

NEW MEXICO CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND - *Ensuring Families Thrive*

<https://nmchildrenstrust.org>

REQUEST TO THE 2024 LEGISLATURE

Despite making progress on several indicators of child wellbeing, New Mexico ranks last in the nation. Right now, many families face barriers to resources that strengthen opportunity. The New Mexico Children's Trust Fund (CTF) is part of the long history of working together to solve tough problems. By supporting CTF we can ensure that we are working towards a state where all families thrive. **The CTF board of trustees requests a one-time allocation of \$10 million with \$6 million for the CTF endowment and \$4 million for the NextGen endowment.**

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

New Mexico Children's Trust Fund (CTF), created by the legislature in 1985, provides multi-year grants to community-based organizations for innovative programs and projects that **prevent or treat child abuse and neglect**. CTF is governed by a statewide 13-person volunteer board of trustees appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. CYFD provides administrative support for CTF and manages grants. CTF receives financial support through the sale of the KID license plate, a portion of marriage license fees, endowment investment returns, and private donations.

CTF also oversees the **Next Generation Fund (NextGen)** which provides one-year grants for programs promoting **positive youth development**. The CTF board appoints members of the statewide NextGen Council who review proposals and recommend grant awards. NextGen grants are funded from investment returns on the NextGen endowment.

The CTF board has taken steps to improve CTF's visibility such as creating an independent-of-CYFD website; is actively working on marketing campaigns to sell more KID license plates; and has put in place investment policies to better manage the endowments. The board continually visits its strategic plan and updates it as opportunities present themselves. CTF is an active member of the *national* CTF Alliance and works with Prevent Child Abuse America.



JUSTIFICATION

- ⇒ Increased support will provide an opportunity for CTF to have a greater impact on the **prevention of child abuse and neglect** in communities by strengthening families' access to the resources and services they and their children need to thrive.
 - Currently CTF makes grants of approximately \$400,000 per year. In 2020 CTF received 19 proposals requesting \$1,777,494.06. CTF was able to fund 4 programs totaling \$380,000.00 each year for 4 years within current available funding. This allocation would add **\$270,000 per year** to the available funds. Next Generation Fund grants are usually made every year with a recent total awarded of \$120,000. This allocation would add up to **\$180,000 in additional funds** for granting.
- ⇒ A larger budget will enable CTF to support more organizations and entities in rural and tribal communities, including providing technical support to apply for funds. This will better foster connections with other service agencies in the state.
 - **Funds could support critical needs in communities, including gaps in health and behavioral health services, workforce development** and other areas that can benefit children and families. Because CTF is mandated to fund innovative projects and programs, we are committed to working with the Early Childhood Care and Education Department on innovative upstream programs that can support families early and prevent child maltreatment.
- ⇒ The legislature has not made an allocation for the CTF endowment in years. Until the legislature creates an additional revenue stream for the NextGen Fund, the only income available for grants comes from returns on its small endowment. **There is a huge need in our state for programs that give young people opportunities for positive development.**
- ⇒ CTF KID plate experiences significant competition amongst other specialty plates; additionally, revenue from marriage license fees declined dramatically during the pandemic and has not rebounded.