

The Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Well-Being in New Mexico

Before the COVID-19 pandemic reached New Mexico, the state had just begun to make critical investments in our families and children after a decade of stingy spending had driven us to last in the nation for child well-being. COVID-19 is threatening this progress and has quickly exacerbated existing disparities along racial and economic lines, with people of color and families earning low incomes disproportionately impacted. Even as the state grapples with the pandemic and loss of revenue from the resulting economic recession, lawmakers must maintain funding for key health, education, and public safety services for all families, and safety net programs for the children and families who are hurting the most.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY

- 51% of New Mexican adults in households with children have lost employment income since March.¹
- At least 38,000 children were excluded from receiving a stimulus payment because a family member was an immigrant without documentation.²

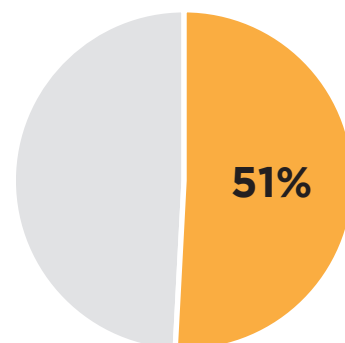
HOUSING INSECURITY

- 26% of New Mexican adults in renter households with children were unable to make last month's rent payment; compared to 12% of adults in households without children.³

FOOD INSECURITY

- Over a five-week period, an average of 17% of New Mexican adults in households with children lacked food sometimes or often.⁴
- As many as 34% of New Mexico children are projected to be food insecure in 2020 as a result of COVID-19. In 2018 that rate was 24%.⁵

Half of New Mexican adults in households with children have lost employment income since March.¹



PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Pediatric visits have declined, and fewer childhood vaccines have been administered due to the pandemic's stay-at-home orders, leaving children in danger of vaccine-preventable diseases.⁶

MENTAL HEALTH

- 40% of New Mexican adults with children in the home felt anxious, stressed, or on edge nearly every day – or more often than not – over the past week.⁷
- Children and parents are experiencing increased anxiety due to school and child-care closures from the pandemic, as well as isolation and other concerns.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- The pandemic has resulted in a drastic drop in the number of child abuse reports in New Mexico. Children are spending nearly all of their time at home, and with less interaction with other adults, especially teachers, it is harder for youth to report abuse or for adults outside the home to notice the signs.⁸

EDUCATION

- 9% of New Mexican adults in households with school-aged children rarely or never have a device available for educational purposes; 8% rarely or never have internet access.⁹
- 1 in 5 New Mexico school kids did not respond to school or teacher emails after schools moved to distance learning in March, and more than half of students were not participating in distance learning by the end of the school year.¹⁰



MORE THAN 1/2
OF NEW MEXICO STUDENTS WERE
NOT PARTICIPATING IN DISTANCE
LEARNING BY THE END OF THE
2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR.¹⁰

1 U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 8-12 Average. Experienced and Expected Loss of Employment Income by Select Characteristics: New Mexico

2 "Essential But Excluded: How COVID-19 Relief has Bypassed Immigrant Communities in New Mexico," New Mexico Voices for Children, April 2020

3 U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 8-12 Average. Last Month's Payment Status for Renter-Occupied Housing Units, by Select Characteristics: New Mexico

4 U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 8-12 Average. Food Sufficiency for Households with Children, in the Last 7 Days, by Select Characteristics: New Mexico

5 "The Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity Interactive Map," Feeding America, June 3, 2020

6 "Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Routine Pediatric Vaccine," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2020

7 U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 8-12 Average. Symptoms of Anxiety Experienced in the Last 7 Days, by Select Characteristics: New Mexico

8 Attributed to CYFD spokesperson Charlie Moore-Pabst in "Social distancing leads to a drop in child abuse reports," *Albuquerque Journal*, July 28, 2020

9 U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 8-12 Average. Computer and Internet Availability in Households with Children in Public or Private Schools, by Select Characteristics: New Mexico

10 "Learning Loss Due to COVID-19 Pandemic," Legislative Finance Committee, June 10, 2020