



NEW MEXICO
Early Childhood
Education & Care Department

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Legislative and Budget Priorities



Building a Brighter Future for New Mexico Families and Young Children

The Executive Budget recommends a \$205 million increase in the department's FY26 operating budget to reach over **50,000 families and 86,538 children** with quality early childhood programs and services.

This budget continues to build on the strategic and successful investments of the New Mexico Legislature and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham which have positively changed the lives of tens of thousands of New Mexico families and young children. The Executive Budget will also advance ECECD's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan in the following ways:

*Investments in early childhood education and care yield substantial long-term benefits for individuals and society—a **13% annual return on investment** through improved outcomes in education, health, and economic productivity.*

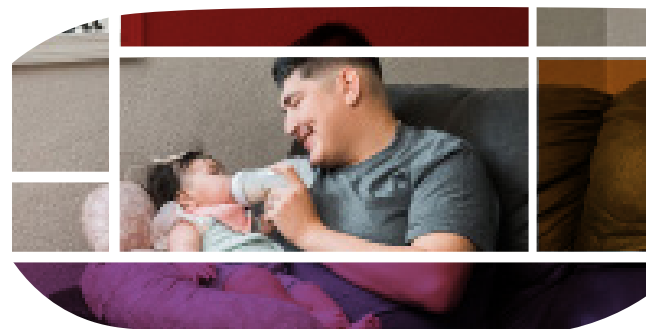
FY26 OpBud Request Alignment with ECECD's Five-Year Strategic Plan

Funding amounts presented are in millions

School Readiness \$186.4 million	\$96.5 Child Care Assistance	\$45.2 New Mexico PreK	\$14.7 Family Infant Toddler (FIT)	\$10.0 Wage and Career Lattice	\$10.0 Home Visiting
	\$7.5 Child Care/PreK Quality		\$2.5 Higher Education Completion		
	FY26 Special Appropriation Requests:				
\$116.6 Million	For Child Care Quality Pilot : raise the wage floor to \$18 an hour (\$73.0), improve ratios and group size (\$14.6), and establish a special needs rate (\$17.0). For Family Infant Toddler (FIT) : professional development and coaching (\$2.0). For Child Care Supply Building : low interest loans (\$10.0).				

Government to Government \$3 million	Language and culturally relevant programs and services
---	--

Family and Community Engagement \$2.5 million	Local Early Childhood Coalitions Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
--	--



Family Infant Toddler (FIT) FY25 Supplemental Funding Request

\$7.6 Million

Funding to Serve 100% of Eligible Children

FIT is a federal entitlement program. This funding is needed to ensure that all children with developmental delays and disabilities receive required services.

\$1.1 Million

Rate Increase for the 4th Quarter of FY25

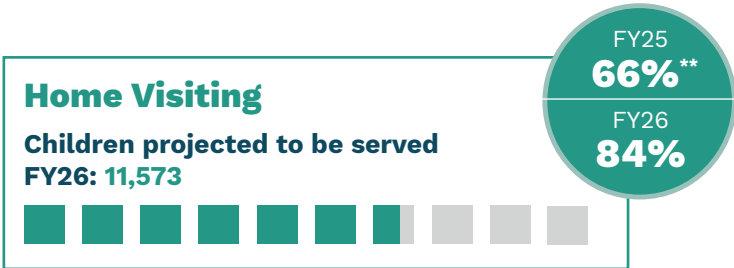
ECECD is requesting funding to support a rate increase for Family Infant Toddler (FIT) providers in the 4th quarter of FY25.

ECECD Programs and Impact

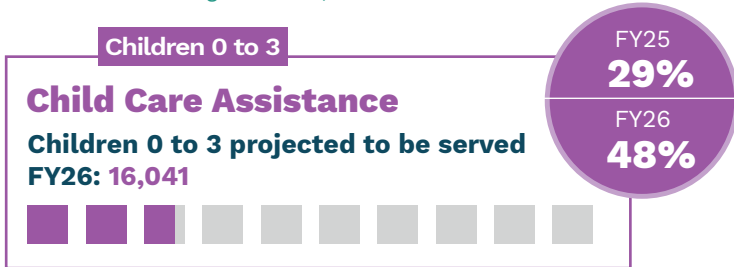
Projected Eligible Children to be Served



* 84% of 4-year-olds and 54% of 3-year-olds served state-wide. Includes NM PreK, Head Start, and Title I



**The percent served reflects the percent of children projected to be served in the highest need population (defined by the percent of annual Medicaid eligible births).



Early Childhood Professionals Workforce Growth

Program	FY25	FY26
FIT	1,000	1,000
PreK	2,660	3,159
Home Visiting	381	465
Child Care	14,791	15,479
TOTAL	18,832	20,103



Follow us: @NewMexicoECECD



Visit nmececd.org for more information.

ECECD Proposed 2025 Legislation

HB71 Increased Distribution from the Early Childhood Trust Fund - Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos

HB71 increases the distribution from the Early Childhood Education and Care Trust Fund from the greater of \$250 million or five percent to the greater of \$500 million or five percent. This will allow New Mexico to continue building and sustaining a universal, high-quality prenatal-to-age-five system of programs and services, reaching over 85,000 children and their families.

SB147 Exclusionary Practices Prohibition Bill - Sen. Harold Pope and Sen. Linda M. Trujillo

SB147 prohibits the expulsion or suspension of children under age five from pre-kindergarten programs or licensed child care facilities for discipline or behavioral reasons. Young children are 3 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than school age children often causing significant disruption to the child's and family's life. This bill protects all children's right to a learning environment by removing the option of disenrolling a child with behaviors that are difficult for adults and requires programs to address those difficult behaviors in a developmentally appropriate manner.

SB66 Criminal Offender Employment Act Exemptions Bill - Rep. Sen. Katy M. Duhigg and Sen. Heather Berghmans

SB66 creates an exemption from the limitations of the Criminal Offender Employment Act for those positions which involve direct, unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults. This exemption would allow for the consideration of misdemeanor convictions such as enticement of a child, stalking, and battery of a household member when processing background clearances for child care providers, caregivers, teachers, and Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) employees.

SB58 Child Care Facility Licensing Act - Sen. Michael Padilla

SB58 strengthens the statutory framework for a universal, high quality prenatal-to-age five care and education system, reduces administrative burdens for providers, and improves access to services for families.

- Transfers the existing Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) child care facility licensing authority from the Public Health Act to the Children's Code and makes limited updates.
- Creates an exemption from the Procurement Code to allow ECECD to reduce barriers for providers in expanding infant and toddler care and aligns payment practices with the private market.
- Updates the Pre-Kindergarten Act to codify existing standards for New Mexico PreK educator qualifications (NM PreK), aligns eligibility across public NM PreK programs, and updates NM PreK application requirements.
- Clarifies through definition that ECECD is the department to which the Early Childhood Care Accountability Act applies.

SJR6 and SB167 Constitutional Amendment Trust Fund Protections and Supporting Statutes - Sen. Michael Padilla

SJR6 will send a proposed constitutional amendment to New Mexico voters to constitutionally protect the Early Childhood Education and Care Fund by placing the fund in the New Mexico constitution as the Early Childhood Trust Fund (ECTF). SJR6 will constitutionally mandate the fund to be spent only on prenatal and early childhood programs and services that serve children until they are eligible for kindergarten.

SB167 supports SJR6 by amending statutes related to the Early Childhood Education and Care Fund to ensure they are consistent with the constitutional protection for the ECTF proposed by SJR6. These statutory amendments will only go into effect if the constitutional amendment is approved by the voters. Together, SJR6 and SB167 will ensure that critical investments for young children are constitutionally protected for generations to come.