

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**

Brian Blalock, Cabinet Secretary

Terry Locke, Deputy Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Improving the Quality of Life for Our Children.

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CYFD RELEASES PROGRESS AND IMPACT REPORT DEMONSTRATING SIGNIFICANT SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENTS

Santa Fe, NM – The Children, Youth & Families Department today released a Progress and Impact Report to update the public on important initiatives and reforms under the leadership of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and Cabinet Secretary Brian Blalock since 2019.

With support from the Annie E Casey Foundation, this report presents qualitative and quantitative data assessing CYFD's progress on its strategic priorities and, specifically, demonstrates gains CYFD is making in keeping children safe and improving overall child wellbeing in the state of New Mexico.

The report shows the improvements that CYFD has accomplished on behalf of New Mexico's children and families, including the following:

- **Made tangible progress focused on rebuilding the community-based mental health services delivery system** for children including substantial increases in high fidelity wraparound, infant mental health, and respite services and launching or re-launching a number of services including multisystemic therapy (MST), mobile crisis intervention, and functional family therapy.
- **Increased the number of children and youth in kinship care placements** as required by federal and state law, including increasing the number of initial placements with kin from 4% in January of 2019 to 40% currently.
- **Decreased the number of young people placed out-of-state** by protective services or juvenile justice systems in congregate care settings by more than half.
- **Reduced vacancy rates for protective services front line worker positions** by half, from 23% in January 2019 to 15.8% on January 1, 2021, and as of July 1, these rates have been further reduced to 11%.
- **Made progress on replacing CYFD's antiquated, twenty-three-year-old data system** by launching two modules in early 2021 with an anticipated full replacement by October 2022 while also phasing out old technology that was a security risk, replacing 1,500 desktops that were on average eight years old.
- **Launched extended foster care** with more than 160 participants to date, a 95% uptake rate, and currently 100% of participants are in stable housing.

- **Oversaw emergency food and shelter needs** during COVID-19 pandemic for the state of New Mexico by providing more than 2.1 million pounds of food and more than 47,000 nights of medical shelter.
- **Established new safety measures** to help prevent child fatalities including expanded SafeSleep campaigns to address the three quarters of child fatalities which are due to the lack of safe sleeping arrangements.
- **Developed new protocols** and tools for staff to better assess the risk levels of abuse and neglect inside the home; provided new training for staff and families to identify potential child/youth suicides; and adopted evidence-based safety programs that are now part of CYFD's standard practices.
- **Reduced the backlog of investigations** as a critical step to support both the safety and well-being of the children and youth who come to the attention of Protective Services. In July 2021, 95% of the pending investigations of child abuse and neglect reports were conducted on-time, at or under 45 days for completion. This compares to only 37% of the pending investigations being on-time in January 2019 when the new administration took office.

The report looks at progress made by CYFD's entire workforce both as it relates to the department's strategic plan, which has been in place since 2019, and the landmark Kevin S. Settlement that child welfare advocates initially filed against the department under the previous administration.

The full version of this report describes the changes and advancements CYFD has accomplished over the past two and a half years, examines the impact this work has had on children, youth and families in New Mexico and explains why these activities are so important.

The entirety of the report can be found here: <https://cyfd.org/docs/CYFD-2019-2021-progressreport-FINAL.pdf>

County-level Protective Services data referenced in the report can be found here: https://cyfd.org/docs/360ANNUAL_FY21_FINAL.pdf

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