



NEW MEXICO FIRST
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New Mexico First and Program SHARE NM Newsletter

Stay Informed and Engaged

May 11, 2020



Caring for Children During a Pandemic

“The current pandemic reinforces the resilience of families, that the right support at the right time makes a difference. In the short term, we need to support families through home visiting programs, food distribution, multi-generational programs, trauma-informed practices, and safe, high-quality childcare for those

who work in essential jobs and those who will be returning to work soon. The crisis also underscored some long-term needs. High-quality and accessible infant/toddler home-based care is vital. Integrating healthcare into early childhood programs, increased pay for the early care and education workforce, and reimbursements for childcare businesses were known needs prior to the pandemic, and the essential nature of this workforce drives home the point that we need to address these issues with sound public policy.” *Diane Denish, Senior Advisor, New Mexico, Strategies 360 and a NM First board member. In her role as Lieutenant Governor, Ms. Denish was instrumental in creating the NM Children’s Cabinet.*



Building Resilience in Children and Families

The COVID-19 crisis has added new stressors to parenting. With parents and caregivers working at home and in the community, both paid and unpaid, the need for additional support to families is evident. With over four decades of research on resilience, we know that protective factors can buffer children from harm and increase the chances they adapt positively to adversities such as this one. Families and communities can [work together](#) to promote these protective factors.

- Consistent, sensitive, responsive caregiving is the most important factor in protecting a child. We need to be there for our children.
- Concrete support in times of need, meeting the basic needs of children and families—such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical and mental health care—is essential. Search for resources [here](#).
- Positive social connections provide support for both children and adults. Physical distancing shouldn't turn into social isolation. Call, FaceTime, write letters to family and friends.
- Knowledge of parenting and child development can help parents respond more appropriately and effectively to children's needs, especially important in times of crisis.
- Supporting parental resilience by meeting parent and caregiver needs is an effective strategy for promoting children's well-being during and after a pandemic. Caregivers, take care of yourselves.
- Social and emotional competence of children involves developing their ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions, establish and maintain relationships, and to contribute. Find ways for children to help in the family and the community.

[Resources](#)



It Takes a Village—Resources for Parents

Knowledge about Child Development

- [0-3 year-olds](#)
- [Children of all ages](#)

Helpful Tips for Parenting Challenges

- Zero to Three offers [tips for families](#) with age-appropriate responses to common questions, a guide to self-care, and activities for young children experiencing social distancing.

- ChildMind has suggestions for Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus in [English](#) and [en Español](#)
- Healthy Children offers [Tips to Keep the Calm at Home](#)

Home Learning Activities. New Mexico Kids has a raft of [home learning resources](#) including a free subscription to Parentivity, with web-based information, games and activities for all families of children from pregnancy to age five. Or check out [Gardening with Kids](#) for fun, education, and healthy activities for children and families.

Childcare. New Mexico's childcare facilities and programs are now permitted to serve all NM families. All childcare facilities are asked to follow reduced group size and health and safety guidelines, and not all are open. To find a childcare center that is open near you, [search this list at New Mexico Kids](#). The list is updated regularly, but changes happen quickly, so call first.

Home Visitors. If you are pregnant or parenting a young child, you may be able to enjoy the services of a free home visitor. Currently, home visits are via the internet, telephone, or email. But home visitors can still provide you with information and home activities, help you find other resources and answer your questions about parenting. To find a home visiting program near you, call 800-691-9067 or visit <https://pulltogether.org/resources-by-county>

Talk to a Friendly Voice. The New Mexico Peer to Peer Warmline puts you in touch with someone who has been there and may have experienced some of the same things you're going through to offer a sympathetic ear and possible advice. Call 1-855-466-7100, 3:30pm – 11:30pm or text 6pm – 11pm every day.

Tips for Families



Grandparents or Relatives Raising Children

If you are a grandparent or other relative raising children, there is a special program to assist you. CYFD's Kinship Navigation program has resources to advise, support, and advocate for you and your family. Visit the [Kinship Navigation website](#).

[Kinship Navigation Website](#)

When Home and Family Are Not Safe

We know that community crises like COVID-19 puts heightened stress on families. With everyone isolated in their homes, tensions increase, and paths to safety are unpredictable and require additional support. If you or someone you know is feeling unsafe at home, help is available. If physical danger is imminent,

call 911. Or call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, text at 22522, or the NM Crisis and Access Line at 1-855-662-7474**. All operate 24/7 and speak multiple languages. All New Mexican domestic violence shelters are open and providing shelter and services. [Locate a program near you.](#)

Child abuse and [neglect rates in NM](#) were already far above the national average. Current reports of child abuse are down, but the fear is that this may be because children are behind closed doors without teachers and other mandatory reporters seeing them every day. Anyone who knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected must report the matter immediately to CYFD's child abuse hotline (**1-855-333-SAFE [7233] or #SAFE from a cell phone**), or to law enforcement or the appropriate tribal identity.

What can we all do to help? There is [a role](#) that each of us can play in keeping children safe and supported during the pandemic. Those who are concerned about possible domestic violence can access this [information sheet](#) from the NM Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

[NM Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)



Tip for Civility: The 9 Rules for True Apologies

The stress and trauma brought on by change, uncertainty, and threats to our health and economic well-being bring out a whole continuum of stress responses. In some instances, COVID-19 is bringing out really incredible creativity, responsivity, and problem-solving. It is also heightening underlying structural inequality, hurt, harm, and injustice in both inter- and intrapersonal levels. At every turn there is an opportunity for rupture and repair in relationships. On an individual level Harriet Lerner, PhD, [identifies 9 rules for true apologies](#) as a resource for people to repair the harm that they have caused to others.

When systems are broken and they wound others by inflicting the harms associated with injustice, we couple apologies with more systemic efforts at reconciliation. Rather than waiting for the perfect time, as one does not exist, the time to contribute to efforts at healing and reconciliation is always now. While

there is no simple solution and reconciliation takes many steps, naming the harm and bearing witness are important places to begin. COVID-19 is [disproportionately impacting communities](#) who have experienced environmental injustice and racism.

Lilly Irvin-Vitela, President and Executive Director provided the parent and family tips. Connect with Lilly at lilly@nmfirst.org.

[Nine Rules for True Apologies](#)



Letter to the NM House and Senate Leadership on the 2020 Special Session of the NM Legislature

On behalf of a broad coalition of individuals, businesses, and NGOs, New Mexico First is pleased to present a [Letter to the NM House and Senate Leadership on the 2020 Special Session of the NM Legislature](#). The intention of the letter is to promote sound democratic processes and outcomes during the special legislative session. With gratitude to our legislative leadership, this broad coalition is offering suggestions to ensure community voices in policy decision-making are heard. If you are an organization that is interested in signing on to the letter, please email Melanie Sanchez Eastwood at melanie@nmfirst.org.

[Read the Letter](#)

Vote Absentee

Absentee voting started. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is May 28. [Go to NMVote](#), which contains the absentee ballot portal.

[Request Your Ballot](#)

Take the Census and Spread the Word!

Take the census and spread the word! Let's work together to ensure every New Mexican is counted in the 2020 Census! Every person in New Mexico needs to get counted to protect federal funding for healthcare, schools, roads, education, and more! It's easy. It's online. It's important! Go to [@ICountNM2020](#) to spread the word!

[Take the Census Today!](#)

Our Mission. Our Values.

Our Mission

To be a catalyst for positive change by engaging citizens in policy and enabling action.

Our Core Values

Meaningfully engaging New Mexicans in public policy; Striving for and respecting consensus; Pursuing and respecting diverse points of views; Ensuring inclusion and transparency; Rising above partisan politics; Changing policy to improve people's lives; Creating an informed citizenry that is powerfully motivated; Reaching out statewide including rural and tribal communities; Partnering with others; Promoting civility and Democracy at its best!



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