



Build Them Up

Education and Workforce Policy for New Mexico's Boys and Young Men

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“What we’re learning is that when we don’t think about boys and just assume they’re going to be OK because they’ve been running the world and they’ve got all the advantages relative to the girls – and all of which has historically been true in all kinds of ways. But precisely because of that, if you’re not thinking about what’s happening to boys and how are they being raised, then that can actually hurt women...

We rightly have tried to invest in girls to make sure that there’s a level playing field and then they’re not barred from opportunities. But we haven’t been as willing, I think, to be intentional about investing in the boys. And that’s been a mistake... if we do better by our boys and we’re producing stronger, more confident men, that’s gonna be good for our girls and our women as well.”

Barack Obama

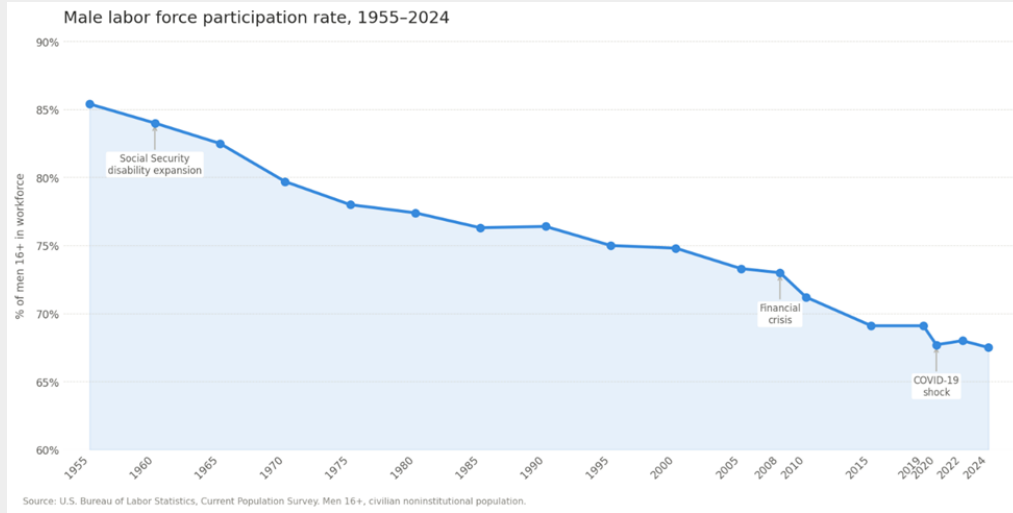


The Numbers

- 40% of men are depressed.
- 44% had thoughts about suicide in the last 2 weeks.
- Men are 3.5-4X more likely to kill ourselves than women.
- We use and get addicted to drugs more- 70% of opioid OD's by men.
- 15%-28% of young men admit to having no close friend.
- 93% of prisoners and 70% of those living on the street are men.
- We are addicted to porn, and more obese.
- 97% of mass shooters are young men.

We die sooner.

Economy



- In 1960, almost every guy who could get a job, did. Since then, increase in the number of men who can work, but don't.
- 64% of young men 16-24 were in the job market in 2014. Now? That number is only 56%.
- Now close to 40M men completely out of labor force.
- 2x the amount of men aged 25-34 live with their parents than women.

Economy Cont.

- Men choose occupations fixing stuff. AI/Robots making those jobs less available.
- Men: 80% of Comp Sci majors. Since 2022, 25% of entry level coding jobs switched to AI. Also, financial planning & legal support... both trending male.
- Men: 71% of Manufacturing jobs. MIT & BU project that AI & robotics will replace 2 M manufacturing workers globally by 2026. By 2030, half of assembly line, packaging, & quality control positions may be automated, with assembly line employment projected to decline from 2.1 million in 2024 to just 1.0 million.

Education

- Female students are outperforming males at every level of education. NCES longitudinal data show that 46.4% of high school girls took either an AP or IB course, compared to only 37.8% of high school boys . Roughly 70% of high school valedictorians were female last year.
- Boys are 2x as likely to be suspended out of school, and 4x more likely to be expelled. If you dropout of high school, you are 8x more likely to end up in the correctional system.
- Men who never finished high school spend way more time (23% of weeks) not working or looking for a job than those with a high school diploma (15% of weeks) or with an Associate's Degree (11% of weeks).

Education Cont.

- College enrollment today is 57% female, with a 61% share of graduates.
- Men receive just 39% of BA degrees... the lowest male share on record & roughly equivalent to what women received in 1970.

Supporting Boys/Men: Not A Zero Sum Game



“Helping boys and men is the right thing to do in itself. But it is also the right thing to do for women and girls. In the long run, a world of floundering men is not likely to be a world of flourishing women. Broadening the gender equality movement to include men will not hinder the progress of women. Failing to, just might.”

Melinda Gates

A zero-sum game is a situation where one group or individual's gain is exactly balanced by another's loss, resulting in a total sum of gains and losses equal to zero. Helping boys and men is NOT one of these scenarios with women.

We can walk and chew gum at the same time.

What Can Help?

Teaching:

Recruiting men into teaching has a double impact - jobs for disengaged men and more male teachers as quality role models.

Better educational opportunities for young men - The research is clear about the benefit to students when teachers look like they do.

Pre-Apprenticeships:

Men are consistently choosing the trades as a higher education pathway... but are failing to complete their training at alarming ways. More quality pre-apprenticeships will increase retention.

Male Teacher Numbers. Low and Falling

The overall share of male teachers in US public schools declined from 30% in 1987 to 23% in 2022.

Current Numbers:

- Elementary schools: 89% female, 11% male.
- Middle school specifically: about 72% female, 28% male.
- High school specifically: roughly 60% female, 40% male

Female teachers are more likely to teach in generalist subjects like math and natural science; male teachers are focussed on social sciences, physical education, and technical/vocational subjects.

Consequences

“Assignment to a same-gender teacher significantly improves the achievement of both girls and boys as well as teacher perceptions of student performance and student engagement with the teacher's subject.”

Dee, Thomas S. (2007). "Teachers and the Gender Gaps in Student Achievement." *Journal of Human Resources*, 42(3), 528–554.

“Male teachers can sometimes earn their male students’ trust in a different way, or at a higher rate. And therefore they can naturally form stronger relationships. Part of being a good, effective teacher is forming strong, trusting relationships with your students.”

Gershenson, Seth, Stephen B. Holt, and Nicholas W. Papageorge. (2016). "Who Believes in Me? The Effect of Student–Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations." *Economics of Education Review*, 52, 209–224.

What Other States Are Doing

Dallas ISD. [Male Residency Program](#).

The Male Residency Program is a paid residency designed to provide candidates with a best-practice residency experience. As a non-traditional pathway into teaching, participants are placed with highly effective mentor teachers and supported through co-teaching, coaching, and cohort-based learning. This structure allows them to build skills, confidence, and their own teaching style before taking on a classroom independently.

Duval County: Jacksonville Public Education Fund. [“The Ones”](#).

“JPEF has a goal to recruit and retain 1,000 diverse male educators by 2025 in an effort to close the teacher diversity gap in Duval County.

JPEF’s original research in 2021 showed Black and Hispanic male teachers made up less than 10% of DCPS teachers, while Black and Hispanic students made up about 60% of the student body. The Duval County numbers mirror those across the country, where the shortage of diverse male teachers is also seen.”

What Other States Are Doing (Cont.)

New York City. [Men Teach.](#)

“The Young Men's Initiative, together with Department of Education, City University of New York, and Center for Economic Opportunity, excitedly announces the launch of NYC Men Teach to recruit and unite Black, Latino and Asian men committed to educating today's diverse student population; supporting each other's professional and leadership development; and to empowering the communities they serve.”

Maryland. [Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant Program](#)

“\$19 million in grants to boost teacher recruitment, with a particular focus on recruiting male teachers. The funding comes from this year's budget through the Excellence in Maryland Public Schools Act, which Moore signed into law, and the program is built to expand teacher and staff pipelines, boost diversity in the profession, and establish apprenticeships.”

Curtis Valentine.



Curtis Valentine President of the Male Educator Network & Policy Institute (MEN).

Leads the organization's work to put men in education on the national agenda — advancing research, shaping policy, and building coalitions to recruit and retain a new generation of male educators. MEN is an initiative of the American Institute for Boys and Men.

Goal: 30% of new teachers are men by 2030.

Apprenticeships

The US has approximately 650,000 active apprentices. NM contributing with 2,607.

- [American Staffing Association](#): 33% of U.S. adults would now advise a graduating high schooler to attend vocational/trade school, versus 28% who'd recommend a four-year college. 1st time trades out-recommended college.
- [American Student Alliance](#): Interest in vocational schools, apprenticeships & technical boot camp programs more than tripled, from 12% in 2018 to 38% in 2024.
- [Harris Poll, 2026](#): Six in 10 Gen Zers plan to pursue jobs in construction, electrical, HVAC, plumbing, building maintenance and manufacturing, among other trades.

Construction trades are over 90% male.

Problem: Retention Rates

[US DOL 2021](#): Non-completion (dropout/cancellation) is roughly 65–76%, cumulative over the full length of the apprenticeship (typically 2–5 years).

Research identifies financial hardship, social isolation, and lack of mentorship as the leading reasons apprentices, disproportionately young men, drop out.

The higher education pathway young men are pursuing more has an unacceptable number of dropouts.

How Pre-Apprenticeships Help

[2011 Australian Pre-Apprenticeship Survey](#): Students who complete quality pre-apprenticeship 23% more likely to finish construction apprenticeship program.

[Kelly, Wilkinson, Eyo-Idahor & Williams \(2022\)](#), *Journal of Applied Social Science*: “We further find that non-financial services, ready supplies, and childcare services have a positive impact on completion, with receipt of non-financial support having the largest impact on completion.”

More Pre-Apprenticeship Opportunities Increase Apprentice Completions

NM Building Trades Apprentice Readiness Program



Courtenay Eichorst: Business Manager of UA Local 412, representing more than 2,000 plumbers, pipefitters, and HVAC professionals across New Mexico and El Paso. President, NM Building & Construction Trades Council. Fed Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Economic Advisory Council.

Joan Baker: Director of Outreach & Engagement for UA Local 412, Member, NM Mexico Building Trades and Construction Council.



Asks

1. Serious discussion, study, and policy proposals on how to increase and retain male teachers.
1. Increased funding and support for Educators Rising Career Technical Student Organizations to recruit and retain more teachers - including men and men of color.
1. Triple allocation for Dept of Workforce Solutions for pre-apprenticeship programs from \$600k to \$1.8M.