

New Mexico Families First Prevention Services Act

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2026



Submitted Pursuant to Section 32A-31-3 NMSA 1978

Prepared by the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department

Submitted to:

- Governor
- Legislative Finance Committee
- Legislative Health and Human Services Committee
- Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee

Executive Summary

The Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) allows states to use federal Title IV-E funding to provide evidence-based prevention services that help children safely remain with their families and reduce unnecessary foster care placements. In September 2025, the U.S. Administration for Children and Families approved New Mexico's Five-Year Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan, authorizing the state to implement its prevention strategy and pursue federal reimbursement for eligible prevention services.

Fiscal Year 2026 marked New Mexico's first year of implementation under the approved Prevention Plan. During the year, CYFD focused on establishing the infrastructure necessary to support statewide implementation, including expanding prevention services, strengthening workforce capacity, implementing evidence-based practices, and developing quality assurance and performance monitoring processes.

This report summarizes New Mexico's implementation progress during Fiscal Year 2026, including the prevention services available, implementation activities, service utilization, fiscal investments, and priorities for continued expansion. As implementation continues, CYFD remains committed to strengthening families, improving child well-being, and preventing unnecessary foster care placements through a coordinated, evidence-based prevention system.

Overview of the Families First Prevention Services Act

The U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) approved New Mexico's Five-Year Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan in September 2025. The plan establishes New Mexico's strategy for implementing the Families First Prevention Services Act by identifying eligible populations, approved evidence-based prevention services, implementation requirements, and quality assurance processes necessary to support federal Title IV-E reimbursement.

The Prevention Plan authorizes New Mexico to provide evidence-based prevention services to children who are candidates for foster care, their parents or caregivers, and pregnant and parenting youth in foster care. The Department selected Motivational Interviewing and SafeCare as the state's initial Title IV-E prevention services and established implementation, monitoring, and continuous quality improvement activities to support effective statewide delivery.

The following sections summarize New Mexico's implementation of the Prevention Plan during Fiscal Year 2026.

FY2026 at a Glance

Item	FY2026 Summary
Federal Law	Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)
State Prevention Plan	Approved by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in September 2025
Reporting Requirement	Section 32A-31-3 NMSA 1978
Reporting Period	Fiscal Year 2026
Lead Agency	New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department
Federal Funding Authority	Title IV-E Prevention Services
Eligible Populations	Children who are candidates for foster care, their parents or caregivers, and pregnant and parenting youth in foster care
Approved Evidence-Based Services	Motivational Interviewing and SafeCare
Primary Implementation Activities	Workforce development, service implementation, quality assurance, data collection, and continuous quality improvement
Focus of FY2026	Building the infrastructure necessary to support statewide implementation of New Mexico's Prevention Program

New Mexico Prevention Plan Implementation

During Fiscal Year 2026, implementation activities focused on establishing the infrastructure necessary to support a sustainable prevention system. This included expanding the prevention workforce, implementing approved evidence-based prevention services, developing policies and procedures, strengthening quality assurance and fidelity monitoring, and enhancing data collection and performance measurement.

CYFD continued implementation of the state's approved evidence-based prevention services, Motivational Interviewing and SafeCare, through trained staff serving eligible children and families. In addition, the Department expanded prevention capacity using In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists, strengthening connections between families and community-based supports intended to improve child safety, family well-being, and permanency.

As implementation continues, CYFD will use performance data, fidelity monitoring, and continuous quality improvement activities to strengthen service delivery, expand statewide access, and maximize federal Title IV-E prevention opportunities.

Implementation Area	Status FY26	Progress
Federal Prevention Plan Approval	Completed	New Mexico's Five-Year Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan was approved by ACF in September 2025, authorizing implementation and Title IV-E prevention claiming.
Evidence-Based Prevention Services	Implemented	Continued implementation of Motivational Interviewing and SafeCare for eligible children and families.
Prevention Workforce	In Progress	Expanded prevention capacity through In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists.
Policies and Procedures	In Progress	Continued development of implementation guidance and operational procedures to support statewide implementation.
Quality Assurance Framework	In Development	Developed quality assurance processes and began creating fidelity monitoring tools. CYFD will partner with curriculum purveyors to support ongoing fidelity monitoring and continuous quality improvement.
Data & Performance Monitoring	In Progress	Continued development of data collection and reporting processes to

		support implementation and outcome measurement.
Statewide Implementation	In Progress	Continued building statewide infrastructure and provider capacity to expand prevention services.

Evidence Based Prevention Models

The following table identifies the evidence-based prevention models approved under New Mexico's Title IV-E Prevention Program Plan. These models represent the services eligible for federal Title IV-E prevention reimbursement and are one component of CYFD's broader continuum of prevention and family support services.

Evidence-Based Service	Clearinghouse Rating	Eligible Population	Qualified Service Delivery
Motivational Interviewing	Well-Supported	Children who are candidates for foster care, their parents or caregivers, and pregnant and parenting youth in foster care	Qualified CYFD staff trained in Motivational Interviewing, including In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists, as identified in the Prevention Plan
SafeCare	Supported	Families with children ages 0–5 who are candidates for foster care	Qualified CYFD staff trained in SafeCare, including In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists, as identified in the Prevention Plan

Prevention Service Availability

New Mexico continues to expand access to evidence-based prevention models as implementation of the Title IV-E Prevention Program progresses. Availability is based on the location of trained staff qualified to deliver approved evidence-based models and the eligibility of children and families under the Prevention Plan.

During Fiscal Year 2026, Motivational Interviewing was available in areas served through trained Family Services Division staff. SafeCare was available in areas served by trained In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists. CYFD will continue expanding workforce capacity and training to increase access to evidence-based prevention models across the state.

Service Utilization

Fiscal Year 2026 marked New Mexico's first year carrying out the approved Title IV-E Prevention Program. As implementation expanded, CYFD began delivering evidence-based prevention models to eligible children and families while continuing to build statewide prevention capacity.

The following tables summarize utilization of approved evidence-based prevention models during Fiscal Year 2026.

Table 1. Children and Families Served

Measure	FY2026 SafeCare	FY2026 Motivational Interviewing	FY2026 Total
Referrals Received	117	1,839	1,956
Families Enrolled	44	1,839	1,883

Eligible Populations	FY2026 SafeCare	FY2026 Motivational Interviewing	FY2026 Total
Families Determined Eligible for IV-E	41	1,313	1,354
Parents/Caregivers	41	1,313	1,354
Pregnant & Parenting Youth	3	0	3

Eligible family counts include In-Home, Family Support, and CARA families. MI cases in Family Outreach are not included because these cases have been screened out, meaning they are not eligible for foster care involvement under CYFD criteria. Even though they are not eligible for purposes of this plan, Family Outreach still provides MI to these families. The purpose is to assess their needs and help connect them to community-based support and prevention services.

Families referred to SafeCare services are offered services, but families may decline or be ineligible depending on their risk level. SafeCare families must also have at least one child

aged 0-5 in the household, so some families are not enrolled due to not meeting this requirement.

However, for Motivational Interviewing, any family who is referred to an In Home Services or Family Support Services worker for case management will be receiving motivational interviewing as part of their time with the worker. Therefore, referrals for MI are not captured in the same way as with SafeCare families, as every family is eligible to receive MI.

Table 2. Evidence-Based Prevention Models Delivered

Model	Families Served
Motivational Interviewing	1839
SafeCare	44

Table 3. Referral Source

Referral Source	SafeCare	Motivational Interviewing
In-Home Services	24	182
Family Outreach	0	526
CARA/DOH	0	936
Family Support Services	17	195
Fostering Connections	3	0

Table 4. Prevention Performance Measures

Performance Measure	FY2025*
Families served with prevention services that were not subject of a new substantiation within 6 months of service	97.1%
Families served with prevention services that did not have an entry into foster care during or within 6 months of close of service	99.6%
Reunification families who were not the subject of a substantiation within six months of receiving services	100%
Reunification families who did not have a re-entry into foster care within six months of receiving services	100%

The performance measures included are for the Community Based Prevention, Intervention and Reunification (CBPIR) program and were noted in the state's FFPSA plan. FY26 data is still being validated and analyzed, so FY25 outcomes were reported. However, CBPIR providers may utilize various prevention and reunification curriculums, so the reported measures are not exclusive to families receiving evidence-based services (SafeCare and MI) under the program.

Performance measures for SafeCare and Motivational Interviewing are still in development by the agency, but CYFD will be able to assess repeat substantiations among families who participate in these prevention services and will analyze changes in family outcomes over time as more data becomes available. Measures will align with reported measures for CBPIR.

Further, CYFD is currently undergoing an evaluation of SafeCare and will report on findings from that analysis in future updates, but preliminary data suggests that SafeCare families experience subsequent substantiations at a similar rate as families who are not participating in SafeCare, and SafeCare families experience significant improvements in family functioning protective factors. However, more data is needed to evaluate other impacts on protective factors, such as family wellbeing and stress.

Because Fiscal Year 2026 represents the first year of implementation under New Mexico's approved Title IV-E Prevention Program, outcome measures are limited to children with at least six months of follow-up after receiving prevention services. Accordingly, this report includes outcomes measured within six months of service delivery. As additional years of implementation data become available, CYFD will report outcomes over longer follow-up periods to evaluate the sustained impact of prevention services on child safety and foster care prevention.

Challenges and Opportunities

Fiscal Year 2026 represented the first year of implementation under New Mexico's approved Title IV-E Prevention Program. As with any new statewide initiative, implementation provided valuable insights that will inform continued expansion and program improvement.

Key opportunities identified during implementation include expanding the prevention workforce, increasing access to evidence-based prevention models in underserved areas, strengthening data collection and outcome reporting, enhancing quality assurance and fidelity monitoring, and maximizing federal Title IV-E reimbursement opportunities. CYFD will continue working with partners to strengthen statewide prevention capacity and improve access to evidence-based services for eligible children and families

Fiscal Summary

Implementation of New Mexico's Title IV-E Prevention Program during Fiscal Year 2026 was supported through existing state and federal funding sources while the Department established the infrastructure necessary to implement the approved Prevention Program and support future Title IV-E prevention claiming.

During Fiscal Year 2026, many In-Home Services Practitioners and Family Support Specialists delivering approved evidence-based prevention models were funded through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Because federal Title IV-E funds may not supplant other federal funding sources, CYFD did not seek Title IV-E reimbursement for these expenditures during the reporting period.

CYFD works with the Casey Family Programs and Title IV-E consultant Don Winstead to develop a compliant claiming methodology and the administrative and fiscal processes necessary to support future federal Title IV-E prevention reimbursement for eligible expenditures, consistent with federal requirements.

FY27 Implementation Priorities

Implementation Area	FY27 Focus
Workforce Capacity	Continue training and expanding qualified providers.
Geographic Access	Increase availability of evidence-based prevention models across the state.
Quality Assurance	Finalize quality assurance tools and implement fidelity monitoring
Data & Reporting	Enhance data collection, reporting, and performance measurement.
Federal Funding	Continue implementation activities that support Title IV-E prevention claiming.