



Preamble: *New Mexicans expect our elected officials to make the positive development of our state's children their highest priority. The core of any successful policy for children is supporting their families in providing a healthy, nurturing start to life. This Agenda draws attention to the needs of children and families that must be addressed if all our children's futures are to be secure. We hold our elected officials accountable for acting on The Agenda and will release an annual report to the public on their progress.*

1. **Leadership:** Create a Children's Work Group within the Governor's Cabinet, possibly chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, with appropriate staff support, to establish specific objectives, coordinate services, create policies across departmental lines and maximize the use of available funds for children's services. There must be a functioning mechanism within State Government to continually refocus efforts on children's needs.
2. **Education:** Establish an official State goal of literacy for all New Mexico's children by the end of the third grade and finance expanded early childhood care and education strategies, enriched after school programming and family literacy efforts to reach it.
3. **Health Care:** Charge the new Cabinet Children's Work Group with developing a plan to provide healthcare coverage that guarantees access to appropriate services for all, especially vulnerable populations such as immigrants, children with special health needs and those living in rural and other underserved areas.
4. **Health Care:** Re-establish income eligibility level for the State Children's Health Insurance Program at 235% of the poverty level, without reducing current benefits.
5. **Participation:** Establish a network of regional youth councils and an umbrella State Youth Council. The councils will be a representative voice for youth, advising the Governor, the Legislature and the Cabinet on issues that affect young people.
6. **Poverty Reduction:** Tie enrollment for food stamps and Medicaid to the State's income tax filing process and make enrollment automatic with client permission.
7. **Behavioral Health:** Implement the recommendations of the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, especially to expand funding, develop needed services and recruit and train behavioral health providers to serve this State's children.
8. **Protection:** Fund and undertake a review of the Children's Protective Services Division's Statewide Central Intake System to insure timely, adequate responses are being made to all reports of abuse or neglect of children.
9. **Juvenile Justice:** Declare a moratorium on additional juvenile facilities and reduce the number of youths in correctional institutions by shifting money from them to positive youth development, prevention, diversion and rehabilitation efforts.