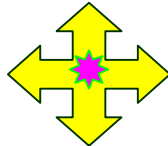


# Project FLECHA

## Family Leadership in Education, Culture and Healthcare Access



## Family Handbook



Written by Louise Kahn, RN, MSN, CPNP

Illustrated by Teodoro Butler

Contributor: University of New Mexico's Family Development Program

Adapted with permission for use by Parents Reaching Out



**Parents Reaching Out**

*Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family*

**Summer 2008**

# Welcome

Parents Reaching Out is proud to become a partner with Project FLECHA\* as we work with families in communities across New Mexico. We thank Louise Kahn, author of Project FLECHA materials, and her team for their continuous support, guidance and generous permission to use their materials as we begin our journey.

Every family had greatness inside of them—a wealth of experiences to give us hope, skill, knowledge and power! How do we tap these experiences as resources that will help families excel? How can we use what we know to help others?

As parents, we all want our children to reach their highest potential in life with a sense of belonging, purpose, well-being and an education! Along the way, we connect with a variety of systems in the hope of getting supports or services to help us on our journey. But we cannot expect systems to do it alone! We must realize and embrace our own strengths, skills, talents and dreams. We must acknowledge where we have been to know where we are going. We must know where we are going in order to get there.

We can build a strong bridge to the future for our children through the decisions and involvement that we invest today. Together we will go on a journey through family, education, health, and share how to access and navigate these systems. You do have choices. You are not only making a difference for your child and family—YOU ARE THE DIFFERENCE!

Destiny is where preparation and opportunity meet! Life has a way of preparing us for this moment and time. Now we have the opportunity to create change for positive outcomes that will impact our children lives for years to come. Like a potter's hand, let's shape a destiny of academic success, well-being and promise for our children! Welcome to FLECHA

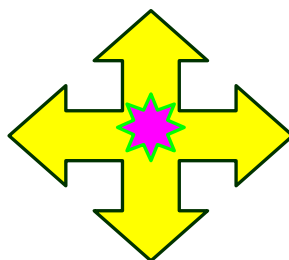
## **Families Make A Difference for Children in New Mexico!**

Parents Reaching Out builds family leadership in New Mexico through grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement as the Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC); the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs as the Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC); and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau as Family to Family Health Information Center F2FHIC.

Our work is also funded by grants from the New Mexico Department of Education and the New Mexico Department of Health. This booklet represents collaborative partnerships in these grants and with Project FLECHA. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

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Project FLECHA (Family Leadership in Education, Culture and Healthcare Access) and the FLECHA Curriculum has been supported, funded, and incubated by the New Mexico Community Foundation and the New Mexico Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (NM SPARK), an Initiative of the NMCF funded by the W.K.Kellogg Foundation, the McCune Charitable Foundation, and the Daniels Fund. Additionally, this curriculum is based upon work funded by the RWJ Executive Nurse Fellows Program, a national program supported by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with direction and technical assistance provided by The Center for the Health Professions, University of California, San Francisco.

The human catalysts for DREAMERS are the parents, teachers and encouragers that dreamers encounter through out their lives. They are invaluable in the quest to turn dreams into REALITY!!!!

Through telling YOUR story, you are the catalyst for change, hope, and positive outcomes for our children—our future!

# Introduction

This manual has been made to be used with the four-part “Project FLECHA” curriculum for parents of young children. It has information about resources to help families to get and do some of the basic things they need to raise healthy children who are eager and able to learn in school and at home.

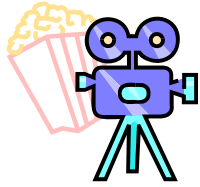
This curriculum has been developed with the knowledge **that families themselves can make the biggest difference for their children’s success** – by learning how the health care and education systems work, by using their family and cultural strengths to support their children’s journey through early childhood and the school years, and by becoming **LEARNING ADVOCATES** for their own children and others in their community by getting involved.

The New Mexico SPARK Program  
has defined “**Learning Advocate**” this way:

**A Learning Advocate respects, cares for and nurtures the child through an intentional process that builds upon the child’s strengths. The Advocate looks for opportunities to help move the child forward by knowing, listening to and supporting the child, through observation of the child’s unique needs and interests, and actively seeking resources to meet them. The *Learning Advocate* is the voice for the child until the child can voice for him/herself.**

The **long-lasting and purposeful role** of the Learning Advocate is supported by ***NM SPARK*** and ***Parents Reaching Out*** by providing assistance with skills-building and information about available resources for parent advocacy.

A Learning Advocate **seeks answers** to their concerns about their children's learning and education, and is **willing to take risks and consequences for their child**.



## FLECHA Video

*Think about the ways that you are a Learning Advocate.*

Advocating for your child means being the most important member of the team of teachers, educators, health care providers and others who will help your child to grow up – you will be the constant one. Others will come and go in your child's life. Knowing your child the best, you will need to let others know about your child's uniqueness and what is best for him or her.

A lot of attention is being paid to what is now called "the achievement gap", or the difference in how well minority children do compared with non-minority children in school and into the workplace. Most of the work has been focused on literacy and how schools can help children succeed.

Parents must be the major part of the solution – only they can build on their own strengths and empower themselves to be advocates for their children, to work for and to demand better health care, better education and better environments for the children in their communities to thrive.

"Empowerment is a social action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life and social justice."

(Wallerstein, 1992)

Parents and families should be the leaders of the effort to close New Mexico's achievement gap, and in the creation of New Mexico's future leaders.

Some of the ideas in this parent leadership program may seem new, or too small to make a difference in your child's success. But remember,

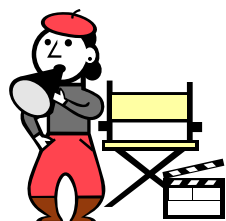
***"the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step"..***  
(Lao Tzu)

Your child needs you to be on the journey for the first steps, so that later on, he or she can walk and then run on ahead. Families provide the foundation of strength, the support and protection children need as they go out into the world.

"If you do what you always did,  
you will get what you always got".

Kenneth W. Jenkins  
President, Yonkers NY NAACP

This training will allow you to learn from the experiences of other families in your community, and for you to work on solving some of the problems that make school and learning hard for young children and their families.



## **Activity**

# **Setting Ground Rules for the Training Comfort and Learning Styles Issues**

# Notes



## Class 1

# “THE PROBLEM”: Educational Disparity (The Achievement Gap)



New Mexico is a minority/majority multicultural state where 67% of the children are racial minorities:

51% are Hispanic,  
12% are Native American,  
2% are African American and  
2% are Asian,

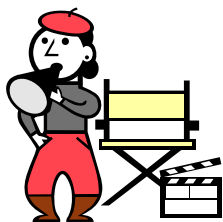
while only 33% are white non-Hispanic.

Despite their high numbers, children of color in New Mexico tend not to fare as well as their white counterparts due to the numerous *disparities* they face.

*Disparities* are often created and maintained both intentionally and inadvertently through policies and practices that contain barriers to opportunities. We call this structural racism. Structural racism is evident in New Mexico as unequal outcomes in the health, success and wellness of children of color.

Source: New Mexico Race Matters Coalition

*Disparity* means a lack of equality between people or things.



## Activity

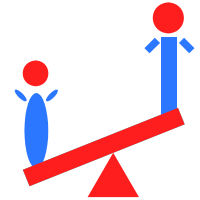
### Jelly Bean Jars and Graph Discussion

Jelly Bean Jars concept by Dr. Margaret Montoya,  
University of New Mexico Law School

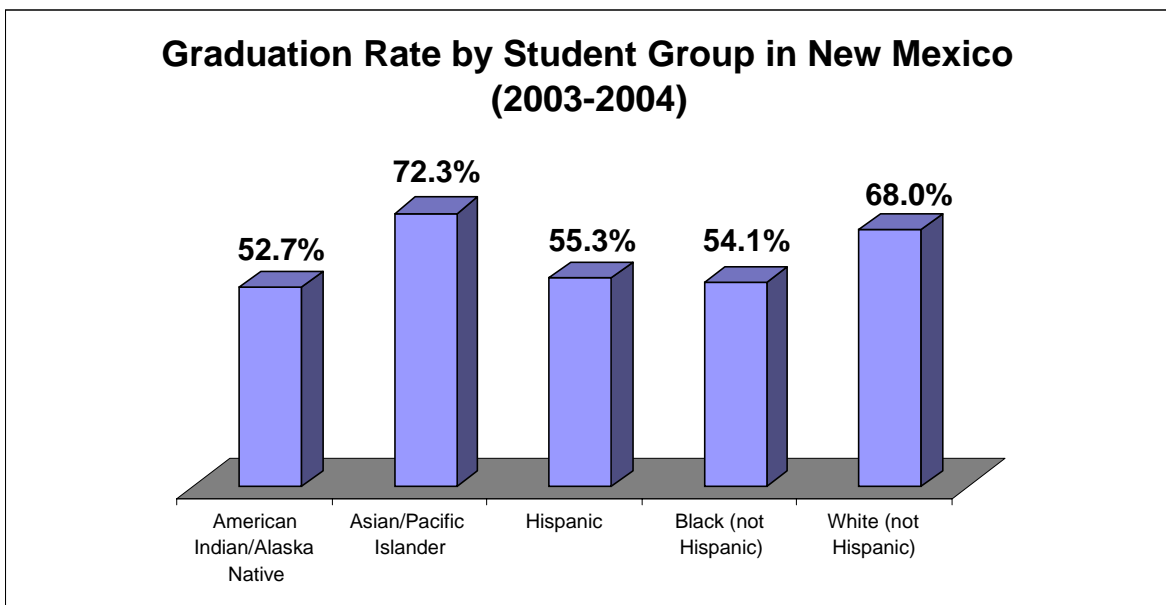
What do you think may be causing this to happen?

**What can we do to help more of our children be more successful in school?** A lot of people are trying to figure out why children in New Mexico are having a lot of trouble in school, and why so many of them are not finishing high school and not getting their diplomas. There are many reasons for this, but one fact remains:

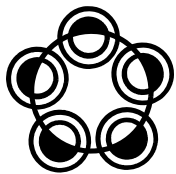
Children of families who are poor or who are of minority cultures in New Mexico (African American, Native American, Mexican or Hispanic, and Asian) seem to have more difficulty getting through school.



If you look at the graph below, you see that less and less kids of minority cultures make it through to the end of high school, and even less get to go on to college.



Source: [ProjectsinEducationResearchCenteredweek.org](http://ProjectsinEducationResearchCenteredweek.org)



## **Talking Circle Activity**

### **Who Do You Come From?**

Talking Circle begins with the facilitator and follows these rules:

- All members have an equal chance to speak
- All members respect each others' words
- Choice to speak or not to speak



## Group Conversation Cultural Coat of Arms

How do we define “culture”?

Talking Circle to discuss Cultural Coat of Arms and how it represents us and our families, how culture protects us in the larger society, as well as how pigeonholes and stereotypes can oppress us.

### Discussion points:

- Are we encouraged to bring our family history and our ancestors into school with us?
- Is this important for children as they go to school? Why?



Corn Being and Raven  
Courtesy of Harry Thomas,  
OFFCenter Community Arts Studio, papier maché

# Cultural Coat of Arms

*Adapted from the works of Dr. Eric Lopez, Ph.D., New Mexico State University*

*What is a favorite food of your family and/or culture?*

*Share a belief or value that makes your family and/or culture strong.*

*Share your family's and/or culture's greatest accomplishment.*

*Describe an item that represents your family and/or culture.*

*What is important from your family and/or culture that you reflect in your personal style?*

# Notes

## Class 2

# Developing Your Child's Learning Foundation







# Preparing Your Child for Success

## *Part 1: What can parents do to raise healthy children?*

Research tells us:

- Children learn more and have the most brain growth in the first three years of life!! ( Discussion of recent brain growth and development research)
- The most important relationship for a child is his or her relationship with her/his parent or parents (or grandparent if that is their primary parent)

Knowing these facts, what kinds of things do you think are the most important to help your child be the best learner she/he can be?



### **Activity: Flipchart discussion**

#### **Parent's ideas**

*What does your child need to be healthy and ready to learn?*



# Early Intervention Makes a Difference

Source: First Steps fact sheet # 6 by Parents Reaching Out

Early Intervention is designed to help families of infants and toddlers that may have a delay or are at risk of a delay to get off to a good start. Research has shown that the earlier we begin to help, the better the outcomes for your child.

**How do I know if my child could benefit from early intervention?** If you contact or are referred to an Early Intervention provider your child will be evaluated by a team that includes you, your family and professionals in the field of early childhood development to see if he or she is eligible for Early Intervention services. In New Mexico, these services are part of the statewide Family Infant Toddler (FIT) system administered by the Department of Health. You can accept some services and decline others. It is up to your family to decide if and when you want to begin early intervention services. We encourage families to contact the NM Department of Health Family Infant Toddler Program: 1-877-696-1372 (toll free) or website: [www.health.state.nm.us/ltsd/fit](http://www.health.state.nm.us/ltsd/fit)

Early Intervention supports a child's learning and development during the important time from birth to three years of age. (The brain grows the most during the first 3 years of life). Early intervention can help with the development of children who have delays or assist in preventing delays or even some disabilities in children who may be at risk due to medical or environmental concerns.

**Who pays the costs for Early Intervention Services?** Some Early Intervention services are provided at no cost to families by law. Some services are paid for by Medicaid or insurance or based on a sliding scale. Families are never denied services due to inability to pay.

## **Why is Early Intervention important to my family?**

The information you learn will help you become your child's first and best advocate!

- You will learn ways to address the developmental concerns of your child within your daily routine.
- You will learn from specialists how to support and promote your child's development and get additional information about your child's development through evaluations and assessments.
- You will connect with other parents through various support groups.
- You will learn about other services like child care, health services, and family support.



To learn more about Early Intervention, call Parents Reaching Out on our toll free number 1-800-524-5176 or visit our website: [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

## ***Part 2: Advocating for Your Child's Health***

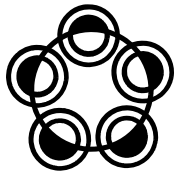
A healthy, happy child is ready to learn! In order to help your child to be as healthy as she or he can be:

1. Try to make sure your child:
  - eats a healthy diet - apply for Food Stamps and/or WIC if you don't have enough money to buy food - see the information on pages 21, 22 and 23.
  - gets plenty of rest and has a regular bed time
  - has chances to use his or her big muscles to run, jump, climb steps and other outdoor activities
  - has chances to use her/his small muscles by using crayons, cutting with child scissors, playing with play doh or tortilla dough or other "small motor" activities
2. Sign your child up for Medicaid (SALUD) if she/he is eligible. Make sure your children stay enrolled. Medicaid is one of the most complete insurances for children. (information about signing up and staying enrolled is on page 24). Medicaid covers dental care for children. Dental health is very important for a child's long term health. A dental examination is recommended by 2 years of age, and sooner if any dental problems are noticed. Make an appointment for a checkup well in advance, since there is a shortage of dentists in our state. Note: If you need a dentist who accepts Medicaid, please call: 1-888-997-2583.
3. Ask your provider for a developmental screening on your child at least every year to find out if your child's development is going along as expected. If your child is showing delays in development, you can ask for your child to have a more in-depth evaluation through the Family Infant Toddler Program (FIT). For information on the FIT Program call the Toll Free number for the NM Department of Health Family Infant Toddler Program 1-877-696-1372 or visit their website: [www.health.state.nm.us/ltsd/fit](http://www.health.state.nm.us/ltsd/fit)

4. If your child is over three, call your local school district to ask about the Child Find or other program in your area where you could have your child evaluated if you are concerned that your child is not developing appropriately. Your child's medical provider should know how to do both the developmental screening and where to get an evaluation done. Don't wait for your provider to arrange this if you feel it is needed. For more information about Child Find or how to request an evaluation for your child, contact Parents Reaching Out at 1-800-524-5176 or 505-247-0192.

**Why is this important?** There is a strong connection between health and educational success.

- Poor children in New Mexico (87% of whom are ethnic minorities) are more likely to lack access to adequate health care, adequate nutrition and educational opportunity.  
- 2004 NM Voices Minority/Majority Report
- "Health is the basis for job productivity, the capacity to learn in school, and the capability to grow intellectually, physically and emotionally"  
-World Health Organization Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, 2001
- Poor children lose 30% more school days than non-poor children, are more likely to be admitted to a hospital and have longer stays, once admitted, and uninsured children have 25% more school absences.
- At least 20% of children identified as problem learners have undetected vision problems.  
-National Parent Teacher Association and American Optometric Association
- 70% of juvenile offenders in a study population had undetected and untreated vision problems!!  
- Journal of Behavioral Optometry



## Talking Circle Activity

### Sharing Health Care Stories

**Some ways to get the most out of your child's and your own health care appointments:**

- Try to see only one or two providers. If your child has to see someone different every time you go in, they will never be able to develop trust in that person, and you will have to keep starting over again and again with each new person.
- Make sure to take your child to the Well Child Checks. Providers are supposed to do developmental screening, vision and hearing testing, check for low iron and lead in the blood, and other screenings. These tests may find problems that can affect learning early, and will help your child be more ready to learn. The chart on page 19 shows the exams and screenings that should take place at certain ages during well child checks. Ask your provider about these tests.
- Ask as many questions as you need to so that you understand what you are being told. Be clear with the provider and provide full information.
- Try not to feel ashamed if you don't understand what the provider is saying – lots of people don't understand medical words. Providers need to learn how to speak more clearly to people they take care of or they need to provide someone who can interpret. It is your right to get the information in words you can understand.
- Make a list of your questions before you go to your appointment or while you wait in the clinic, so you won't get nervous and forget what you wanted to ask the provider.

**Always remember that you know your child better than anyone else. You can tell if your child is having problems or changing in ways that worry you.**

**YOU ARE THE EXPERT ABOUT YOUR CHILD.** Your provider should be your partner in your child's health

**If you do not feel your child is getting the health care they should or if you aren't communicating well with the medical provider, try these steps:**

1. If you have a choice in your community, change providers. You may have to change your Medicaid HMO in order to do this, or you may not. Ask people you know and trust who they take their kids to, and if they have had better experiences. There are some helpful ideas on page 25.
2. Call your Medicaid Salud provider member services number and let them know that you are not happy with the services your child is receiving and that you would like to switch doctors. You can call for free with questions, complaints, concerns and grievances to the Medical Assistance Division at 1-888-997-2583.

**We invite you to call Parents Reaching Out.** We are the *Family to Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC)* for New Mexico. We offer workshops and family friendly publications on many healthcare topics. Please call 1-800-524-5176 to speak with a family liaison, attend a workshop or receive free materials.

**Family Health Care Tips (Fact Sheets)**

1. Advocacy and Health Care
2. Teen Scene: Communicating with Doctors
3. Prepare Your Child for Doctor Visit
4. DD Waiver
5. Medicaid
6. SSI (Social Security Supplemental Income)
7. Preventing Medical Errors
8. Transition Health Care
9. HIPPA—What Does It Mean?
10. Parents-Questions to Ask Your Child's Doctor
11. Handling Medical Appointments
12. Mi Via
13. What is EPSDT?

# Health Supervision Visit (Birth to Five)

The chart below shows the recommendations of the Committee on Standards of Child Health Care of the American Academy of Pediatrics. These are guidelines for health care providers. The star shows the age of the child that exams are typically performed. Based on the child's health history, some types of exams may take place earlier or more often.

AGE	2-3 Wks	2-3 Mos	4-5 Mos	6-7 Mos	9-10 Mos	12-13 Mos	14-15 Mos	16-19 Mos	23-25 Mos	3 Yr	4 Yr	5 Yr
<b>History</b>												
Initial	At First Visit											
Interval	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
<b>Measurements</b>												
Height/Weight	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Head Circumference	★	★	★	★	★	★			★			
Blood Pressure										★	★	★
<b>Sensory Screening</b>												
Vision (Sight)			Gross Screening							★	★	★
Hearing			Gross Screening							★	★	★
Developmental Appraisal	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Physical Exam	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Discussion & Counseling	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Dental Care Assessment			Gross Screening							★	★	★
Dentist's Exam									★	★	★	★
Nutritional Assessment	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Immunization Assessment	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
<b>Procedures</b>												
Tuberculin Risk Assessment							★		★	★	★	★
Hematocrit or Hgb						★			★	★	★	★
Urinalysis										★	★	★
Newborn Screening	★											
Sickle Cell						★						
Lead Screening							★		★			

## Communication

You hold the keys to your child's success. These keys include knowing the service providers, educators and others in your child's life, establishing good communication and a building good relationships. These keys will open many doors and ensure that your child and family is supported by services that fit your needs. Remember these basics for effective communication.

It is two way.

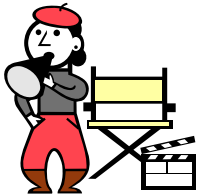
It involves active listening.

It reflects the accountability of speaker & listener.

It utilizes feedback.

It is free of stress.

It is clear.



### Group Activity

### Practicing communication strategies

## The Right Question—

We need good information to make informed decisions and get the services or supports that will help our child succeed. The best way to get information is to ask questions and listen to the answers. Asking "the right question" will help get specific information. It is helpful to know when to use close-ended or open ended questions.

**Closed-Ended Questions** are answered with a simple "yes" or "no" or with a one word answer.

**Open-Ended Questions** require more explanation. They cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" or a one-word answer. These questions usually begin with words like who, what, where, why or how.



## Healthy Families: The Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Program helps many low-income households buy the food they need to stay healthy, productive members of society. Food Stamps are simple to use when you purchase food products at your grocery store.

The Federal Government sets the rules for who qualifies for Food Stamps and determines the amount of Food Stamps that you can receive each month. The Human Services Department (HSD) will help you to determine whether or not you qualify for Food Stamps. This normally depends on how much money you earn each month, and it also depends on what you own.

### Basic Food Stamp Rules

- You must have proper identification
- You must be a U.S. citizen or a qualified lawful resident
- You will have to list who lives and eats with you (your household)
- You will have to provide information about how much money your household receives each month
- You will have to provide information about what your household owns (property, bank accounts)
- You will have to provide information about what your household pays for things like rent, utilities and child care.
- Work program participation is required for some Food Stamp recipients
- The house you live in does not count for Food Stamp eligibility
- There are special rules for the cars and trucks you may own

**How do I ask for food stamps?** You need to fill out an application. You can use this same application to ask for other kinds of assistance, such as free medical care. Fill in as much information as you can, then turn it in to your local HSD office. Applications for assistance are at your local HSD office. These offices are listed in your telephone book under State Government, Human Services Department. You can also call this free number (800) 432-6217 or visit the Human Services Department website at: <http://www.state.nm.us/hsd/isd/>

**Can I get food stamps right away?** You may receive Food Stamps in as soon as seven days if:

- You have very little or no money
- Your shelter costs are more than the money you earn
- You are in a migrant worker household

**What happens after I ask for food stamps?** You will be asked to come in for an interview with an eligibility worker in about ten days. Your assigned worker will give you a list of things you need to provide. This information will tell your worker about you and your household so he or she can determine if you qualify for Food Stamps. Bring as much of the requested information as you can to the interview. This will help us to help you faster. If, after your interview, you need to provide more information, your worker will make a list of things you need to do. Your worker will explain the time allowed and ask you to gather the information as soon as you can. If later, you still need more time, or you can't get the information required, let your worker know as soon as possible.

**When will I know if I can get food stamps?** You will be notified by letter within 30 days as to whether or not your Food Stamp application was approved. If you do not agree with the letter, you can ask for a Fair Hearing on the decision. Remember, our job is to serve you. It is our policy to ensure that everyone who applies for and qualifies for Food Stamps receives these benefits in a timely manner and in accordance with the law.

**What is the EBT card?** When you are approved for Food Stamps, you will be issued an Electronic Benefits Card (EBT). Your EBT card is used like a bank debit card. Each month your Food Stamp allotment will be deposited into your EBT account. Use this card to purchase food items at most grocery stores.

**Nutrition Education:** The Nutrition Education Program can help you stretch your Food Stamp dollars. You can also learn tasty and nutritious new recipes. Call (877) 993-3637 to find out about free classes in your area.

## Healthy Families: Is WIC for YOU?

WIC is the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). It is a federal program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, and the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division. In New Mexico, other WIC Programs are also available through Indian Tribal Organizations. WIC provides supplemental food to program participants, along with nutrition education, information on breastfeeding, reviews of your child's health and development and referrals to health and social programs.

**Do I Qualify?** You must meet the following criteria:

1. Live in New Mexico. WIC participants usually receive services in the county where they live (U.S. citizenship is not a requirement for eligibility)
2. Be a Pregnant, Breastfeeding or Postpartum woman, an infant under one year of age or a child less than 5 years of age. (Parents, step-parents, guardians, and foster parents of infants and children under 5 can apply for their children)
3. Meet the income guidelines. Households with incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty income level are eligible. WIC determines income based on gross income. WIC counts all of the members of a household, related or non-related. WIC counts an unborn baby as a household member.
4. Be at nutritional risk. WIC participants receive an initial health and diet screening at a WIC clinic to determine nutritional risk. WIC uses two main categories of nutritional risk: 1) medically-based risks such as history of poor pregnancy outcome, underweight status, or iron deficiency anemia, and 2) diet-based risk factors such as poor eating habits which can lead to poor nutritional and health status. Participants will be counseled at WIC about these risks and the outcome influenced by nutrition education and nutritious foods provided by WIC.
5. Participants must apply in person.

*To find out if you qualify, schedule an appointment at the WIC office in your area. To apply for WIC, you must provide: proof of residency, proof of identity, proof of income etc. Visit the WIC website: <http://www.health.state.nm.us/phd/wicsite/index.php>*

## Healthy Families: New Mexi Kids

**New Mexi Kids** is no cost or low cost health care coverage for children under 19 years of age. If your household income is less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, health care services are provided to your child at no cost. If your household income is between 185% - 235% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, some of the health care services your child receives may require that you make a co-payment at the time each service is provided. Preventative services, such as Tot to Teen Health Checks and immunizations do not require a co-payment.

**New Mexi Kids** pays for regular check-ups, doctors visits, dental visits, hospital care, prescriptions, glasses and hearing and vision exams. Other services may be covered if they are determined to be medically necessary.

**How to Apply for New Mexi Kids:** You can apply for **New Mexi Kids** at most clinics, hospitals, primary care providers and schools. You can also visit your local Income Support Division office or call **New Mexi Kids** toll free hot line 1-800-977-2583.

New Mexico is one of the states that allows "presumptive eligibility". This means that the individual who processes the application is allowed to presume that the family will qualify for **New Mexi Kids** based on their statements and begin health coverage while the application is processed. Once your child is formally approved for coverage, he or she is eligible for 12 months of coverage, regardless of any changes in family income.

*If your child has health care insurance, do not drop it.* In some instances, **New Mexi Kids** may be able to supplement the coverage you already have. If you drop your health insurance, you might not be eligible for **New Mexi Kids** and you may not be able to resume coverage with your present insurance company.

**What to Bring When You Apply for New Mexi Kids:** You will need: proof of the past four weeks of income (if working); your child's Social Security number, proof of any other health insurance you may have and proof of your child's age.

# Navigating the Medicaid System

*(This information is provided by Parents Reaching Out as New Mexico's Family to Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC))*

One of the most important tools to help you find your way through the Medicaid Systems is the Member Handbook that is provided to you by your Managed Care Organization (MCO). Your Member Handbook is a good resource when you have questions. Take time to read it and become familiar with the information it contains.

## **When do I call Member Services of my Managed Care Organization?**

- To request case management. If you need help with multiple appointments, transportation, have a lot of medical services or need help coordinating your care.
- To request a change in your Primary Care Physician (PCP) at anytime. Generally, the change will go into effect on the first of the following month.
- Or to make complaints. You can also make complaints by calling the Medicaid office: 1-888-997-2583.

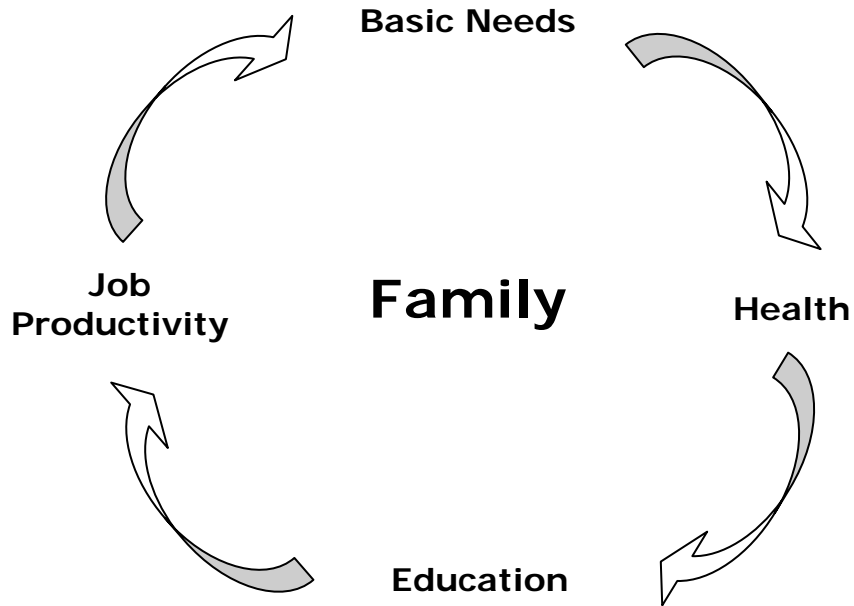
### **Tips for working with your Primary Care Physician (PCP)**

When you call to make an appointment, you may request a longer appointment time if you have concerns regarding your child's health or if you need extra time to ask questions. *You have the right to a second opinion, if you disagree with your provider, or if you want a different provider to look at your treatment plan.* There is no charge if the provider is in the network, but you will need a referral from your PCP. If you need to see a specialist, it must be within the network. If there is not a specialist in the network, your PCP will send a form to your MCO for approval.

## **Other important information:**

- To get medications paid for that are not on the formulary list you must have prior approval from your Managed Care Organization (MCO).
- To obtain durable medical equipment, your Primary Care Physician (PCP) must get prior approval from your MCO and you need a referral.
- If you are traveling outside of NM but within the United States & need care, your MCO will cover emergency services. Contact your MCO as soon as possible to let them know.
- The MCO will pay for cosmetic dentistry if deemed medically necessary by the dentist, and the dentist must get prior approval.

*Usually you would have to wait until open enrollment to change your MCO, although members, including children with special health care needs may request to "break a lock-in". You would need to write to the Medicaid office and make that request.*



**Get ready for Class 3!**

**Please bring pictures of your family to our next class!**



## Class 3: Being a Learning Advocate



## **What Do Children Need**

Children need security.

Children need to trust themselves and others.

Children need to be independent.

Children need to develop interests.

Children need a positive self image.

Children need to feel competent.

Children need to acquire values.

Children need to be a part of a group.

Children need to solve their own problems.

## **Common Characteristics of Successful Families**

They are affectionate. Members express their love and caring for one another.

They have a sense of place, with a stable environment.

They pass on their cultural heritage.

They honor their elders.

They promote and perpetuate family rituals.

They communicate with one another.

They respect differences among their members.

***Support the bond between parents and their children.***

Developed by Anna Maria Garcia with information from *Caring for Young Children*  
by P. Click and J. Parker

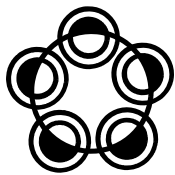


## **Class 3: Being A Learning Advocate for Your Child**

All children are born ready to learn. Children begin to learn as soon as they are born, and they keep learning every day. Literacy is a part of everyday living. If you have to put your child into care away from home, try to find the best place for your child's learning - see page 28 for ideas - safe, comfortable, loving, responsible, educational toys, training of staff, good nutrition

Being "ready for school" is a process that begins when your child is born and continues as he or she learns from their experiences with the people and the things in the world.

Sometimes we think babies are just playing until they go off to school, but they are learning A LOT!!!!



### **Talking Circle Activity**

### **Stories of Starting School**

As we talked about in the second class, your child's health is the foundation for successful learning.

Other things that parents can do to be a learning advocate:

#### **Social and Emotional Development**

- Having chances to be with other children
- Learning to dress him/herself
- Helping your child learn to take turns
- Having regular routines at home and being consistent so they feel safe and confident
- Make rules and be consistent so children will know what is expected

## **Communicating, Learning and Literacy**

- Telling your child stories about him or herself, and about when you were little
- Listening to your child
- Encouraging your child to listen when others talk
- Give your child lots of chances to draw and scribble
- Give your child jobs to do and praise him or her for finishing each job. Charts that list jobs with spaces to place stickers for jobs completed are great to pair with your praise!
- Take your child to different places in your town or neighborhood. Visit the library and get a library card. Take your child with you to run errands. Talk about what you're doing and why—talk about colors, count things, ask him to tell you what he sees around him.
- Sing songs in the car, dance together in the kitchen, encourage your child's creativity and enjoyment of life every day!!

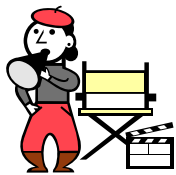
**The most successful students are those whose parents are involved in their educations.**

*Ways to be involved at home:*

- Read to your child and talk about what you've been reading
- Participate in family activities
- Let your child participate and listen to adult conversations
- Watch television together and share your thoughts about what you see, so it isn't just taking in information, but thinking and talking about what is seen. Limit violent and scary TV to young children. The world is scary enough already without it.

### *Ways to be involved at school:*

- Maintain a presence in the school – make frequent visits, make sure the teacher knows who you are, and that you go to parent-teacher conferences. Try to reschedule if you can't make it at the time or the day they schedule you.
- Step in when appropriate. Occasionally there is not a good match between a child and a teacher. Try talking with the teacher first. If that doesn't help, you need to speak with the school principal. **You need to be your child's advocate.**
- If your child is often coming home from school sad or upset, you need to find out why and try to fix it. If your child can't tell you what is going on, you may need to speak to the teacher, the school counselor or go in to observe what is going on for your child at school.
- Pay attention to how your child learns. There are many ways of learning. You may have to let the teacher know that your child needs something other than what the teacher is providing to your child.



## **Activity**

### **Family Scrapbook**

**Materials needed:** Scissors, Paper, 2 hole punch, paper bags, rubber bands, sticks, stickers and markers. If old magazines or newspapers are available, you can use these to cut out pictures for your scrapbook.

## **Make a Scrapbook for your Family Learning Activities**

Goals for Your Family

Goals for Your Child

Family Stories



Note: Scrapbook idea courtesy of Bob Kanegis and Liz Mangual of FutureWAVE  
(Working Toward Alternatives to Violence Through Entertainment)

## 10 Signs of a Great Preschool

If your child is between the ages of 3 and 6 and attends a child care center, preschool, or kindergarten program, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) suggests you look for these 10 signs to make sure your child is in a good classroom.

1. Children spend most of their playing and working with materials or other children. They do not wander aimlessly, and they are not expected to sit quietly for long periods of time.
2. Children have access to various activities throughout the day. Look for assorted building blocks and other construction materials, props for pretend play, picture books, paints and other art materials, and table toys such as matching games, pegboards, and puzzles. Children should not all be doing the same thing at the same time.
3. Teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day. They do not spend all their time with the whole group.
4. The classroom is decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing with invented spelling, and stories dictated by children to teachers.
5. Children learn numbers and the alphabet in the context of their everyday experiences. The natural world of plants and animals and meaningful activities like cooking, taking attendance, or serving snack provide the basis for learning activities.
6. Children work on projects and have long periods of time (at least one hour) to play and explore. Worksheets are used little if at all.
7. Children have an opportunity to play outside every day. Outdoor play is never sacrificed for more instructional time.
8. Teachers read books to children individually or in small groups throughout the day, not just at group story time.
9. Curriculum is adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help. Teachers recognize that children's different background and experiences mean that they do not learn the same things at the same time in the same way.
10. Children and their parents look forward to school. Parents feel secure about sending their child to the program. Children are happy to attend; they do not cry regularly or complain of feeling sick.

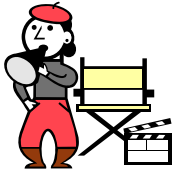


*Ask if the program is accredited by NAEYC.* NAEYC accredited programs complete a rigorous self-study and external review to prove that they meet standards of excellence in early childhood education. For more information, visit the NAEYC web site: <http://www.naeyc.org/>

## Class 4: Supporting Your Child at Home and at School



## Class 4: Supporting Your Child At Home and School



### Activity

### The Apple Exercise

Three groups describe an apple:

Group 1 - a picture of an apple

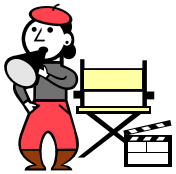
Group 2 - a plastic model of an apple

Group 3 - an apple



Which of these methods provides the most information?

How do we learn best?



### Activity

### Human Knot

- Form a circle and hold the end of a rope in your left hand.
- Put your left hand with the rope in the center of the circle.
- Holding on to your rope tightly, reach across with your right hand and grab the end of someone else's rope. (Knot works best if everyone is connect to 2 different people)
- Don't let go!
- As a group, untie the knot. (It can be done!)



## Your Unique Child –

### Young Children and Temperament Styles:

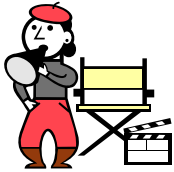
Researchers have found that while all children show the same behaviors at some time, some children are more likely to show certain behaviors. They found that about 60% of children fall into one of three groups.

**The Easy Child** – this child has regular eating, sleeping and bowel habits. They are positive about new situations, adapt easily to changes and don't get easily frustrated. They usually are in a good mood, smile a lot and do well in many types of situations.

**The Strong-Willed Child** – this child has irregular eating, sleeping and bowel habits. They are often negative to new situations, and may cry or throw tantrums when frustrated. They are slow to adapt to change, and need more time to get used to new food or people. If pushed to become immediately involved in a situation, they are more likely to become loud, oppositional and aggressive.

**The Slow-to-Warm-Up Child** – this child shows fairly mild negative responses in new situations at first, but slowly comes to accept them over time. They have fairly regular eating, sleeping and bowel habits. These children are different depending on their activity levels.

1. If the child has a high activity level , they don't do well with too little space, rigid schedules, too little physical movement allowed.
2. If the child is "persistent" or likes to stay with an activity until he feels done with it, he will get upset and shows "problem behavior" if interrupted or disrupted too soon without any warning.
3. The child who is distractible will often get distressed if asked to work for long times or at tasks harder than he can handle. If these kids are pushed to become involved right away in a situation, they may withdraw and cling to the parent, refuse to move into the activity, or retreat to a corner of the room.



## Activity

### That Would Be ME!

**What does “temperament” mean? Temperament is a person’s style of being or general nature.**

Your temperament is like a landscape. Just as a river is a river and a mountain is a mountain and a mesa is a mesa, you are whom you are through out your life.

Those of us born with a shy, or feisty, or easy-going temperament remain so throughout are lives. It is basic way of approaching the world. However, just as the elements affect and alter the landscape, our experiences alter and affect our temperament. A river is a river but it grows larger during spring runoffs and floods and grows narrow during droughts.

A person who is born shy might learn to become more outgoing. But if you ask her, she will probably say that she still considers herself shy. A feisty person may learn to become less intense, but her basic nature will still be to jump in and try new things.

Just like a mountain over the years with wind and rains, we may wear down and become rounder.





## Your Child's Temperament

Each infant comes into the world with a particular style of "being". It is called temperament. An infant begins life with a particular temperamental style that influences the way others treat the child and how he or she reacts to the world. Understanding the differing temperamental styles can help adults respond appropriately to their child's behavior and help them to reach their full potential. Temperamental styles can be looked at as developing from a continuum of responses to stimuli.

- **Activity level:** Is the child particularly active or restless? A child who is very active, restless and fidgety might be considered to be at the difficult level. The child rarely slows down and doesn't like to be confined.
- **Quality of mood:** How would you describe the child's basic disposition? Positive and easy going? Negative and fussy? At a difficult level this child would generally be cranky or serious. The child might not seem to get much pleasure from life.
- **Approach/withdrawal:** How does the child react to new experiences or unexpected events? Are they approached with enthusiasm or with hesitancy? If considered difficult, this child would usually be shy and clingy. The child may be stubborn in refusal to try something new.
- **Biological rhythms:** Does the child have more or less regular eating, sleeping and bowel habits? Unpredictable rhythms of hunger and resting times might be a difficulty. This could create conflict at mealtimes and bedtime.
- **Adaptability:** What happens during times of transition and change? The difficult level shows up as anxiety and resistance to change in activity, routine, food, or clothing on a regular basis. These children don't like change and may be particular.
- **Sensory threshold:** How does the child react to sensory stimuli? Does the child get easily or over stimulated by light, noise, smells, tastes, pain, weather, touch, wet diapers? Over sensitive children would be at the difficult level.
- **Intensity of reaction:** How does the child react to stimuli? A child that generally responds to both discomfort and pleasure with great intensity could be considered difficult.
- **Distractibility:** Is the child too easily distracted from an activity? At the difficult level the child has great difficulty concentrating and paying attention, daydreams and tends to forget instruction.
- **Persistence:** Does the child remain focused for extended periods of time? If happily engaged, does the child continue for a long time? When unhappy, does the child persist until needs are met? The child with a high level of persistence would be extremely stubborn and wouldn't give up



## Children's Temperament — Mix & Match

---

Very, Very Active

Very, Very Calm

Very, Very Irregular  
Sleeping and Eating

Very, Very Regular  
Sleeping and Eating

Very Difficult to Distract

Very Easy to Distract

Very, Very Persistent

Not at all Persistent

Very, Very Intense

Very Mellow, Calm

Hates, Hates, Hates  
New Things

Loves, Loves, Loves  
New Things

---

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## **Learning Styles are simply different ways of learning.**

### **Visual Learners: learn through seeing...**

These learners need to see the teacher's body language and facial expressions to fully understand the content of a lesson or conversation.

They tend to prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to see better. They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays (diagrams, charts, picture books, overheads, videos, etc.).

### **Auditory Learners: learn through listening....**

They learn best through lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say. Written information may have little meaning until it is heard. These learners often benefit from reading text aloud or using a tape recorder.

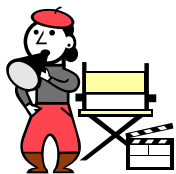
### **Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners: learn through moving, doing and touching**

These learners do best with a hands-on approach to actively exploring the physical world around them. They may find it hard to sit still for long periods and may become distracted by their need for activity and exploration.

**What have you noticed about how your child learns?**

**Is your child the kind of learner who watches a long time before getting involved, or does he just jump right in?**

**How do you learn best?**



**Activity**

**Quick Check of Learning Styles**

(All participants complete the Quick Check of Learning Styles with a follow-up discussion lead by FLECHA trainers.)

# Learning Styles Checklist

## What kind of learner are you?

Read each sentence and put a check next to the ones that best describe:

- What you usually do
- How you usually act

### A. Visual Strengths                      Total for Section A \_\_\_\_\_

- Can put together almost anything with help when using printed or pictured directions.
- Close eyes when memorizing or remembering.
- Notice things around you.
- Good at working with and solving jigsaw puzzles.
- In spare time, prefer to watch television, movie or play a video game.
- Like to see what you are learning.
- Have a great imagination.
- Looking neat wearing color-coordinated clothing is important.
- Can better understand thing by reading about them than by listing.
- Is quiet; rarely volunteer answers.
- Think that the best way to remember something is to picture it in your mind.
- Take many notes in school.

### B. Auditory Strengths                      Total for Section B \_\_\_\_\_

- Love to communicate and talk a lot.
- In spare time, enjoy listening to CD, tape play or radio.
- Remember television commercials, jingles and songs after hearing them once or twice.
- Use rhyming words to remember names or facts.
- Hear spoken directions and follow them quickly.
- Do better in academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes and discussing material than by just reading about it.
- Most likely to read aloud or mumble when reading.

- Have difficulty reading diagrams or maps unless someone explains them to you.
- Very verbal and expressive of feelings.
- Good at picking out sounds: can tell if sounds match when presented in pairs.
- Like to use free time to talk to others in person or on the phone.

**C. Kinesthetic/Tactile Strengths    Total for Section C\_\_\_\_\_**

- Hard to hold your attention, especially when reading, unless the story is full of action.
- Favorite pastimes include sports, active games and building things.
- High-energy person; rarely sit still.
- As a young child, tried to touch everything you saw; like to feel the textures of things.
- Likes to move with music.
- When angry or upset show feelings more with body language, react physically, like stomping out of room.
- Learn best when you can do something. Have a hard time sitting and listening for long periods of time.
- Often use fingers to count off items or write in the air.
- Have difficulty following and remembering spoken directions.
- Appreciate physical affection and encouragement such as a hug or pat on the back.

**Add up the number of check marks in each section.**

- If you checked more in section A than in the other two sections, you learn well visually. This means you learn best by seeing something.
- If you checked more in section B than in the other two sections, you learn best by hearing something.
- If you checked mostly section C, you have kinesthetic or "active doer" strengths. This means you learn best by doing something.

**What is your Learning Style?**

- Visual                       Auditory                       Kinesthetic or a  
 combination \_\_\_\_\_



## **Children and Parents' Educational Rights and Responsibilities**

Let's spend some time together to review the educational rights information on the following pages.



### **Activity**

### **Experiences with the Educational System**

Families are invited to share and discuss their experiences with the educational system.

## Parent's Rights and Responsibilities In Public Education

### You (The Parent) Have These *Rights*:

- To enroll your child in any public school within your district (unless system is under court order to meet certain racial/ethnic balance).
- To visit the school at anytime during the regular hours of the day (as a safety measure, check with the office first).
- To view your child's accumulative file at any time.
- To request the removal of certain items from his/her folder that you may deem personal.
- To request a copy of school board policies; name of each school board member; rules and regulations regarding conduct while-riding the school bus, eating in the cafeteria, etc. to which your child is subject and other pertinent information.
- To object to the use of corporal punishment with your child by school officials.
- To be informed of reasons for corporal punishment, suspension (in- or out-of-school), exclusion or expulsion.
- To inspect and review the academic and psychological records of your child (Special Education).
- To be kept informed, by the school, about your child's academic progress.
- To receive the services of a homebound teacher for your child in the event of a serious injury or illness.
- To hold your child out of school for a religious holiday without it being counted against his attendance record.
- To appeal to the principal or Superintendent your disagreement regarding promotion or retention of your child.
- To request a conference with the principal or any/all of your child's teachers
- To be informed when your child is suspected or having or being able to transmit a contagious disease prior to excluding him/her from school.

## **You (The Parent) Have These *Responsibilities*:**

- To teach your child to respect himself and others.
- To be totally involved in your child's learning.
- To have your child properly immunized against certain illnesses, disease etc. identified by the Department of Health and Environment.
- To have the necessary proof of age documents at the time of registration (entering school for the first time).
- To be honest about your residence, telephone number, and place of employment.
- To have our child at school, on time, everyday.
- To see to it that your child's appearance at school reflects neatness, cleanliness and self-respect in line with the "dress code" policy.
- To discuss, teach, explain, or whatever it takes to get across to your child, the "non-acceptance" of the following while on school property:
  - Disrespect or insubordination toward teachers, principal or other school employees.
  - Violence or the threat of violence directed toward other students, teachers, or designated authority.
  - Physical or verbal intimidation of other students.
  - Sale, possession, or use of alcohol, drugs, and substances represented to be drugs or alcohol, substances for huffing, or drug paraphernalia.
  - Smoking and or the possession of tobacco products, lighters or matches.
  - Persistent disobedience or disorder.
  - Possession of beepers, portable phones, and other electronic communication devices without written permission of the principal.
  - Immoral conduct.
  - Sexual harassment.
  - Theft.
  - Violence
  - Vandalism
  - Gang activities
  - Weapons or weapon look-alikes.
  - Possession of mace or disabling sprays.
- To put in writing your objection (if there is one) to the use of corporal punishment with your child.
- To accept the school's alternative to corporal punishment, which may mean immediate out-of-school suspension.
- To attend readmission hearing following a suspension of your child.
- To stress the proper maintenance of textbooks school properties.
- To pay for the damage or loss of any school property by your child.
- To see to it that your child has necessary school supplies/materials.



# ***Know Your K-12 Education Rights***

## **The Federal Rights of Students and Their Families**

Source: Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)

### **You and Your Child Have Rights**

Education is essential to the development of every child and progress for every community. In the United States, every child is entitled to a free K-12 public education regardless of race, nationality, native language, gender, or immigration status, and is free to enjoy an education without the fear of unlawful discrimination or fear of deportation.

### **The Right of Immigrant Students To Enjoy Equal Access to K-12 Public School Programs**

All children living in the United States have the right to a free K-12 public education. Immigrant children do not need a green card, visa, passport, alien registration number, social security number or any other proof of citizenship or immigration status in order to register for school. It is unlawful for a public school official to require proof of U.S. citizenship for enrollment.

In order to enroll your child in school, you may need to present: A) student medical records - to prove that your child has the proper immunizations; B) documents that show your child's name and age (such as a birth certificate). School officials must not use these documents to prove immigration status for enrollment; C) proof that your child lives in the school district. Schools are required to provide undocumented immigrant students equal access to the same benefits and services as all to other students. If a school official denies your child the right to enroll in a public school or participate in a school program because of his or her immigration status, please contact an attorney in your area, MALDEF's national office at 213-629-2512, or the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-421-3481.

### **The Right to be Free from Unlawful Discrimination**

The law protects you and your child from official government discrimination based upon race, ethnicity, gender, disability, immigration status in K-12 public schools, and/or national origin. If a teacher or school official treats you or your child differently because of one of these factors such that your child cannot receive an equal education, you are protected under federal law. If school officials are aware of severe harassment by other students based upon these characteristics, you are also protected. Discrimination in public schools can sometimes be resolved by meeting with school or district officials, describing the unlawful discrimination, and agreeing to a plan to fix it. If this is ineffective, you should contact an attorney in your area, MALDEF's national office at 213-629-2512, or the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-421-3481.

### **The Right to Understandable School Information for Parents**

Federal law requires states to develop programs to communicate with parents in the parents' native language. This includes the right to a translator for parent teacher conferences. If you require these services, you should ask the school for assistance and/or translation.

### **The Right to Review Student Disciplinary Actions**

Suspension and expulsion from school are the most serious penalties that school officials can impose. If your child is suspended from school, your child has a right to an informal hearing. If your child is expelled from school, you have a right to a formal hearing to which you may bring a lawyer. Federal law requires these hearings to assure that your child is being treated fairly.

### **English Language Learners' Right to Receive an Appropriate Education**

School districts are required by law to develop special programs for children who need English language help. These programs (such as English as a Second Language or bilingual education classes) allow English Language Learners to eventually transfer into regular classes without falling behind in their studies. You may not be able to select a particular method of instruction, but you should make sure that your child is receiving appropriate instruction that considers his or her language ability.

### **Parents' Right to Review School Achievement Data, Participate in School Improvement Activities**

Parents have the right to receive annual school and school district "report cards" that provide information about the academic performance of their child's school and school district. This information must be provided in a language and format that is understandable to you. If a school consistently underperforms on state tests, parents may have the right to participate in school improvement programs. Please contact local school officials if you have questions about your access to these rights.

### **Students' Rights to School Choice and/or Tutoring**

If your child attends a public school that fails to meet state standards for academic achievement, he or she may be able to receive free academic tutoring and/or transfer to a better school. Please contact your local school officials to learn if your child has either of these options.

### **The Right of Disabled Students to Receive Special Education Services**

All students, including those with disabilities, have a right to a free and full public education. If you feel that your child needs special education services because of a disability or if the current services don't meet his/her needs, you may request an evaluation from the school. If, on the other hand, your child is placed in special education classes but does not require these services, you should meet with school officials to have your child placed in appropriate classes.

### **The Right to Confidential Education Records**

Federal law prohibits schools from distributing your child's education records to anyone outside of the school for non-educational purposes without your consent. This includes police officers or immigration officers (unless they get a court order). If your child changes schools, however, officials from his or her new school may review his or her student records.

### **The Right to Review Your Child's Education Records**

You have a right under federal law to inspect and review the education records of your child. If you find that the records are inaccurate or misleading,, your school district must give you an opportunity to challenge the information as well as to insert your view into the record.

### **The Right of Low-Income Students to Receive a Free or Reduced-Price Lunch**

All U.S. schools provide free or reduced-price lunches to students from low income families. Ask your school for materials to apply for this benefit.

MALDEF Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
634 S. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90014  
Phone: 213-629-2512 Website: [www.maldef.org](http://www.maldef.org)

Parents Reaching Out offers workshops and publications to help families navigate the education system. Our Resource Center has a free lending library. Contact our Family Liaisons on our toll free number (1-800-524-5176) or visit our website: [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

*What No Child Left Behind Says About*  
**Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications**

Source: Did You Know Fact Sheet # 8 by Parents Reaching Out

***No Child Left Behind*** says that schools/districts must provide parents in Title I schools with certain information about the qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who work with your child. Ask your school principal if your child's school receives Title I funds!

**Parents have a Right to Know!** At the beginning of each school year, the district must notify all parents of students in Title I schools that they may request information about their child's teachers.

Parents have the right to know:

- Whether the teacher meets state qualifications for grade/subject that he or she teaches
- Whether the teacher has been certified under an alternate or provisional (temporary) program, rather than through a regular college or university teacher certification process
- The teacher's major in college; what degrees he/she has earned and in what subject area(s).
- Whether paraprofessionals provide any services to their child and if so, what are their qualifications
- Title I schools must notify parents if their child is assigned to or has been taught more than 4 weeks in a row by a teacher who has not met "highly qualified" standards.

**Teacher Qualifications** The law says that all teachers who teach academic subjects; hired in Title I programs must be highly qualified. They must have:

- A bachelor's degree
- Be certified to teach in New Mexico.
- Have passed a state test on their knowledge of the subjects they teach and their teaching skills (reading, writing, mathematics at elementary school levels)
- Middle and high school teachers must either pass a state test in the subject they teach or have either college or graduate-level course work equal to a college degree in the subject or advanced certification.

***Paraprofessional Qualifications*** NCLB requires that paraprofessionals (educational assistants) working directly with students in academic subject areas also must be highly qualified. They must have: a high school diploma or GED and completed two years of college or community college or an Associate's degree or higher or passed difficult tests given by the state or the school district that shows their knowledge of and ability to teach reading, writing and mathematics.

To learn more about No Child Left Behind, call Parents Reaching Out on our toll free number (1-800-524-5176) or visit our website: [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org). Our **Did You Know** fact sheets and our **Family Connections** series help families make informed decisions their child's education and be involved with their child's school.

# Be The Best That You Can Be!

Being a Learning Advocate takes practice. We all learn by doing. Take time to get to know yourself so that you can expand your skills. You may want to ask someone that you know and trust to help you critique your skills. *Constructive criticism* is a way to help us use our strengths to tackle areas that seem to challenge us.

## My Strengths:

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**My Small Challenges:** (Things I need to work on just a little bit to be an effective Learning Advocate for my child.)

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**My BIG Challenges:** (Things I really need to work on or learn more about to be effective.)

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## My Action Plan for Learning

(What did you learn during the FLECHA classes that you will use as a Learning Advocate for your child?)

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## Resources—Websites

New Mexico Public Education Department, <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/>

New Mexico Department of Health, <http://www.health.state.nm.us/>

Office for Civil Rights, <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR>

Social Security Administration, <http://www.ssa.gov/reach.htm>

US Department of Education, <http://www.ed.gov/>



Beach Center on Families and Disability, <http://www.beachcenter.org>

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

Family and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE), [www.fape.org](http://www.fape.org)

Family Village; <http://familyvillage.wisc.edu/>

Family Voices, <http://www.familyvoices.org/>

Kids Count, <http://www.kidscount.com>

Kids Source, <http://www.kidssource.com/>

MUMS National Parent to Parent Network; <http://www.netnet.net/mums/>

National Information Center for Children & Youth with Disabilities, [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

Pacer Center, Inc., [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

Parents Reaching Out, [www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

Raising Resilient Kids, [www.raisingresilientkids.com](http://www.raisingresilientkids.com)

# New Mexico Resource Directory

**Brain Injury Association of NM, Inc.**  
11000 Candelaria NE Suite 113W  
Albuquerque, NM 87112  
505-292-7417 or 1-888-292-7415

**Carrie Tingley Hospital**  
1127 University NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
505-272-5200 or 1-800-472-3235

**Center for Development and Disability**  
UNM Health Sciences Center  
2300 Manual Blvd. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
505-272-3000 or 1-800-827-6380

**Department of Health  
Children's Medical Services**  
2040 South Pacheco  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
505-476-8868

**Department of Health –Long Term  
Services  
Family Infant Toddler Program**  
1190 St. Francis Drive  
P.O. Box 26110  
Santa Fe, NM 87502-6110  
1-877-696-1472

**Developmental Disabilities Supports  
Division (DDSD) Regional Offices**  
Albuquerque Metro 1-800-283-5548  
NW Gallup Office 1-866-862-315-7123  
SW Las Cruces Office 1-866-742-5226  
SE Roswell Office 1-866-895-9138

**EPICS**  
Education for Parents of Indian Children with  
Special Needs Project  
P.O. Box 788, Bernalillo, NM 87004  
(505) 867-3396 (V/TTY)

**Family Voices**  
2340 Alamo SE, Suite 102  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
Voice: 505-872-4774 or 888-835-5669  
Fax: (505) 872-4780

**Native American Disability Law Center**  
3535 East 30th St. Suite 201  
Farmington, NM 87402  
(505) 566-5880; (800) 862-7271 (in NM)

**New Mexico Community Foundation**  
343 East Alameda  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 820-6860 [www.nmcf.org](http://www.nmcf.org)

**NM Children Youth & Families Department  
(CYFD)**  
P.O. Drawer 5160  
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5160  
Family Services: 505-827-7659

**NM State Department of Education**  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, NM 87501-2786  
505-827-6541

**NM School for the Visually Handicapped  
Early Childhood Programs**  
230 Truman NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87108  
1-800-437-3505

**Parents for Behaviorally Different Children**  
5905 Marble NE Suite 8  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
505-265-0430 or 1-800-273-7232

**Parents Reaching Out**  
1920B Columbia Drive SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
505-247-0192 or 1-800 524-5176

**Protection & Advocacy System**  
1720 Louisiana Blvd. NE Suite 204  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
505-256-3100 or 1-800-432-4682

**STEP\*HI Parent/ Infant Program  
(Early Childhood Programs)**  
New Mexico School for the Deaf  
1060 Cerrillos Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87503  
(505) 476-6300

**Value Options**  
Customer Service Line 1-888-251-7511  
[www.valueoptions.com/newmexico](http://www.valueoptions.com/newmexico)

# Parents Reaching Out

*Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family*

As a statewide non-profit organization, we connect with parents, caregivers, educators and other professionals to promote healthy, positive and caring experiences for New Mexico families and children. We have served New Mexico families for over twenty five years. Our staff and Family Leadership Action Network volunteers reflect the unique diversity of the communities throughout our state.

Children do not come with instructions on how to deal with the difficult circumstances that many families experience. Parents Reaching Out believes that families' needs go beyond the bounds of formal services. *What we can offer to each other is uniquely ours. We have all been there.*

## **Our Mission**

The mission of Parents Reaching Out is to enhance positive outcomes for families and children in New Mexico through informed decision making, advocacy, education, and resources. Parents Reaching Out provides the networking opportunities for families to connect with and support each other. This mission supports *all families* including those who have children with disabilities, and others who are disenfranchised. Parents Reaching Out achieves this by:

- ♦ Developing family leadership
- ♦ Connecting families to each other
- ♦ Building collaborative partnerships
- ♦ Providing families knowledge and tools to enhance their power

## **Our Beliefs**

- ♦ Families need support where ever they are in their journey.
- ♦ All families care deeply about their children.
- ♦ Families may need tools and support to accomplish their dreams.
- ♦ All families are capable of making informed decisions that are right for their family.
- ♦ Families in the state benefit from our organization having the staff and materials that meet their diversity.
- ♦ Systems that listen carefully to the family perspective improve outcomes for our children.

We invite all families and those serving families and children in New Mexico to make *Parents Reaching Out your one stop resource for a stronger family.* Our publications, workshops, and Resource Center offer tools for informed decision-making and building partnerships in communities. Our trained staff and network of volunteers are here to serve you.

*Parents Reaching Out is the home of:*  
NM Parent Information and Resource Center (NMPIRC)  
NM Parent Training and Information Center (NMPTIC)  
NM Family to Family Health Information Center (NMF2FHIC)

## **Parents Reaching Out**

1920 B Columbia Drive, SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
1-505-247-0192 ♦ 1-800-524-5176  
[www.parentsreachingout.org](http://www.parentsreachingout.org)

From I-25—take the Gibson Blvd Exit 222 and go East on Gibson. Turn left at the third stop light (Girard). Turn left on Vail. Go one block to Columbia. Turn left on Columbia. Parents Reaching Out is on the east side of the street. Welcome!

