflect how staff and families collaborate in establishing goals for children both at home and at school. The Family Engagement materials have been shared with families.</p>	<p>There is evidence in the Lesson Plans and center logs that center staff encourage family members to share cultural heritage and practices, stories, activities, and language in the daily classroom activities.</p> <p>Program Policies and Philosophy reflect a comprehensive system for promoting family engagement at all levels of the program, including fatherhood engagement.</p> <p>There is evidence that parents participate in the program Self-Assessment as part of the Continuous Quality Improvement Process.</p>

Research-based elements of quality

*There has always been a co-relation between New Mexico
PreK and Child Care*

*Child Care
Quality
Standards
Informed PreK
Standards
PreK Standards
Informed FOCUS
Standards*



Foundations of Quality

Full Participation of each child

- Family Engagement
- Inclusive Practices for Children with Developmental Delays or Disabilities
- Culture and Language Including the Support of Dual Language Learners (DLL)
- Promoting Social Relationships (Mental Health)

Health Promotion and Developmental Screenings

Professional Qualifications

Group Size-Ratios



Quality Practices that Support Children's Growth, Development, and Learning

Intentional Teaching: Authentic Observation Documentation and Curriculum Planning Process

Intentional Leadership: Continuous Quality Improvement



Onsite consultation - program administrators
Technical Assistance System to train providers
Based on NMPreK Consultation
With RTT Funds – 5 programs per consultant

Child Care FOCUS brought to New Mexico Pyramid Framework

The Pyramid Framework for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children is evidence based and was developed by The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)

- Includes development of a Cadre of trainers
- Training for programs and parents
- On site consultation
- Materials
- Reflective practices



Even at the initial phases of the FOCUS Pilot, practices started to improve

Training and onsite consultation provided positive impact to providers

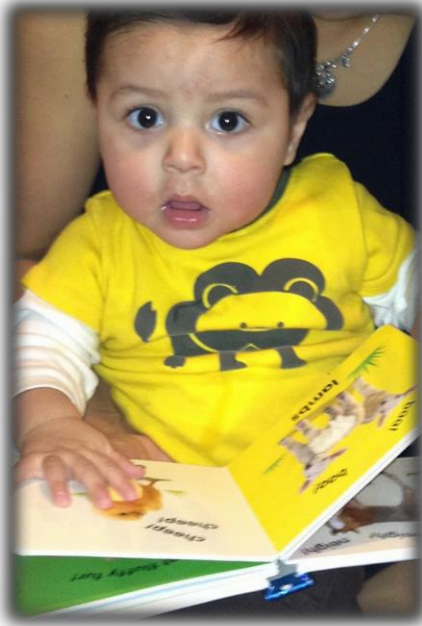
The Continuous Quality Improvement process brought professionalism to the field

Children who attended programs with FOCUS interventions – even under Aim High transition - demonstrated positive outcomes for Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd Grade

- The first verification was for 3 STAR on November 2014
- Contracted out – started with 2 verifiers
- Off-site desk reviews of documents
- On-site review of documents
 - AODCP
 - CQI
- Added TTAPs to verification process
- Accreditation Standards were cross-walked for approval on 2013



Consultation



- Consultation was fragmented, some programs had 3 individuals coming to their program – others none
- After RTT ended it was difficult to sustain caseloads
- Educators did not feel supported
- High need for trauma-informed practices
- Strong emphasis on documentation

Verification

- There were not enough verifiers to support the need
- There is no system for accreditation verification
- It was difficult to verify implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment in the classroom
- Documentation verified did not reflect the level of understanding of the process and implementation by educators
- There was no mechanism to get parental perspective
- Not all 5-Star programs functioning at highest quality

Consultation

- The Training and Consultation System was consolidated in July 2017
- Developed consultation standards and consultant PD
- Educators, administrators and coordinators are involved
Onsite training tied to consultation - coaching
- Includes classroom curriculum implementation strategies
- Strong emphasis on Mental Health onsite consultation, Trauma-informed practices – Pyramid Framework for S/E support
- Use of reflective practices



Verification

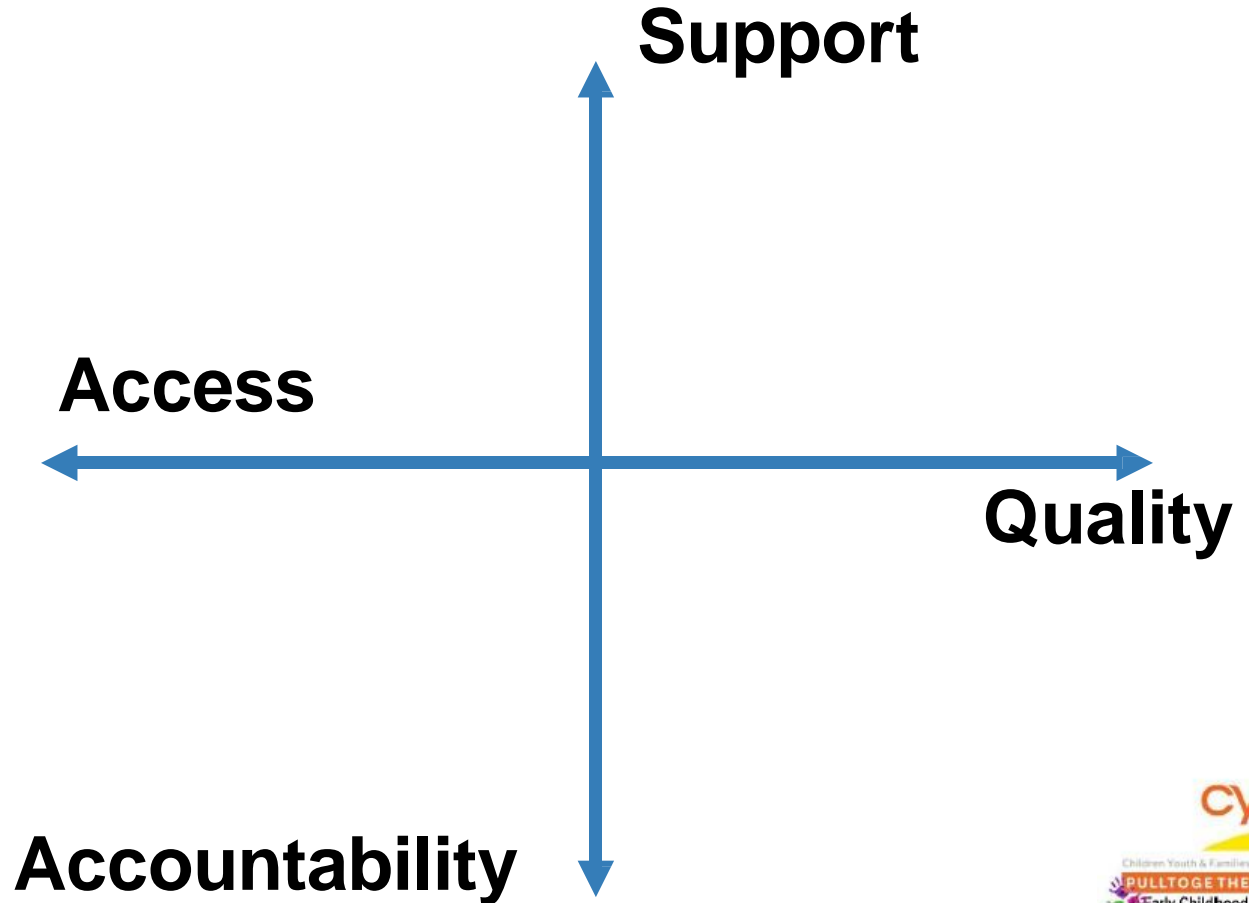
- To ensure fidelity and accountability:
 - CYFD-ECS, Office of Child Development staff is conducting onsite verifications – since July 1 2017, they have conducted 157 Verifications
 - A team of 2 per verification is deployed
 - 63 Programs verified as FOCUS 5 STAR
- Process includes a three-prong approach (OIR)
 - **Observe** – Connections between assessment, curriculum and implementation in the classroom – classroom interactions – full participation
 - **Interview** – Educators, administrators, directors, families, community partners (children)
 - **Review** – Documentation related to AODCP, CQI, training, etc.
- Case Management and next steps with program and consultant

Access

- New Mexico Child Care Assistance ensures low income children have access to high quality child care
- PullTogether Am I Eligible Online Application and Referral
- PullTogether events to recruit child care providers
- Partnerships to support startup costs for rural child care programs
- Meet programs where they are: 1-STAR and 2 STAR Consultation
- Partner with Tribal Early Childhood programs



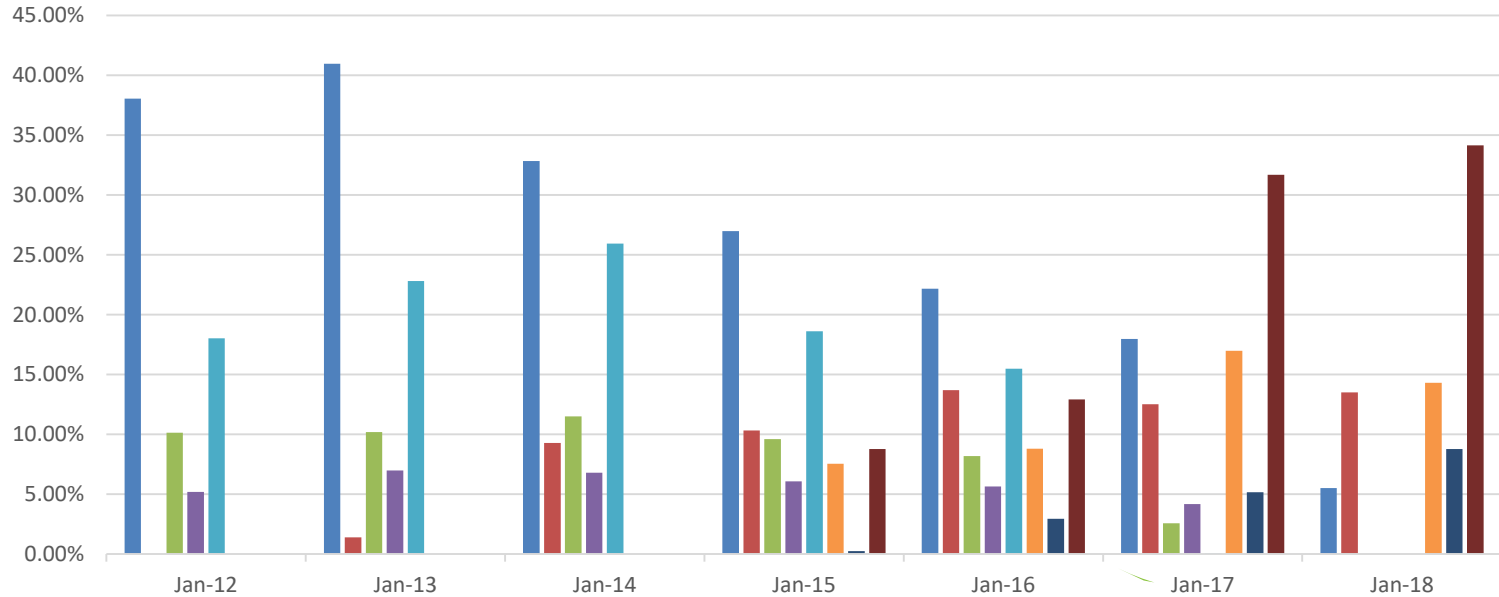
Balancing
Tradeoffs?



Where are our Subsidy Children Now?

FY18 Child Care High Quality Programs:	FY18 Average Subsidy Children	Percentage
3 STAR FOCUS	3,470	17.02%
4 STAR FOCUS	1,502	7.37%
5 STAR FOCUS	7,246	35.54%
Average number of children in High Quality Programs	12,218	59.92%
Average number of subsidy children served in FY18	20,389	

% of Children in Child Care Subsidy by STAR program

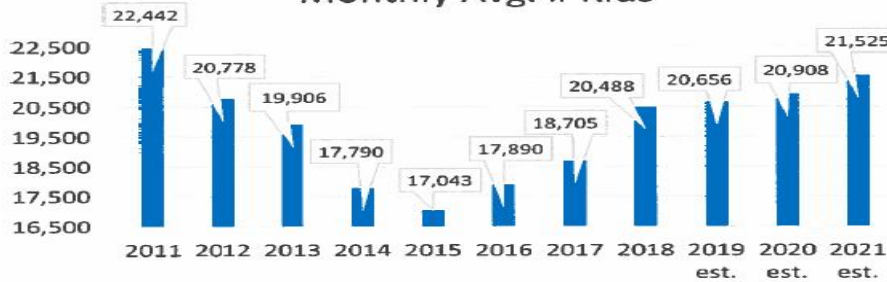


- Star 2 Programs
- Star 2 + FOCUS Programs
- Star 3 Programs Aim High
- Star 4 Programs Aim High
- Star 5 Programs Accredited Non-Cross walked
- Star FOCUS 3 Programs
- Star FOCUS 4 Programs
- Star FOCUS 5 Programs

Child Care At-A-Glance

(revised June 2018)

Monthly Avg. # Kids



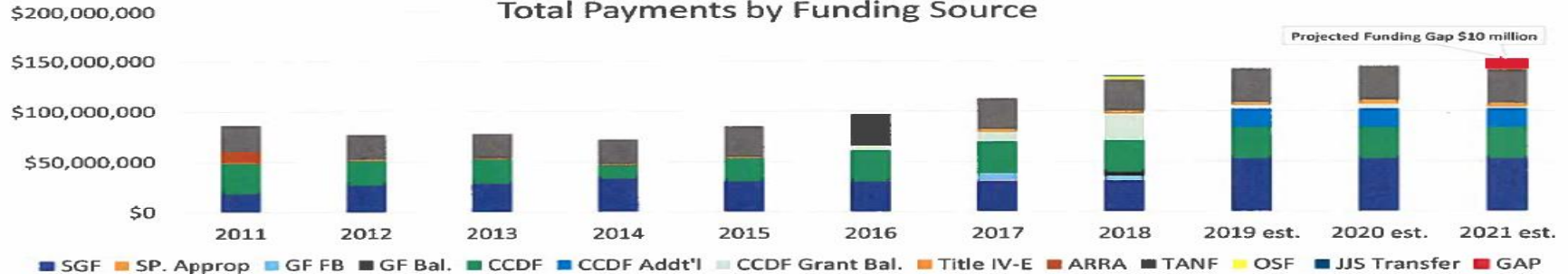
Monthly Avg. Cost per Kid



FY16 – Implemented At Risk Child Care Pilot in Bernalillo, Sandoval & Valencia Counties; rolled out Pull Together
 FY17 – Implemented 12-month Child Care Certification; Implemented statewide At-Risk Child Care

FY15 – Increased infant & toddler base rates; established FOCUS quality differentials; increased rural rates equal to metro
 FY16 – Increased pre-school & school-age base rates; further increased FOCUS quality differentials
 FY17 – More kids in higher quality settings; Recognized a new Accredited Entity for quality – NECCPA

Total Payments by Funding Source



What's Next for New Mexico?



- Clarify FOCUS Standards and Criteria to ensure intentionality*
- Enhance the consultation system by providing additional pre-service and in-service training to consultants*
- Expand Capacity and use of Video-based coaching*
- Expand Mental Health Consultation and support*
- Update verification tool to be used as Self-Assessment and CQI*
- Random Verification of 5 STAR FOCUS and Accredited Programs*
- Due process for STAR revocation*
- FOCUS-TQRIS for Registered Providers*
- Use KEA to measure outcomes for Children in FOCUS programs, in addition to the Early ChildCare Accountability Act measures*

Why is this important?

The Benefits of Child Care

Alive

- From 2015 to date there have been at least 9 infants and school-age children that have died as a result of being left with an inappropriate care taker or unattended afterschool.

Safe and cared for

- In FY17 1.2% of children receiving a child care subsidy were reported as experiencing repeat maltreatment as opposed to 11.1% for the general population.
- Child care basic licensure ensures health and safety of children in licensed or registered child care programs.
- Child care subsidy base requirements, in addition to health and safety, ensure that programs support the social-emotional wellbeing of each child enrolled.
- Child care programs participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, which ensures that children receive nutritious and well balanced meals.
- Child care programs that enter the FOCUS quality system promote and connect families with well child check health care providers. This includes physical and dental checkups. In addition, Ages and Stages Questionnaires are conducted to identify possible developmental delays and disabilities and referrals to IDEA Part B or Part C take place.

After school – when children are in “self-care” for extended hours a day, they are more likely to engage in dangerous and illicit activities.

Prepared to be a contributing member

- Child have regular schedules and activities, which promotes learning and an easier adjustment to formal schooling.
- Time with peers – learn how to problem solve, share and play and learn together.
- Interaction with other adults – very young children learn mostly from adults – child care provides an opportunity for children to see other positive adult role models.
- An extensive study by the U.S. National Institutes of Health found that young children had higher cognitive and academic scores as teens, if they spent time in high-quality child care facilities. High quality child care facilities are defined as those that provide extensive interaction with care providers, support and cognitive boosting activities.
- A recent University of Texas at Austin showed that parents who enroll their child in child care were more likely to be involved in school life as their children got older.
- New Mexico FOCUS is based on National Research, best practices and standards from NM Pre-K and Home Visiting programs.

Strengthens families

- Allows parents to go to school or work.
- Allows parents and caregivers to arrive at work ready to be productive, reducing absenteeism.
- Gives parents and caregivers the opportunity for higher education programs.
- Parents feel part of a community.



Thank you!

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