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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Ferrary/Thomson/Romero,
A/Jaramillo/Lara LAST UPDATED _____
ORIGINAL DATE 2/23/23

SHORT TITLE Reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences BILL NUMBER House Bill 420

ANALYST Klundt

APPROPRIATION* (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY23	FY24		
	\$1,140.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent version of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill

House Bill 420 (HB420) appropriates \$1.14 million from the general fund to the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) for expenditure in fiscal years 2024 through 2027 to facilitate coordination among providers and improve access to and expand the capacity of existing support services for families in Dona Ana County to reduce rates of adverse childhood experiences.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1.14 million contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY27 shall revert to the general fund. However, if the funding contained in this bill is used to fund services, recurring revenue may be necessary beyond FY27. Establishing a new grant program could create an expectation the program will continue in future fiscal years.

It is unclear what specific programs and services would receive funding from this appropriation because a broad array of children and family services could reduce adverse childhood experiences.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The U.S. Health and Human Services Department reports:

The foundational ACE Study was conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente in the mid-1990s with a group of patients insured through Kaiser Permanente. The initial study focused on how traumatic childhood events may negatively affect adult health. The 17 thousand participants surveyed were asked about their experiences with childhood maltreatment, family dysfunction, and current health status and behaviors. The ACEs Pyramid on the left side of the image below represents the conceptual framework created, which illustrates how strongly ACEs are related to a person's wellbeing throughout their lifespan. The ACE study found a direct link between childhood trauma and adult onset of chronic disease, incarceration, and employment challenges.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, parental drug use, parental incarceration and other issues that occur before age 18 years. ACEs can affect a person's mental and physical health, well-being, and success in adulthood. New Mexico's children and youth experience the highest rates of ACEs in the nation.

DOH reported:

Prevalence of ACEs in NM

From 2020 to 2021, New Mexico children (ages 0-17) were significantly more likely to have experienced two or more ACEs (27.2 percent experienced two or more ACEs) than the nationwide child rate (17.2 percent experienced two or more ACEs) ([NCSH ACEs in New Mexico](#)). The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) collected data on ACEs among New Mexico adults in the 2019 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS); an estimated 67.6 percent of New Mexico adults experienced at least one ACE, and nearly one in four adults (23.8 percent) experienced four or more ACEs ([Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) Among New Mexico Adults](#)).

The ACE that most New Mexico adults experienced was emotional abuse or verbal abuse with 36.4 percent of adults saying that an adult, such as a parent, ever swore at or insulted them, or put them down. The second most common ACE was having divorced or separated parents (30.4 percent). Physical abuse (having a parent ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt them in any way) and having a household member who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, were the third and fourth most common ACEs (29.0 percent and 28.9 percent, respectively) ([Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) Among New Mexico Adults](#)).

Child Abuse and Neglect

In fiscal year 2022, for every 1,000 children under the age of 18 in Doña Ana County, approximately 16 were abused or neglected which is higher than the state rate (11 per 1,000). In the same timeframe, of all substantiated allegations of child abuse, 24 percent were for physical abuse, 3 percent were for sexual abuse, and 73 percent were for physical neglect ([NM KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK 2022](#)).

Child Sexual Abuse

A recent analysis of [Sex Crimes in New Mexico](#) found a total of 2,520 sexual assault charges filed in 586 new cases of sexual assault in New Mexico district courts in 2021. Criminal sexual penetration comprised most (47 percent or 1,195) of the charges filed. Among these, 14 percent (350) were among minors, (ages 13-17); 19 percent (489) were among children (ages <13); and 1 percent (31) were incest (age undocumented). Criminal sexual contact of a minor comprised 33 percent (825) of sexual assault charges filed, followed by sexual exploitation of children, 9 percent (217). There were 1,992 sexual assault charges disposed in 594 cases of sexual assault. “Disposed” is a legal term which means that a final judgement, such as conviction or dismissal, has been determined. The percentage of cases disposed in 2021 is a 43 percent increase from the number of cases disposed in 2020 (415), as court operations began to return to pre-pandemic procedures following the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions. Of the disposed sexual assault charges in 2021, most (47 percent or 928), were criminal sexual penetration. Of these, 21 percent (424) were among children (ages 17 and under); 12 percent (238) were among minors, (ages 13-17); and 1 percent (21) were incest (age undocumented). Criminal sexual contact of a minor comprised 30 percent (588) of sexual assault charges disposed, followed by sexual exploitation of children, 9 percent (183).

Sexual Violence

In 2021, 11.7 percent of high schoolers (grades 9-12) in Doña Ana County reported that they had been sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, and 9.0 percent reported that they had ever been forced to have sexual intercourse (in lifetime) (pre-published data provided by the Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey manager in the Injury and Behavioral Epidemiology Bureau).

Social Determinants of Health

Social and economic factors such as income level, housing or food insecurity, level of education, access to healthcare, environmental factors and quality of relationships are also referred to as [social determinants of health](#) (SDOH). These conditions in which people live, work and play can influence health and well-being throughout a person's lifetime.

Economic Stability

In terms of poverty and food security, lower childhood socioeconomic status is associated with a greater risk of ACEs/maltreatment ([Relationship between childhood socioeconomic position and adverse childhood experiences \(ACEs\): a systematic review](#)). In Doña Ana County, 34 percent of children live at or under the federal poverty level (FPL), and 29 percent of children experience food insecurity ([NM Voices for Children - Doña Ana County Fact sheet, 2022](#))

RELATIONSHIP

Senate Bill 49 (SB49) appropriates \$1.14 million from the general fund to the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) for expenditure in fiscal years 2024 through 2027 to facilitate coordination among providers and improve access to and expand the capacity of existing support services for families in Doña Ana County to reduce rates of adverse childhood experiences.

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