Findings from the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department's 2023 Family Engagement and Satisfaction Survey

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Executive Summary

Together, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) and Project ECHO are working to understand the needs of New Mexico's families by listening directly to parents and caregivers themselves through the annual New Mexico Family Engagement and Satisfaction Survey. The survey was collaboratively developed by ECECD and Project ECHO in 2022. This report outlines the findings from the second administration of the survey, which is planned to be conducted annually from 2022 to 2027. Each year, the survey is distributed to families with children aged 0-5 throughout New Mexico.

The primary goal of the longitudinal survey is to gather information from parents and caregivers of children ages 0–5 in three key areas:

- **Awareness of early childhood programs among parents and caregivers**

- **Availability, usage, and satisfaction of parents and caregivers with early childhood services**

- **Levels of need for child care and early childhood services, along with experiences related to food and housing insecurity and access to medical care**

Last year's survey (2022) provided baseline data from New Mexico families in each of those interest areas. This year's survey (2023) is the first time comparative data is available to understand how residents' responses have changed over the past year.

A total of 3,551 responses were received for the 2023 survey, representing a significant increase compared to the 1,549 responses collected in 2022. These responses represent 33 counties in New Mexico. In the 2022 administration of the survey, responses from 32 out of 33 counties across the state were collected. The responses were roughly proportional to the state's population in terms of race/ethnicity, geography, household income levels, and educational attainment.

From the 2022 and 2023 data sets, we've learned that the overall awareness, availability, and satisfaction of child care programs has increased across the state. However, over the same time period, the need for programs has also seen an increase in demand. So, while programs offered through ECECD have had a positive impact on families and more families report knowing of programs, the demand continues to exceed current program availability. Many factors seem to contribute to the increase in need, namely: inflation, recovery from the pandemic, and return to in-person work.

Below are the year-over-year increases in awareness, usage, impact on well-being, and need.

Awareness
13.9% increase

Usage
5.2% increase

Impact on Well-Being
3.7% increase

Need
8.4% increase

As seen above, it is evident that ECECD has experienced a notable and encouraging positive increase in the four areas they can influence: awareness, availability, usage, and satisfaction. These findings serve as integral indicators of the Department's effectiveness and impact on the community.

The growth in awareness stands as a testament to ECECD's successful efforts in sharing program information and promoting the importance of early childhood education and care. Furthermore, the observed increase in usage signals a positive shift in the community's engagement with early childhood programs. And the rise in satisfaction signifies that the Department's dedication to effective, beneficial, and well-structured programs has fostered positive experiences and garnered the community's trust and approval.

However, it's crucial to acknowledge that amidst these achievements, a distinct trend emerges: the overall need for early childhood education and care programs is rising. While the department might not wield direct influence over the extent of this need, it remains positioned to respond dynamically and proactively. This necessitates a continual assessment of the evolving demands and challenges within the community and an agile approach to crafting innovative solutions that address these demands effectively.

The following report expands on the details and nuances we've found while analyzing data from 2023 with the baseline data from 2022. Below are the key takeaway findings from the report.

Key Findings

Awareness of early childhood programs among parents and caregivers:

- The average increase in awareness across all programs is 13.9% from 2022 to 2023.

- ECECD has closed the gap in awareness between the most and least familiar programs measured by 12% from 2022 to 2023.

- The average increase in awareness from 2022 to 2023 amongst the 4 least familiar programs (Home Visiting, Preschool Special Education, Family Infant Toddler program, and Families FIRST) is 18.5%.

Program availability, usage, and satisfaction of parents and caregivers:

- The positive impact on families remained consistently high from 2022 to 2023 across all programs, with substantial improvements for Tribal Head Start, FIRST, and Early Head Start.

- Child care services cost resulted in the most significant area for improvement. This finding is echoed by the lower percentage of child care program usage by people earning below the poverty level.

- Lack of service awareness in participants' areas is the most commonly cited source of prevented access, with Child Care Assistance receiving the highest percentage (31%).

- Wait times to use programs decreased across all programs when compared to 2022, except for food support.

- Income and education levels follow similar trends regarding participants' program usage. Mainly, participants in the lower income and education categories tend to use more food support and use less special education services compared to higher income and education groups.

Levels of need for child care and early childhood services, as well as experiences with food and housing insecurity and access to medical care:

- In 2023, there are significant increases in need expressed across all areas. Child care needs increased by 5.3% across all areas, food insecurity by 8.5%, housing insecurity by 8%, and health care access and insurance by 11.7%.

- Child care was the highest-rated need by all respondents in 2022, and remains so in 2023, with four out of five respondents in 2023 indicating that the need for child care to allow an adult to work outside the home was experienced in the past 12 months.

Program Summaries

Child Care Services

- **Usage rates of child care services in 2023: 64%**

- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 11% increase**

- **Variance in the usage of child care services by race from 2022 to 2023: 16% decrease in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial equality in use.**

Most valuable aspects of child care services to families who use them are:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 55% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was easy: 26% of respondents

- These services were affordable: 26% of respondents

- These services were offered at convenient times: 26% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for child care services identified by families who indicated that they use them:

- No improvements are necessary: 32% of respondents

- The services were expensive: 21% of respondents (3% decrease from 2022)

- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 18% of respondents (3% decrease from 2022)

- I had to wait too long to use the services my family needed: 14% of respondents (5% decrease from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access child care services reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- The services are too expensive: 28% of respondents

- I am not aware of services like this in my area: 25% of respondents

- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 18% of respondents

- I do not have time to use the services available in my area 16% of respondents

Impact on family well-being:

- 85% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 2% decrease from 2022.

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/ Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.
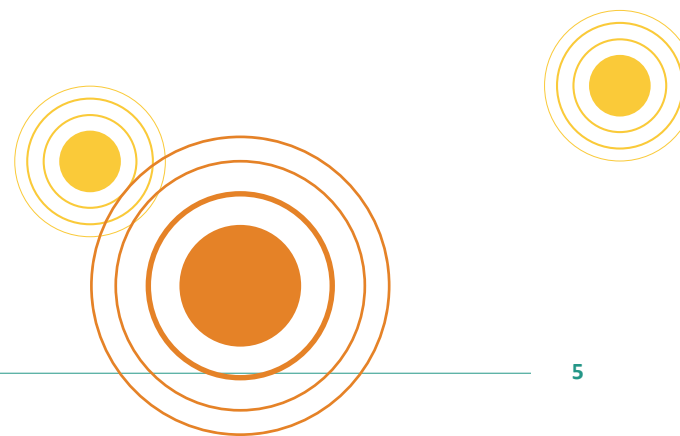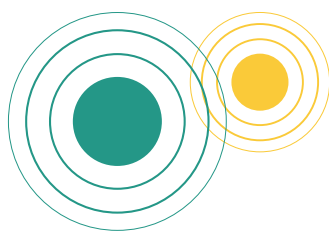
Preschool Programs

- **Usage rates of preschool programs in 2023: 59%**

- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 11% increase**

- **Variance in the usage of preschool programs by race from 2022 to 2023: 2% decrease in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial equality in use.**

Most valuable aspects of preschool programs to families who use them:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 38% of respondents

- These services were offered at convenient times: 34% of respondents

- I did not feel judged for using these services: 25% of respondents

- These services were affordable: 23% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for preschool programs identified by families who indicated that they use them:

- No improvements are necessary: 34% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 17% of respondents (no change from 2022)

- The services are too expensive: 16% of respondents (1% decrease from 2022)

- I had to wait too long to use the services my family needed: 15% of respondents (2% decrease from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access preschool programs reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- I am not aware of services like this in my area: 22% of respondents

- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 18% of respondents

- The services not offered at a time my family can use them: 19% of respondents

- The services are too expensive: 19% of respondents

New Mexico Pre-K

Program awareness:

- Average awareness of program: 84%

- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 12% increase

Impact on family well-being:

- 88% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 3% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 31

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.

Head Start

Program awareness:

- Average awareness of program: 88%

- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 12% increase

Impact on family well-being:

- 88% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 3% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 45

Tribal Head Start or Preschool Program

Impact on family well-being:

- 84% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 12% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 13

Child Care Assistance Program

- **Usage rates of the Child Care Assistance program in 2023: 43%**

- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 8% increase**

- **Variance in the usage of the Child Care Assistance program by race from 2022 to 2023: 4% increase in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial inequality in use.**

Most valuable aspects of the Child Care Assistance program to families who use it:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 51% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was easy: 29% of respondents

- It does not take much time to use the services in my area: 28% of respondents

- These services were affordable: 27% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for the Child Care Assistance program identified by families who indicated that they use it are:

- No improvements are necessary: 37% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 18% of respondents (7% decrease from 2022)

- The services were too expensive: 17% of respondents (5% decrease from 2022)

- I do not have time to use the services in my area: 14% of respondents (1% increase from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access the Child Care Assistance program reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- Not aware of services in my area: 31% of respondents

- The services are too expensive: 22% of respondents

- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 19% of respondents

- I do not have time to use the services available in my area: 13%

Program awareness:

- Average awareness of program: 81%

- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 9% increase

Impact on family well-being:

- 87% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 3% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 31

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/ Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.

Special Education Services

- **Reported usage rates of Special Education Services in 2023: 26%**

- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 5% increase**

Most valuable aspects of program to your family:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 55% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was easy: 26% of respondents

- These services were affordable: 26% of respondents

- These services were offered at convenient times: 26% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for Special Education services identified by families who indicated that they use them are:

- No improvements are necessary: 33% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 16% of respondents (2% decrease from 2022)

- I had to wait too long to use the services my family needed: 16% of respondents (6% decrease from 2022)

- The services were too expensive: 15% of respondents (1% decrease from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access Special Education services reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- No time to use services available in my area: 10%

- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 10% of respondents

- Not aware of services in area: 9% of respondents

- I do not think the service would improve my families' well-being: 9% of respondents

Impact on family well-being:

- 82% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 4% increase from 2022

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/ Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.

Preschool Special Education Program

Program awareness:

- Average awareness of program: 75%

- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 16%

- Variance in the usage of Preschool Special Education by race from 2022 to 2023: 5% increase in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial inequality in use.

Family Support & Early Intervention

- **Reported usage rates of Family Support and Early Intervention Services in 2023: 40%**
- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 2% increase**
- **Variance in the usage of Family Support and Intervention Services by race 2022 – 2023 changes: 5% increase in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial inequality in use.**

Most valuable aspects of program to your family:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 51% of respondents
- Signing up for the services was easy: 33% of respondents
- These services were affordable: 31% of respondents
- These services were offered at convenient times: 31% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for Family Support and Early Intervention services identified by families who indicated that they use them are:

- No improvements are necessary: 42% of respondents
- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 18% of respondents (3% decrease from 2022)
- The services were too expensive: 14% of respondents (3% decrease from 2022)
- I had trouble getting transportation to use the services: 13% of respondents (2% increase from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access Family Support and Intervention services reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- Not aware of services in area: 31% of respondents
- No time to use services available in area: 20%
- No transportation to access the service: 19% of respondents
- Feeling judged for using services: 17% of respondents
- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 19% of respondents
- Services not offered at a time my family can use them: 18% of respondents

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.

Early Head Start program

Program awareness:
- Average awareness of program: 87%
- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 11% increase

Impact on family well-being:
90% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 5% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 35

Family Infant Toddler program

Program awareness:
- Average awareness of program: 67%
- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 19% increase

Impact on family well-being:
- 86% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 3% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 34

Families FIRST program

Program awareness:
- Average awareness of program: 65%
- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 21% increase

Impact on family well-being:
- 82% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 7% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 21

Home Visiting Program

Program awareness:
- Average awareness of program: 76%
- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 18% increase

Impact on family well-being:
- 86% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 4% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 47

Food Support Services

- **Reported usage rates of food support services* in 2023: 51%**

  *Includes Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program; Child and Adult Care Food Program; Summer Food Service Program; and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- **Change from 2022 to 2023: 6% decrease**

- **Variance in the usage of Food Support services by race from 2022 to 2023: 6% decrease in variance of use by race, indicating a possible trend toward greater racial equality in use.**

Most valuable aspects of food support services to your family:

- I was able to use services when my family needed them: 56% of respondents

- Signing up for the services was easy: 33% of respondents

- I did not feel judged for using these services: 32% of respondents

- It does not take much time to use the services in my area: 32% of respondents

Key areas for improvement for food support services identified by families who indicated that they use them are:

- No improvements are necessary: 49% of respondents

- I do not have time to use the services in my area: 13% of respondents (2% increase from 2022)

- Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming: 13% of respondents (2% increase from 2022)

- I had trouble getting transportation to use the service: 11% of respondents (1% increase from 2022)

Reasons respondents could not access food support services reported as a percentage of those who could not access services:

- I am not aware of services in my area: 23% of respondents

- Signing up for services too complex or time consuming: 22% of respondents

- I would feel judged for using these services: 16% of respondents

- No time to use services available in area: 15%

- Services not offered at a time my family can use them: 15% of respondents

For detailed demographic breakdown of selected results see Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program

Program awareness:

- Average awareness of program: 93%

- Change in program awareness from 2022 to 2023: 7% increase

Impact on family well-being:

- 92% of respondents reported positive impact on family well-being of program participation which was a 1% increase from 2022

Net Promoter Score: 55

Summer Food Service Program

Net Promoter Score: 37

Program Familiarity

The first section of the survey aimed to assess respondents' familiarity with selected programs that provide essential services for families with young children. The primary goal was to measure awareness of early childhood programs among parents and caregivers. Data was collected on respondents' awareness of nine programs:

- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- Head Start

- Early Head Start

- NM PreK and Child Care Assistance program

- Home Visiting

- Preschool Special Education

- Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program

- The Families FIRST program

For each of the nine programs, respondents were asked to rate their awareness on a scale of one to five. A response of one indicated that the respondent had never heard of the program and knew nothing about the services it provided, while a response of five indicated that the respondent was very familiar with the program and the services it provides. Additionally, the survey asked respondents to specify the source from which they initially heard about the programs they were familiar with.

To gain deeper insights into program familiarity, responses were compared among various subgroups based on race/ethnicity, geography, household income levels, and educational attainment. The creation of subgroups was essential to ensure a sufficient number of responses for meaningful analysis.

10% increase in program familiarity
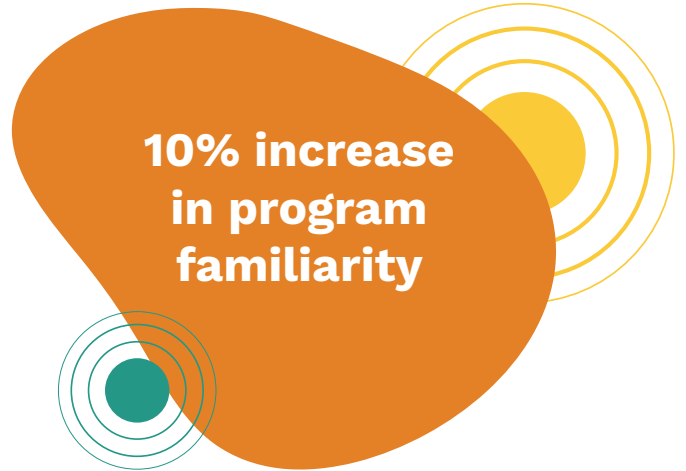
Familiarity Scores

In terms of familiarity scores, the average ratings for the programs presented in the survey ranged from a high of 3.72 (out of five) for the WIC program to a low of 2.53 for the Families FIRST program. Notably, there has been a significant increase from 2022's familiarity score of 2.77, although the highest and lowest scoring programs remain unchanged.

In addition to providing average familiarity scores, the survey also assessed the percentage of respondents who reported having at least some knowledge of each program (rating their familiarity with the program as at least a two on the five-point scale). This analysis closely resembled the results of the average familiarity scores. For example, the WIC proram was the most widely recognized program among the respondents with 93 percent of respondents indicating some familiarity with it. On the other hand, approximately two out of every three respondents reported having any knowledge of the Families FIRST and FIT programs, resulting in a notable 28% difference in levels of familiarity between these two programs and the WIC program.

Figure 1. Average familiarity scores for selected early childhood programs, 2022 and 2023
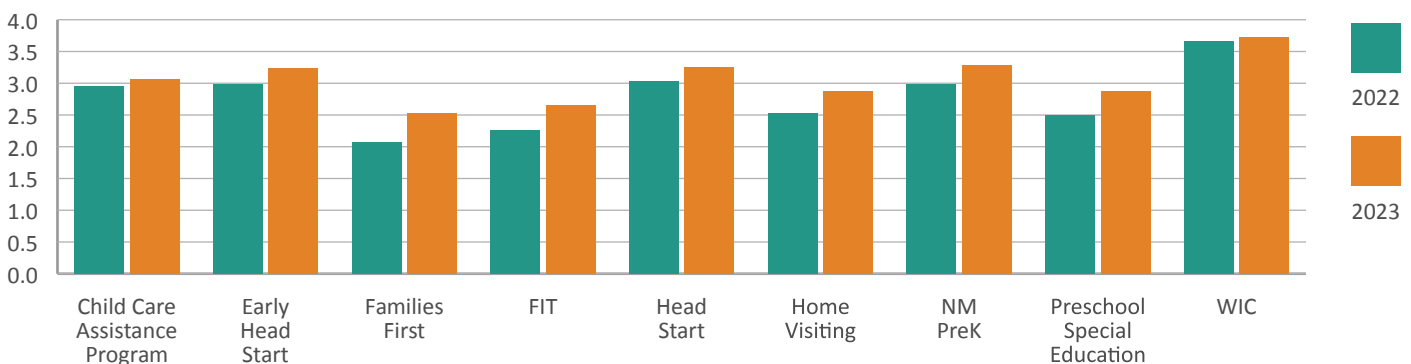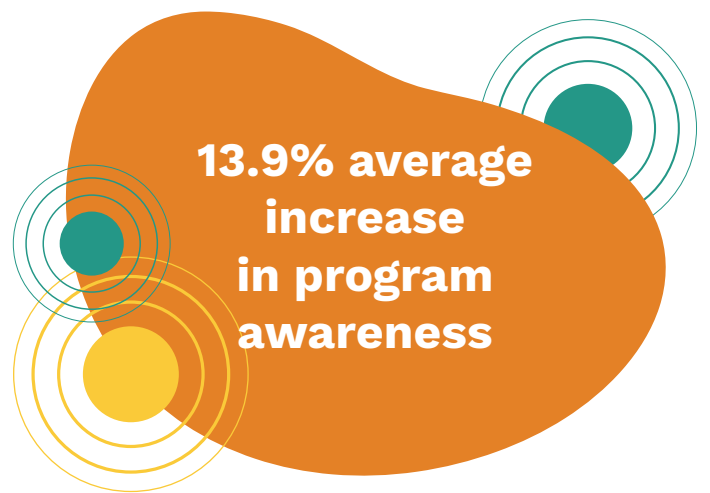
Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who have at least some knowledge of selected early childhood programs, 2022 and 2023
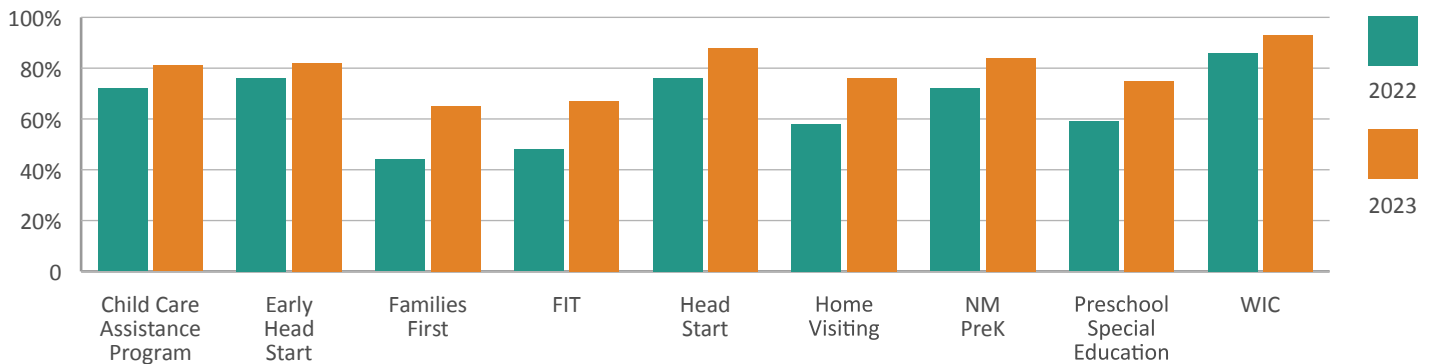
Between 2022 and 2023, there has been a noticeable increase in awareness for all programs, with the relative order of programs remaining largely unchanged. The most significant increase in awareness was observed among the four programs with the lowest initial levels of familiarity. Awareness of the Families First program increased by 21%, the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program by 19%, Preschool Special Education by 16%, and Home Visiting by 18%.

In 2022, the gap between the program with the highest awareness, WIC, and the program with the lowest awareness, FIT, was 38%. By 2023, this gap had decreased to 26%, closing the awareness gap between the most and least familiar programs by 12%.

13.9% average increase in program awareness

Hispanic respondents report significantly less familiarity than other groups with the Families FIRST and FIT programs

The average increase in awareness amongst the 5 most familiar programs (WIC, Head Start, Early Head Start, NM PreK and Child Care Assistance program) between 2022 and 2023 was 10.2%. The average increase in awareness among the four least familiar programs (Home Visiting, Preschool Special Education, FIT program, and Families FIRST) was higher at 18.5%. Overall, the average increase in awareness across all programs was 13.9%. These figures demonstrate a positive shift in awareness levels across the board.

When examining differences in responses by race, white respondents were more likely to have familiarity with most programs, particularly the New Mexico PreK, FIT, and special education programs. On the other hand, Hispanic respondents reported significantly less familiarity than other groups with the Families FIRST and FIT programs. Similarly, Native American families also reported less familiarity with the Families FIRST and FIT programs, as well as NM PreK and Preschool Special Education.

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by race/ethnicity, 2023
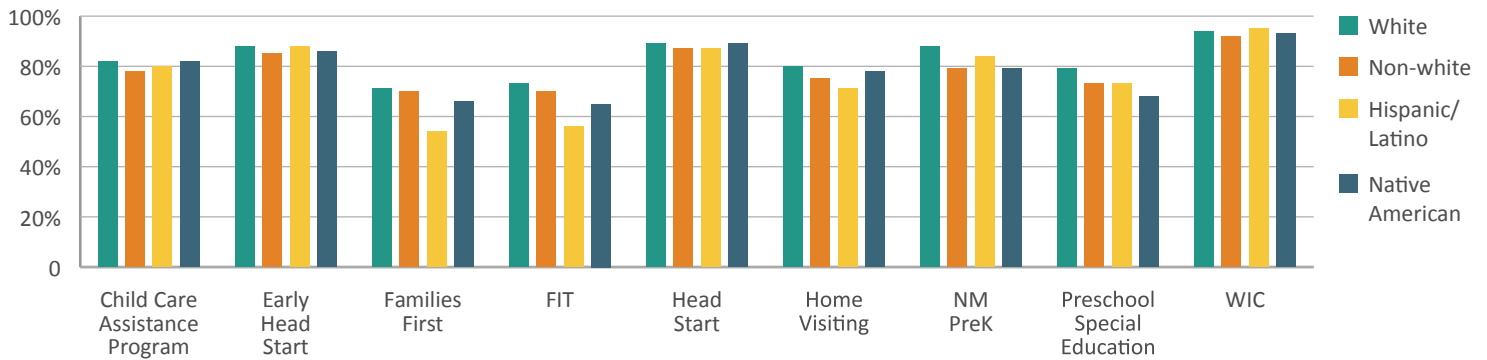
Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by race/ethnicity, 2022
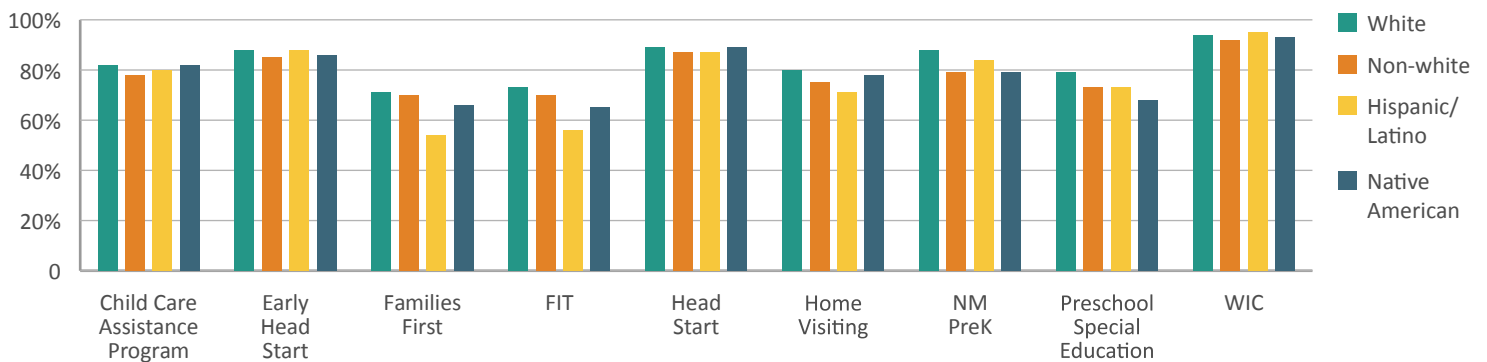
Notably, Native American families showed the most substantial improvement across all programs, except for WIC, which already had very high existing familiarity. This indicates a positive trend of increased awareness among Native American families for various programs.

Respondents were asked to report household income levels and their educational attainment. When analyzing household income levels, responses were split into three groups: under $50,000, $50,000 to $99,999, and $100,000 and over. Unsurprisingly, these two measures exhibited a strong correlation among survey participants, leading to similar trends in both variables.

In 2022, a distinct pattern emerged where respondents in the middle-income group ($50,000 to $99,999) reported the highest level of familiarity for each program by 10-15% more than other groups. This trend was particularly

notable in the Families FIRST, Family Infant Toddler, and Home Visiting programs. However, among the 2023 respondents, this pattern has significantly flattened, with only a 4-5% difference between the familiarity of the middle-income group and the other two groups. The narrowing gap suggests that familiarity with the programs has become more evenly distributed across income groups in 2023 compared to the previous year.

Between 2022 and 2023, changes were made to the methodology for analyzing the geographical location of respondents to gain deeper insights from the data. In 2022, respondents were compared based on their urban or rural classification. Urban respondents were defined as those living in the Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, or Farmington metropolitan areas, while all other respondents were considered rural.

Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by household income, 2023
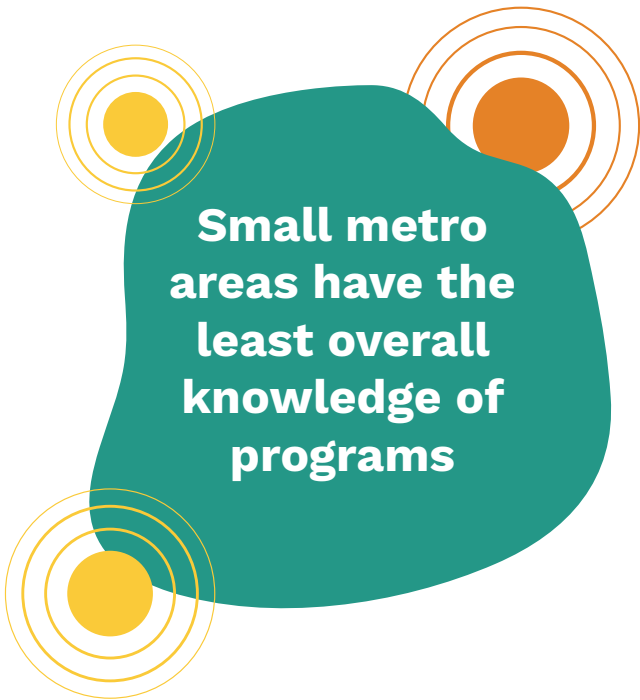

Legend: Under $50k, $50 to $99k, Over $100k
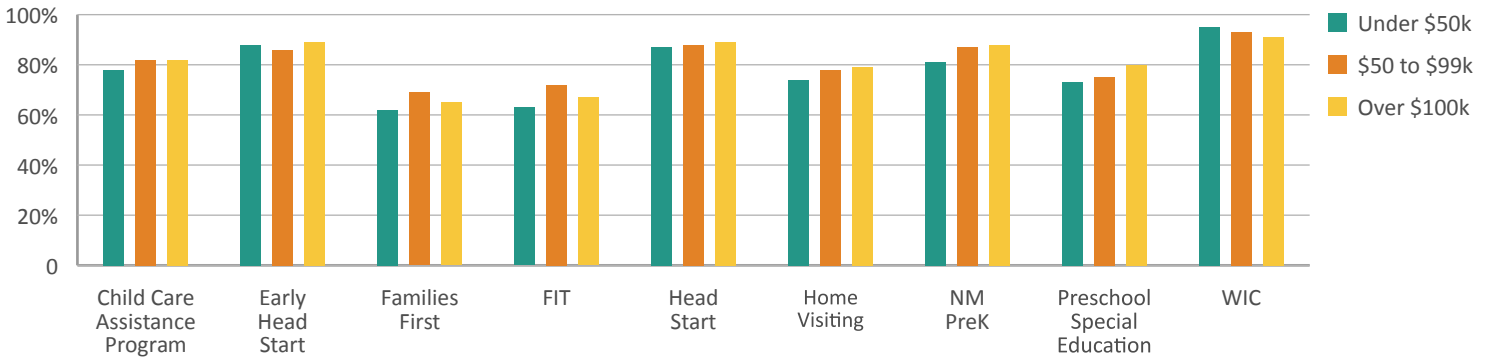
Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by household income, 2022

Legend: Under $50k, $50 to $99k, Over $100k
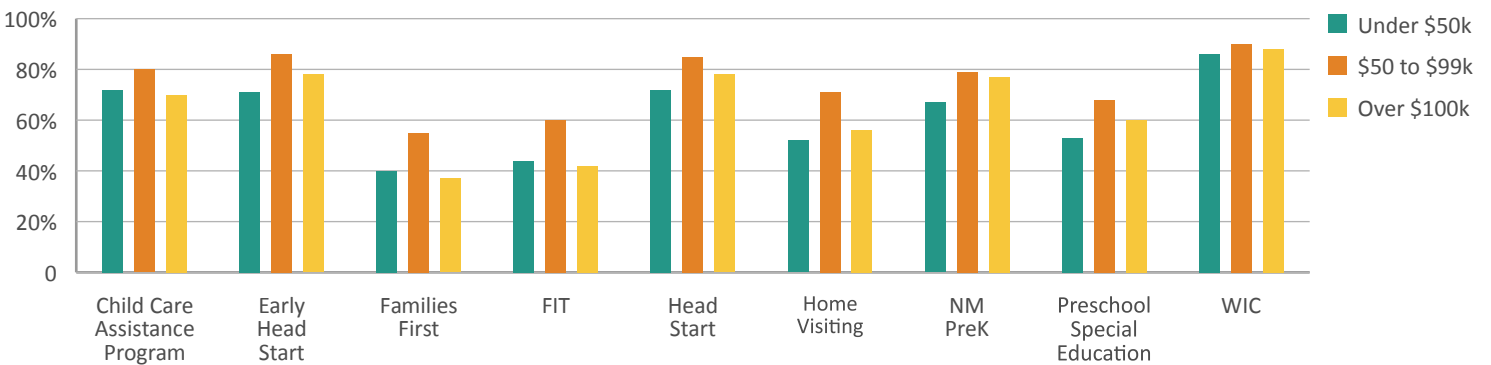
However, in 2023, respondents were categorized into four groups based on county classification: metropolitan (urban), small metropolitan, mixed rural and urban, and rural. The division of the population into these categories is based on the New Mexico Department of Health's classification of counties. Metropolitan counties include Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia. The small metro counties comprise Dona Ana, San Juan, and Santa Fe. The mixed urban/rural counties include Cibola, Chaves, Curry, Eddy, Grant, Lea, Los Alamos, Luna, McKinley, Otero, Rio Arriba, Roosevelt, San Miguel, and Taos. The rural counties are Catron, Colfax, De Baca, Guadalupe, Harding, Hidalgo, Lincoln, Mora, Quay, Sierra, Socorro, and Union.

In 2022, for every program, a higher percentage of rural respondents reported having knowledge of the program compared to urban respondents. However, this trend may reflect the fact that rural respondents were less likely to have low household incomes, which is also correlated with lower levels of knowledge about programs. Notably, about 35 percent of rural respondents reported a household income of $50,000 or less, compared to about 45 percent of urban respondents. This income distribution remained consistent for both 2022 and 2023.

Rural areas have the highest overall knowledge of all programs

Small metro areas have the least overall knowledge of programs

In 2023 we see that for those programs where there are significant differences in knowledge amongst geographic regions (Families FIRST, FIT, Head Start, Home Visiting and Preschool Special Education) small metro areas substantially lag in knowledge behind all other area types. This knowledge gap is especially prominent for the Families FIRST, FIT, and Home Visiting programs.

For these programs, we also see knowledge lagging in metropolitan areas compared to rural areas. For every program, knowledge in rural areas is comparatively high. This pattern of greater program knowledge in rural areas compared to urban areas was also evident in the 2022 data, indicating a consistent trend.

We see less variation in program knowledge when we look at it through the lens of income. However, respondents whose highest education level is high school consistently show lower program awareness across all programs compared to all other groups. There is less disparity in program awareness among respondents whose highest education level is an undergraduate or graduate degree.

Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by geography, 2023
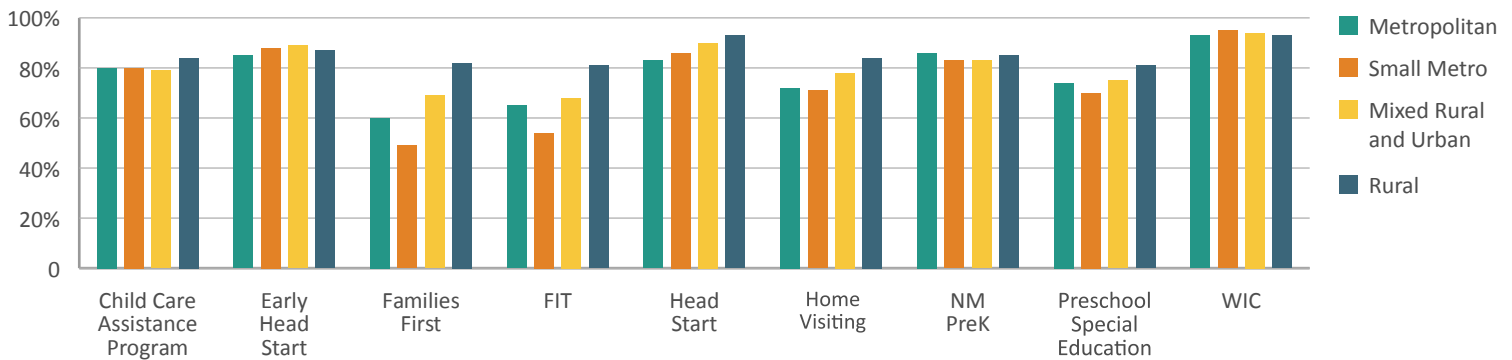
Figure 8. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by geography, 2022
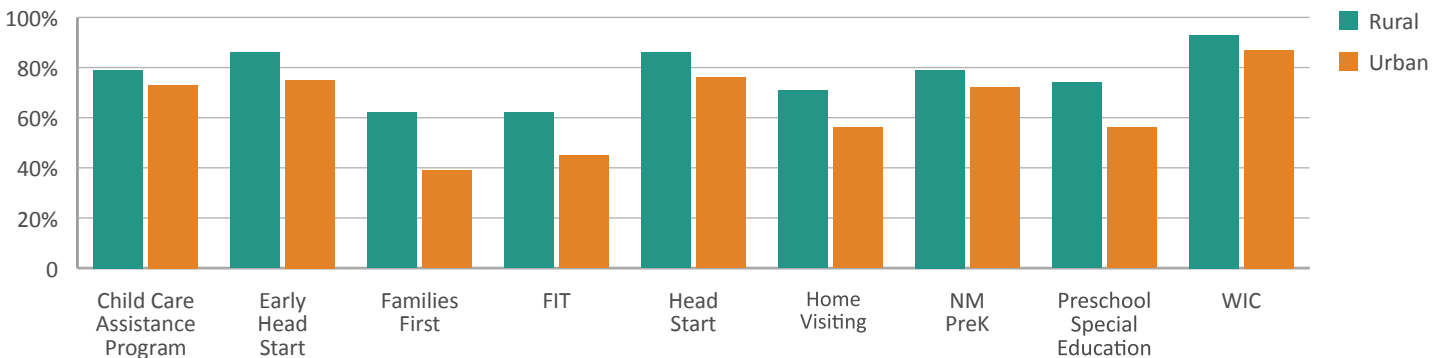
Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who indicated at least some knowledge of programs, by education level, 2023

Legend: High School (teal), Undergraduate (orange), Graduate & Professionals (yellow)
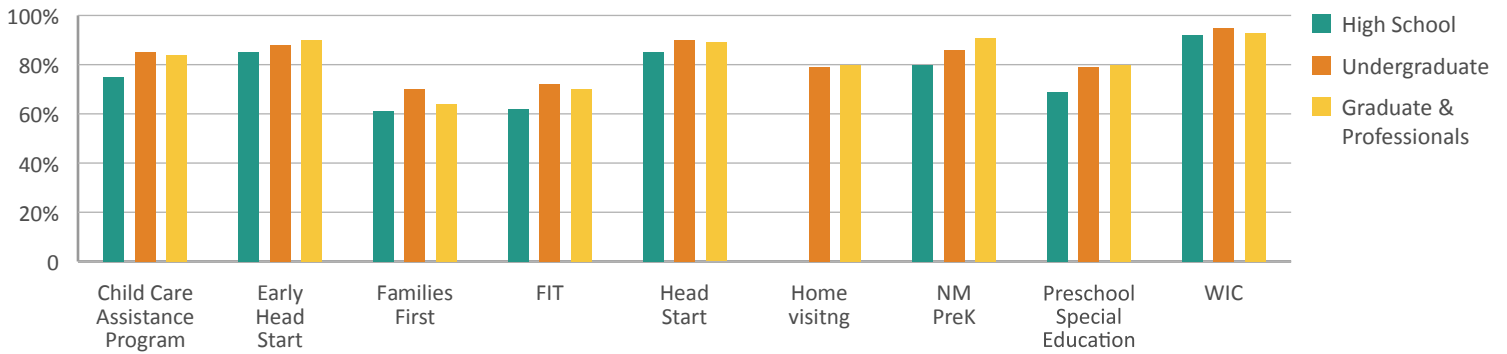
Sources of Knowledge about Programs

The sources for learning about programs were consistent across all programs.

The highest percentage of respondents reported learning about the programs from family or friends for every program in both 2022 and 2023, although this dropped from a high of 33.7% in 2022 to 16.4% in 2023. Child care organizations and Healthcare providers are significant sources of knowledge about programs in both 2022 and 2023.

Respondents consistently reported the lowest rates of learning about programs from traditional forms of advertising among all the options presented. This trend was evident in both 2022 and 2023, with a further decline in 2023. In 2023 fewer than two percent of respondents indicated hearing about programs they were familiar with through television, newspaper and magazine, and radio advertising. The Moments Together website was cited by five percent of respondents in 2022, and this percentage dropped to 2.5% in 2023. This drop is consistent with reduced traditional ad spends for the Moments Together campaign.

It is worth noting that the Early Show with Alax was not included in the list of outreach efforts asked about in the survey. The show was launched after the survey was designed and was not represented in the survey.

Figure 10. Source of knowledge about programs (all programs combined), 2023
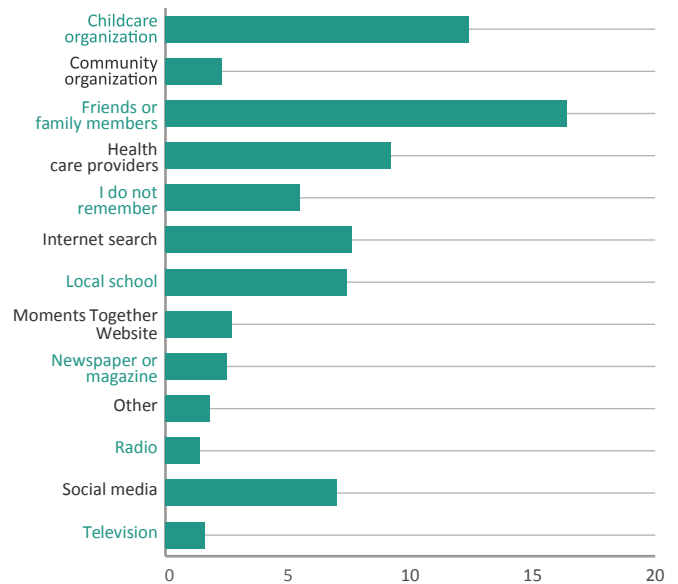
**Figure 11. Source of knowledge about programs (all programs combined), 2022**
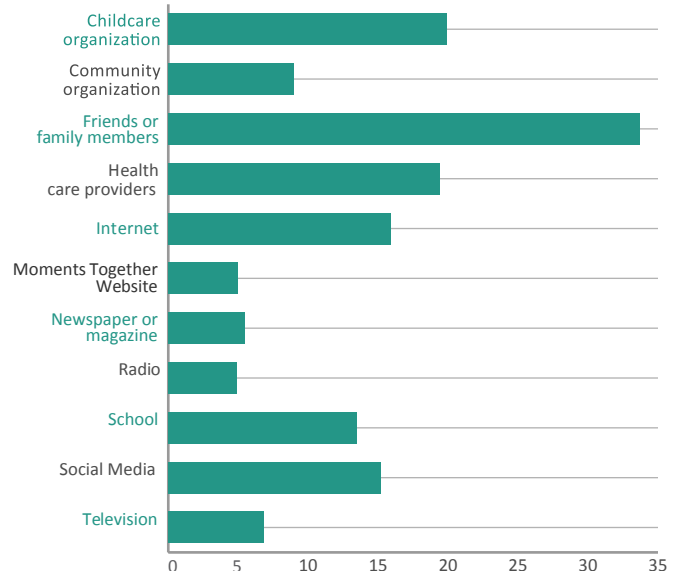
Program Usage and Impact

The second section of the survey asked about respondents' utilization of selected early childhood programs and the effects these programs had on their family's well-being. It also sought feedback on the aspects of these programs that were most valuable and areas that could be improved. Additionally, respondents who reported not having access to a specific type of program were prompted to provide a reason why they have been unable to access those programs.

To better understand program usage and impact, responses were compared among subgroups based on race/ethnicity, geography, household income levels, and educational attainment. Subgroups were created to ensure large enough numbers of responses to allow for analysis.

Figure 12. Program usage, 2022 and 2023
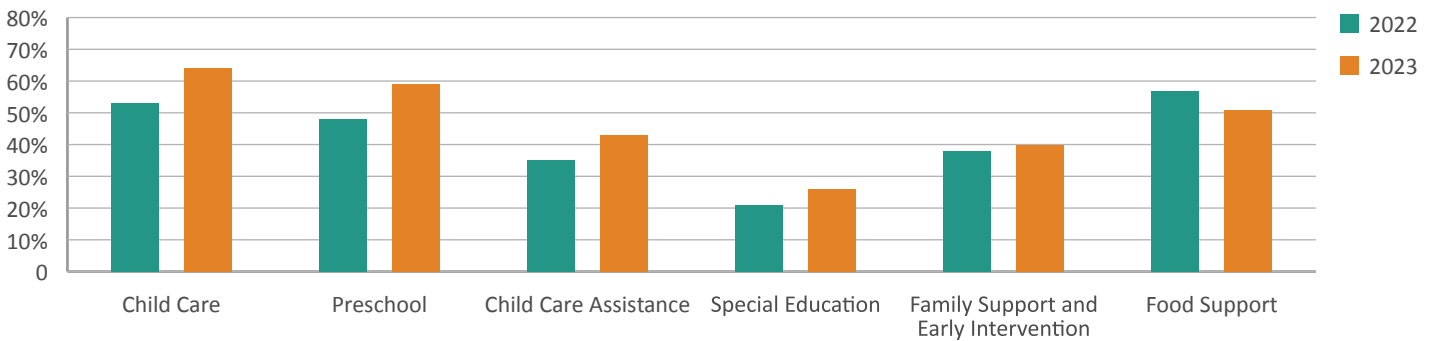
Usage Rates by Program

Across all programs except for food support, we observe an increase in reported usage among respondents from 2022 to 2023. The most significant increases are seen in child care and preschool, both of which rose by 11%. Additionally, Child Care Assistance usage increased by 8% from 2022 to 2023.

In 2022, the program with the highest reported usage was food support, with a usage rate of 57%. However, in 2023, the use of food support dropped to 51%, while reported use of child care increased to 64%, making it the program with the highest reported usage.

64% of respondents use child care, making it the most used program

Figure 13. Usage of types of programs by race/ethnicity, 2023
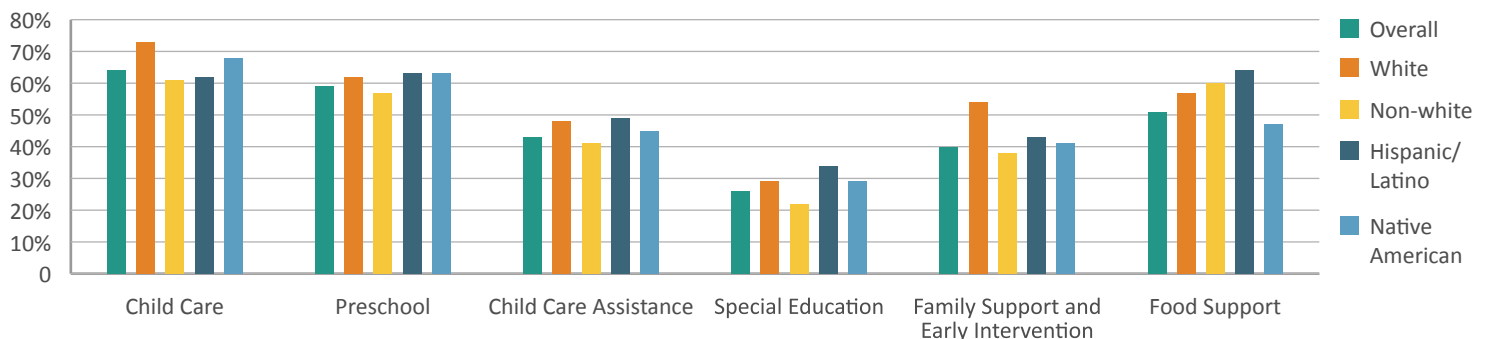
Figure 14. Usage of types of programs by race/ethnicity, 2022
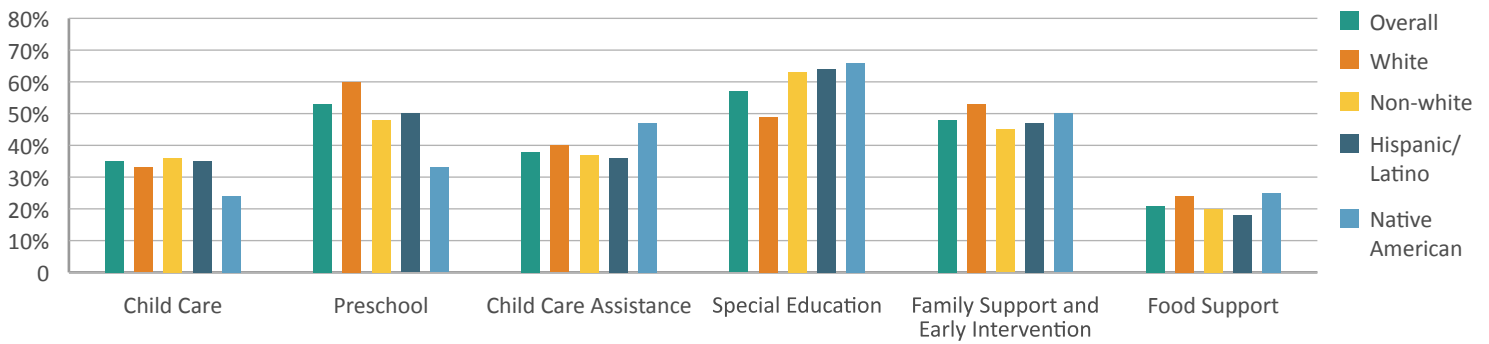
For each type of program, there is variation in usage among racial/ethnic subgroups. However, between 2022 and 2023, there is a reduction in the variations in use for Child Care Assistance, child care services, preschool, and food support programs. Conversely, differences in usage increased from 2022 to 2023 in the reported use of family support and early intervention programs and preschool special education programs.

In 2023, a higher percentage of program usage for preschool was reported among Non-White respondents. The trends for usage are consistent across all racial groups.

Program usage among subgroups based on household income followed expected trends. Assistance programs, which typically have income ceilings, were primarily utilized by lower-income households. In 2022, it was observed that programs involving expenditures by families, such as child care services, were used at a higher rate by higher-income families. However, this trend did not hold for 2023, possibly indicating changes in the level of support for child care services in New Mexico.

Family support and early intervention programs showed more equal participation across income levels. On the other hand, usage of preschool special education services increased with higher income categories.

Figure 15. Trends in differences in usage of types of programs by race/ethnicity, 2022 and 2023

Variance in usage by race: gap in usage between lowest and highest using racial group expressed as difference in usage reported by respondents
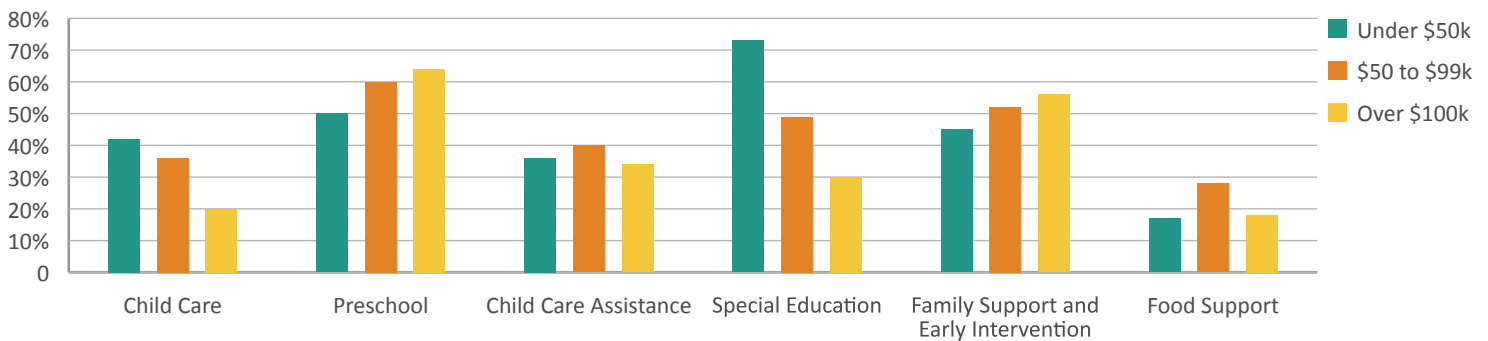
	2022	2023	Trend
Child Care Assistance	12%	8%	↓ 4%
Child Care	27%	11%	↓ 16%
Family Support and Early Intervention	11%	16%	↑ 5%
Food Support	17%	11%	↓ 6%
Preschool	8%	6%	↓ 2%
Preschool Special Education	7%	12%	↑ 5%

Figure 16. Usage of types of programs by household income, 2023
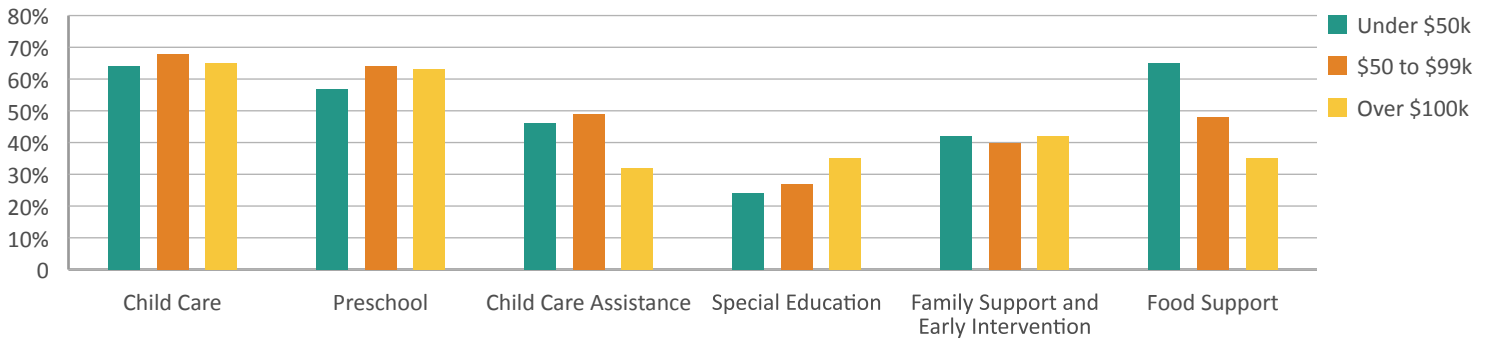
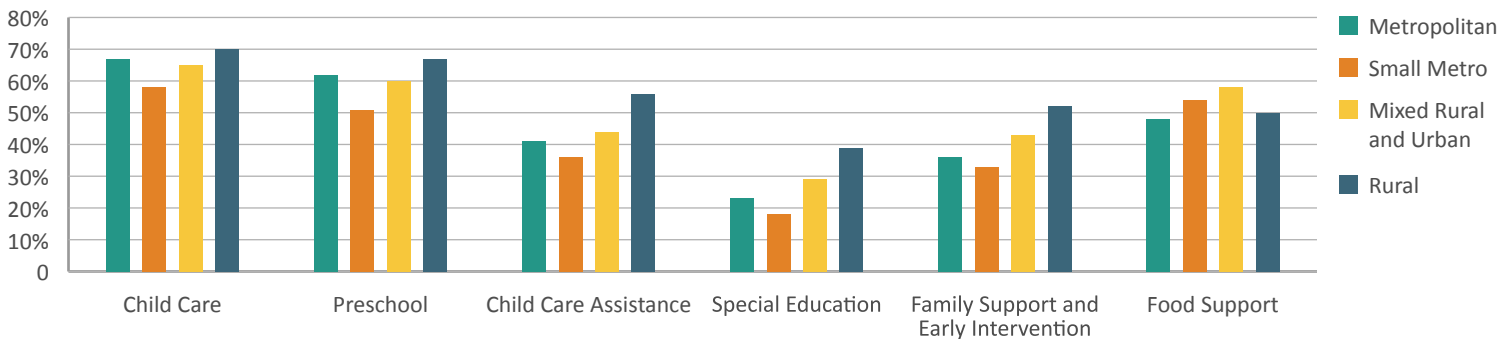**Figure 17. Usage of types of programs by household income, 2022**

Usage of programs by income and education level subgroups is closely aligned. Respondents with a high school education used significantly more food support and less preschool special education services compared to other income groups.

Across all programs, excluding food support, we see a similar pattern of usage. Rural respondents reported utilizing programs and services at a higher rate than other groups, while small metro respondents reported the least program usage.

The usage of specific family support and early intervention programs (Early Head Start, Families FIRST, FIT, and home visiting), preschool programs (Head Start, New Mexico PreK, and tribal), and food support programs (Summer Food Service Program and WIC) generally followed the patterns described above when analyzed by subgroups.

Figure 18. Usage of types of programs by geography, 2023

Figure 19. Usage of types of programs by geography, 2022
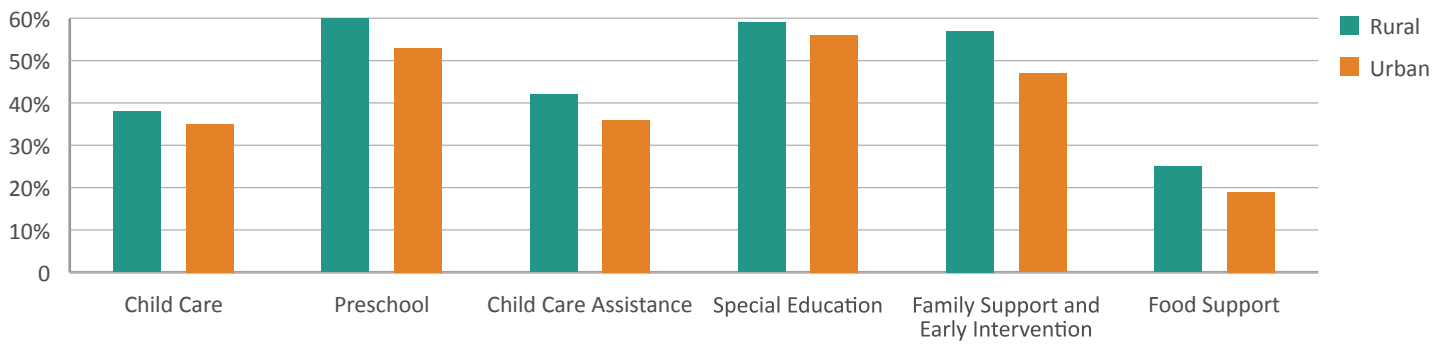
**Figure 20. Usage of types of programs by education level, 2023**
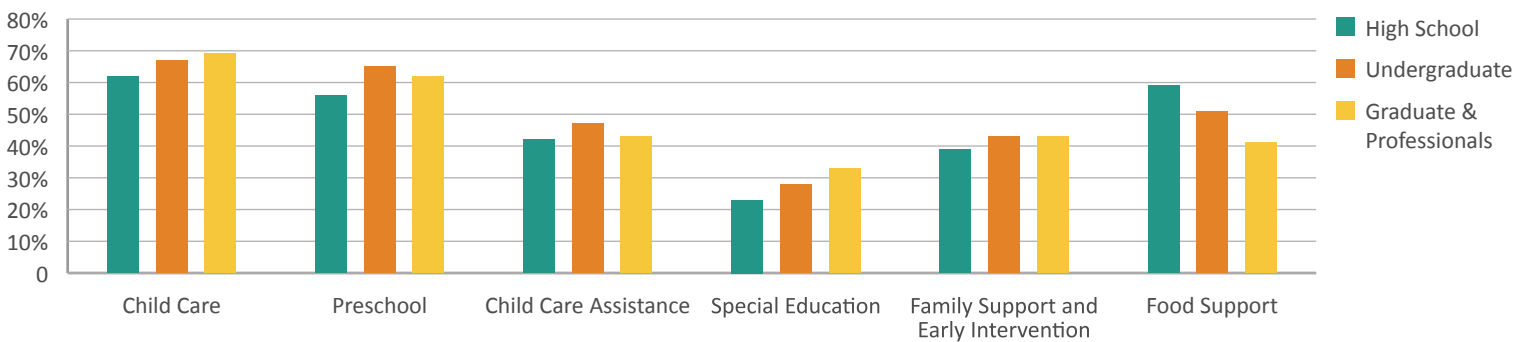

Impact on Family Well-Being

Respondents were asked to rate the impact of the programs and services they used on a five-point scale that ranged from "significantly decreased family well-being" to "significantly increased family well-being." Responses were coded on a negative two to positive two scale to reflect the positive or negative tone of the answer choices.

Overall, the impacts on family well-being remained high and slightly increased for most programs compared to 2022. The most substantial improvements in impacts were observed in Tribal Head Start, Families FIRST, and Early Head Start.

Across all programs and services, over 75 percent of respondents who used the program or service reported an increase in family well-being due to their participation, with all but one program at 80 percent or higher. This trend remained consistent across all racial/ethnic, income-based, and geographic subgroups where there were sufficient responses for analysis. In other words, once someone used the program, they were likely to report a positive impact on their family resulting from that program.

80% of respondents who used a program or service reported an increase in family well-being
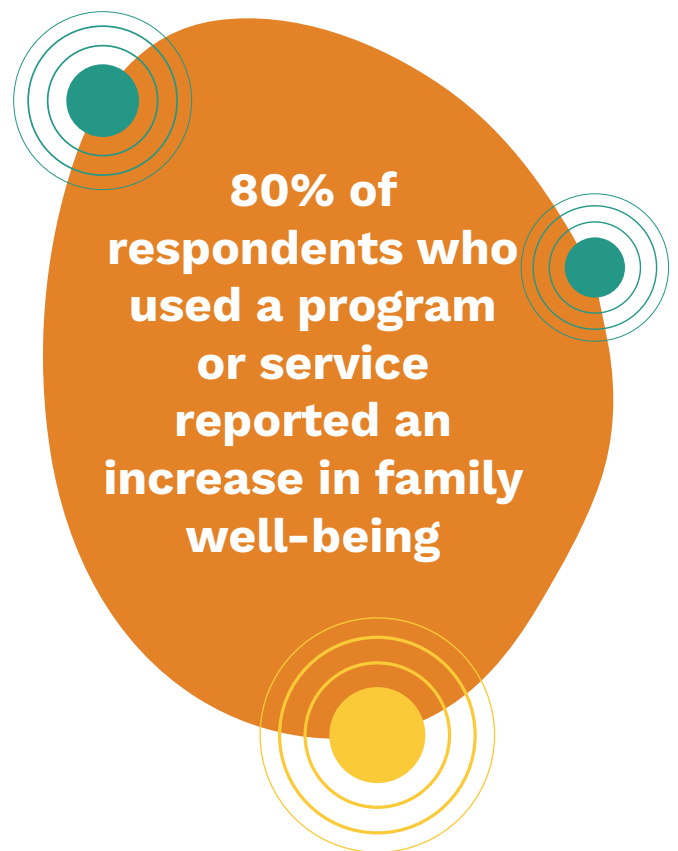
Figure 21. Percent of respondents reporting positive impacts on family well-being due to participation in a program or service, 2022 and 2023
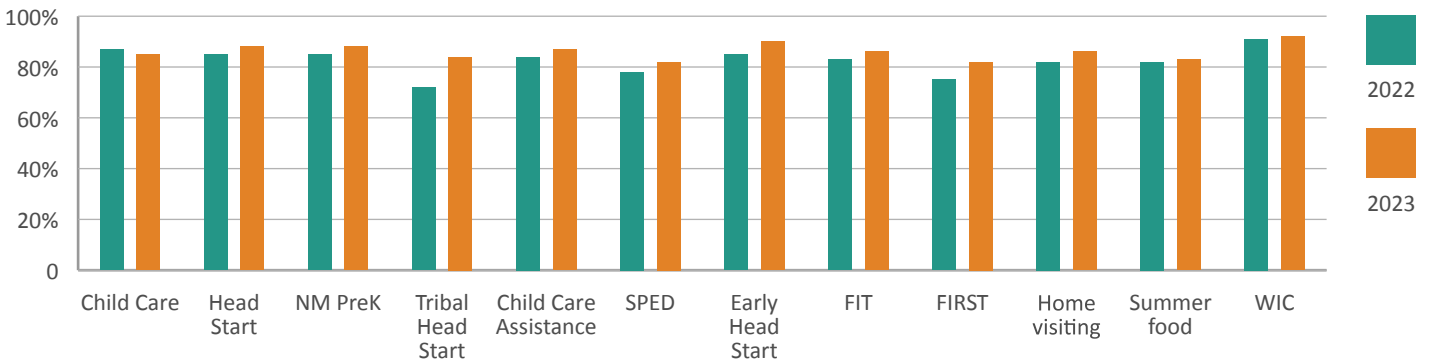
Value of Programs

Respondents were asked to identify the most valuable aspects of the programs and services they used from a list of 10 options, including an "other" answer choice for providing open-ended responses. The frequency of responses for each option and set of programs and services is provided in the figure below.

For every type of program or service, respondents consistently indicated that the ability to use the services when needed was the most valuable aspect. Following this, respondents identified convenience of the program

or services offered, timing, ease of signing up, lack of judgment, and affordability as the next most important factors influencing the value of a program.

Responses were analyzed across subgroups, but no significant differences were found among racial/ethnic, household income, and geographic subgroups.

Figure 22. Most valuable aspects of programs used by respondents (reported as percent of respondents who reported using the program), 2023

	Child Care	Preschool*	Child Care Assistance	Special Education	Family Support and Early Intervention	Food Support
I did not feel judged for using these service	24%	25%	24%	27%	30%	32%
I was able to use services when my family needed them	55%	38%	51%	43%	51%	56%
It does not take much time to use the services in my area	24%	17%	28%	27%	28%	32%
It was easy to get transportation to use the services	18%	14%	18%	21%	21%	16%
Signing up for the services was easy	26%	22%	29%	27%	33%	33%
The services are responsive to my family's language or culture	19%	17%	21%	25%	29%	21%
The services provided before- and after-school care options	21%	21%	NA	NA	NA	NA
The services were affordable	26%	23%	27%	23%	31%	24%
The services were offered at convenient times	26%	34%	24%	27%	31%	30%
The services did not help my family	2%	6%	2%	4%	2%	3%

* Due to a survey collection error, results for preschool most valuable aspects were estimated based on a smaller sample group (n= 229)

In addition to selecting from the list displayed above, participants were given the opportunity to share other valuable aspects that were not listed. Below are the open-ended findings from participants who shared additional valuable aspects about the programs

Table 1. Child care services other most valuable aspects			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Parents Able to Work		"It helped me stay employed after having our second child"	**42% (n=5)**
Quality of Care	• Social Emotional • Values	"Provided social emotional support and development of child."	**25% (n=3)**
Services			**17% (n=2)**
Co-Pay			**8% (n=1)**

Table 2. Preschool other most valuable aspects			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Education	• Supported Development • Peer Interaction	"My child really enjoyed the rich curriculum and programming" "supported development of child"	**50% (n=5)**
Quality of Care	• Family Communication • Relationship with School • Health and Safety	"The program is very caring and helps the whole family improve communication and skills around young children"	**40% (n=4)**
Reducing Parental Burden	• Convenience	"Reducing the parenting burden on parents"	**20% (n=2)**
Hours		"Part time availability"	**10% (n=1)**
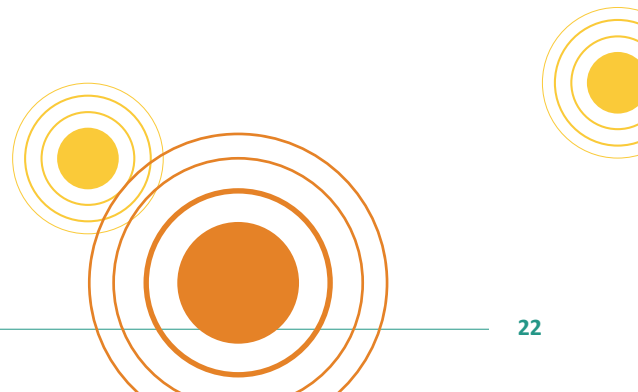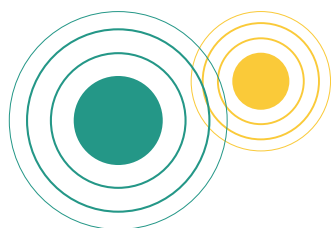
Table 3. Child Care Assistance most valuable aspects

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Relieved Financial Stress	"I would not have been able to afford the program without assistance"	38% (n=5)
Safe Environment	"It's very hard to find reliable and safe child care in our community"	23% (n=3)
Financial Stress	"While services were used they were great and we were super appreciative of the assistance. Since we have not been on the program it has impacted me and my family tremendously and now creates a financial burden"	8% (n=1)

Table 4. Special Education most valuable aspects

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Wait Time	"The wait time for testing/eval is too long. We had to change preschools because the one our kid was at was not understanding why it was taking to long and would not take advice from professionals prior to a diagnosis."	35% (n=2)
Not Satisfied with Services	"My grandson was provided services through APS and it was a total nightmare for my grandson."	25% (n=2)
Improvement in Family Affairs		8% (n=1)
Lack of Support for Special Needs Children	"A specialized teacher and SLP were supporting my daughter. This was not the case at child care services. PED provides a research based, developmentally appropriate learning environment that meets the needs of SPED children where I did not find the resources or the staff that understood how to support my child within the private of child care sector."	8% (n=1)
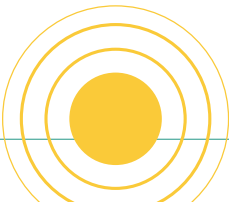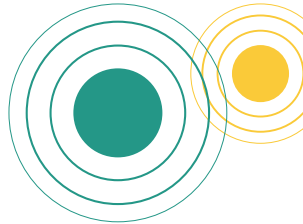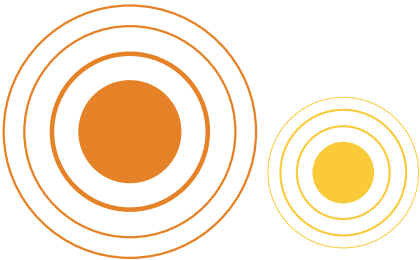
Table 5. Family Support and Early Intervention most valuable aspects

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Resources		"Assisted in connecting us with other resources during a time of need" "It can bring me a lot of relevant professional knowledge, which I don't know"	56% (n=5)
Experience	• Staff • Child Improvemen	"The improvement in our child was valuable."	

Table 6. Food support services other most valuable aspects

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Services provided benefit(s) to the family	• Received help that was needed • Time savings • Included in daycare enrollment	"It offered food when it was needed." "This saves me the time and lack of expertise in choosing baby food." "Our daycare center enrolls everyone I believe. I'm very grateful for this service."	44% (n=8)
Difficulties with access or using benefits	• Hard to use • Not able to access benefits • Experienced other issues with benefits	"Too much hassle to do paperwork" "Hard to use" "I was not able to access these needed benefits."	22% (n=4)
Issues with support office	• Inconvenient office schedule • Long waiting time to hear back	"Took a lot of time to hear back" "...the offices were very busy and times allotted were inconvenient to my schedule at that time."	11% (n=2)
Food quality concerns		"The quality of the food was awful. It was like shopping at a gas station."	6% (n=1)
Other	• Information access • Quality of services • Wage increase	"Need more information about services." "People in support office were kind," "Increasing wages"	17% (n=3)

The most cited area for improvement was the complexity of signing up for programs.

Improvements Identified

Respondents were also asked to identify areas most in need of improvement among the programs and services they used. The same 10 answer options were used, but the meaning of each option was shifted to the negative (see figure below for examples of the language used). The frequency of responses for each option and set of programs and services is provided in the figure below.

Improvements identified by respondents were more varied than the aspects they found valuable. The complexity of signing up for programs or services stood out as the most frequently cited improvement, being mentioned for four out of the six areas. The price of child care services was identified as an area for improvement by nearly one in four respondents (23 percent), the highest rate for any of the options in any program. Other commonly cited areas of improvement across most programs included transportation challenges, wait times to use programs or services, and the amount of time required to access them.

Conversely, a significant portion of program users (ranging from a third for child care services to about half for food support) believed no program improvements were necessary. Additionally, areas with the lowest needs for improvements across all programs were the feeling of judgment, the lack of responses to family's culture and language, and offering services at inconvenient times.

Figure 23. Areas of improvement for programs used by respondents (reported as percent of respondents who reported using the program), 2023

	Child Care	Preschool	Child Care Assistance	Special Education	Family Support and Early Intervention	Food Support
I felt judged for using these services	6%	5%	7%	8%	4%	8%
I had to wait too long to use services my family needed	14%	15%	13%	16%	11%	10%
I had trouble getting transportation to use the services	11%	14%	12%	14%	13%	11%
It takes too much time to use the services in my area	12%	13%	14%	14%	12%	13%
Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming	18%	17%	18%	16%	18%	13%
The services did not offer before- and after-school care options	12%	13%	NA	NA	NA	NA
The services were expensive	21%	16%	17%	15%	14%	7%
The services were not responsive to my family's language or culture	7%	6%	8%	9%	10%	5%
The services were offered at inconvenient times	7%	7%	8%	11%	9%	8%
No improvements are necessary	32%	34%	37%	33%	42%	49%

In addition to selecting from the list displayed above, participants also had the opportunity to share other areas of improvements that were not listed. Below are the open-ended findings from participants who shared additional areas of improvements about programs.

Table 7. Child care services other identified areas for improvements			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Quality of Care	• Staff • Health and Safety • Communication • Organization	"The center is disorganized and not great at communication but I am hesitant to move him since we had such a hard transition to these services"	**60% (n=38)**
Availability	• Hours • Weekend services • Services in Spanish	"I cannot find a a daycare that had availability so I did not use services"	**40% (n=25)**
Issues with support office	• Inconvenient office schedule • Long waiting time to hear back	"Took a lot of time to hear back" "…the offices were very busy and times allotted were inconvenient to my schedule at that time."	**11% (n=2)**
Cost		"Child care in general is a difficult cost for our family and we would be able to use it more if it cost less."	**13% (n=8)**
Inclusion	• Special needs care	"They were not equipped to accommodate our child's needs and did not want to improve."	**11% (n=7)**
More Information		"Better communication and advertisement is services offered"	**6% (n=4)**

Table 8. Preschool services other identified areas for improvements			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Availability	• Full/part time hours • Before and after school care • Summer School	"Not available in our community, we have to travel about an hour one way to access" "I would have liked it to just be half day or every other day instead of full time." "Always need more care, longer hours and coverage for breaks."	**61% (n=37)**
Quality	• Parent communication • Teacher training/pay • Ratios	"Increasing the wages" "Many programs have waitlists or high teacher: student ratios."	**34% (n=21)**

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Inclusivity	• Increased special needs care • Therapy Services	"Daycares are not equipped to meet special needs post 3" "Limited resources to meet my son's needs"	31% (n=19)
Resources	• Access to information about programs	"Resources for preschool programs are uneven, with some regions having more adequate preschool resources than others" "There is not a comprehensive list available to view all the options and their cost. I had to do a lot of research and digging on my own to find a program that would work"	15% (n=9)
Location	• Increased special needs care • Therapy Services	"Not available in our community, we have to travel about an hour one way to access" "I would prefer it to be located in k-5 schools rather than self contained programs"	7% (n=4)

Table 9. Child Care Assistance other identified areas for improvements

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Difficulties Obtaining Services	"Many preschool or daycare companies in this area do not accept the ECECD funding assistance."	37% (n=9)
Financial Stress/Cost	"Copays still very high for my family"	21% (n=7)
Availability	"Need more providers in this rural area"	15% (n=5)
Application Process	"I did not realize that applying online meant a very long wait to receive services but applying in-person meant immediate assistance."	9% (n=3)
Do Not Qualify Do to Income	"I think the program is really helpful. I used it when I lost employment and my income changed but I wish there was partial assistance for families who may not get the entire subsidy. When working, it feels that my entire paycheck went to daycare"	6% (n=2)
Services for Special Needs Children	"Special needs child care providers"	6% (n=2)
Lack of Knowledge of Programs	"More education on programs"	3% (n=1)

Table 10. Special Education other identified areas for improvements

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Training	"There was not certified/licensed staff providing services."	17% (n=5)
Access to Services in Area	"Finding the resources within my community is hard. Once we have the services it went great, but getting the information of what services/programs we could get help with was difficult to find"	7% (n=2)
Services for Special Needs Children	"Special education services such as round tree only serve children up to 3 years of age. There is a 2-year gap from 3 to 5 years of age that children are not receiving services."	17% (n=5)
Quality of Educational Services	"The PED sites my child attended were amazing and I felt they were professional and really knew what they were doing. I did not feel that way at child care. Child care needs to realize their limited education in this area and allow PED to continue on with their systems of support and specialized areas. This can not be mirrored at child care. PED sites are not child care."	7% (n=2)
Limited Providers	"It feels like the providers' caseloads are huge and there aren't enough people providing the services (though the providers are fantastic!)"	13% (n=4)
Wait Time	"I wish it didn't take so long to get services. Hopefully, it will be less of a hassle now that I'm in."	3% (n=1)
Extending Services Beyond Age Three	"Extend services beyond age 3"	10% (n=3)

Table 11. Family Support and Early Intervention services other identified areas for improvements

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Staff	• Communication • Limited staff	"There is high turnover in staff due to unrealistic expectations put on them by their jobs and by the state." "More providers, as they seem to have very full case loads"	37% (n=14)
Availability		"Not having the PT OT FT or ST available all the time" "There wasn't any room to put both my kids in the same center they were in separate centers."	21% (n=8)

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Services		"Covid caused everything to be virtual which didn't help my son and by the end of it, he aged out"	18% (n=7)
In-Person Visits		"When I used the in home services last, they were remote only, which was hard for a young child to focus on"	13% (n=5)
Education	• New ideas for families	"More education"	8% (n=3)
Resources	• Information available to families	"I know that there is a big need in the community for the services. I did have to wait some time for availability with a home visitor. We need more of these resources."	8% (n=3)

Table 12. Food support services other identified areas for improvements

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Food Quality and Variety		"Services do not support healthy organic options, lactose free organic options." "The quality of the food is not good." "More open availability of healthy food for children." "Service failed to consistently meet my child's nutritional needs."	30% (n=17)
Barriers to Accessibility	• Inconvenient hours and wait times at support office • Difficulty with access to information about programs • Inability to transfer services between states • Complications with use of services • Complications with application process	"I just wish that the times for food support services were opened a little bit longer to accommodate those who get out by 5." "Needs to be updated on what kinds of food you can get with the program." "It was very complicated to use WIC checks and often left me feeling frustrated and with limited food choices/choices that didn't fit what my family preferred to eat (organic not allowed, only certain types of bread or sweet cereals, etc.)"	35% (n=20)
Financial Assistance and Eligibility for Assistance	• limited funds -not enough support for food • Eligibility/income guidelines need to be adjusted • Higher wages	"My son and I get $50/month in SNAP benefits. This is hard to stretch. I bought a large sack of beans yesterday, so I now have $20 for the rest of the month." "Eligibility could increase a bit more The guidelines need to be adjusted to reflect the current financial climate"	21% (n=12)

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Issues with Distribution Sites	• Places providing food support run out of food quickly • Not all baby formulas available at all WIC offices	"They often run out of food quickly. You can get there at 12:15 and it's already gone." "All WIC offices to offer all formula types. I had to go to a far one for my daughter's formula. That was an inconvenience."	**4% (n=2)**
Quality of Services	• Quality of summer program services • Quality of support office services	"The summer food boxes always arrived late." "The workers are rude and it seems they do not want to help the customers or are bothered if we ask any questions. The workers have an attitude and do not know how to talk to their beneficiaries."	**4% (n=2)**

Top three reasons for inability to access services:

- ## Long wait times

- ## High costs of programs or services

- ## Complex signup processes

Reasons for No Access to Programs and Services

Respondents were also asked if they needed a program or service but faced challenges in accessing it. For this question, 11 answer options were provided, including the same 10 options from the previous question, along with an additional choice indicating that the respondent did not believe the program or service would improve their family's well-being. All 11 response options are provided in the figure below.

The majority of respondents indicated at least one of three main reasons for their inability to access needed programs and services: long wait times, high costs of programs or services, and complex signup processes. Additionally, a significant number of respondents cited other reasons for not having access to needed programs and services, particularly in the Child Care Assistance and food support programs. Most respondents who mentioned another reason explained that their family did not qualify for these services due to the income ceilings set by the programs.

Respondents highlighted the lack of service awareness in their geographical areas as the most commonly cited reason for not being able to access services. Specifically, Child Care Assistance and Family Support both had the highest percentages for lack of awareness at 31%. Child care services now receive the highest percentage for high service costs at 28%. However, when compared to other programs, Child Care Assistance programs do not appear to be significantly lower than the others (see figure below.).

Echoing the results highlighted in the areas in need of improvements, insensitivity to participants' culture and language was the least frequently selected reason for not being able to access services.

Figure 24. Reasons respondents could not access programs and services (reported as percent of respondents who reported not having access), 2023

	Child Care	Preschool	Child Care Assistance	Special Education	Family Support and Early Intervention	Food Support
I am not aware of services like this in my area	25%	22%	31%	20%	31%	23%
I do not have access to transportation needed to use the service	14%	16%	12%	16%	19%	14%
I do not have time to use the services available in my area	16%	17%	13%	22%	20%	15%
I do not think the service would improve my family's well-being	13%	13%	10%	18%	15%	12%
I would feel judged for using these services	12%	14%	12%	15%	17%	16%
Signing up for the services is too complex or time consuming	18%	18%	19%	22%	19%	22%
The services are not offered at a time my family can use them	14%	19%	13%	18%	18%	15%
The services are not responsive to my family's language or culture	8%	11%	6%	10%	8%	9%
The services are too expensive	28%	19%	22%	16%	13%	10%
The services did not provide before- and after-school care options	10%	11%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wait times to use the services are too long	17%	15%	13%	12%	12%	13%

In addition to selecting from the list displayed above, participants had the opportunity to share other reasons for not having access to services that were not listed. Below are the open-ended findings from participants who shared additional reasons for not having access to programs.

Table 13. Other reason for no access to child care services			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Application Process	• Cost • Income Requirements	"I didn't know how to apply for services" "State stated my income did not meet requirements"	**56% (n=28)**
Availability	• Hours • Age limit	"Daycare options are extremely limited and often full." "I could use child care outside of normal business hours but high quality programs don't often provide this"	**34% (n=17)**
Quality of Care	• Health and Safety • Accommodations	"Accommodations were not made for my disabled child" "My son got so sick so frequently in daycare with so many hospitalizations we had to take him out"	**16% (n=8)**

Table 14. Other reason for no access to preschool programs

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Income		"Services are limited by income restrictions"	38% (n=15)
Availability		"Services for children under 3 years is too limited. waitlists excessively long"	35% (n=14)
Qualifications	• Age Limit • School Hours	"The center we are using ages out 3 year olds" "There are no options for evening or weekend care in my area."	25% (n=10)
Inclusivity	• Services offered	"Have the centers be inclusive to children who have disabilities"	15% (n=6)
Location	• Special needs care		10% (n=4)

Table 15. Other reasons for no access to Child Care Assistance programs.

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Do Not Qualify Do to Income	"We were told our family makes too much money to get assistance, child care costs more than my monthly mortgage and is a huge burden each month, but both my husband and myself have to work or we would not be able to afford to live."	49% (n=45)
Unsure of Application Process	"I don't know where to apply, do I have to be low income to qualify?"	9% (n=8)
Access to Childcare Centers	"I'm not sure I would qualify for this program and there are no after school care centers that would take my children after school. This is what I need."	5% (n=5)
Do Not Qualify Do to Unemployment	"I applied multiple times and was told programs were full or that I was ineligible because I wasn't working, however I was trying to get child care so I could begin working."	3% (n=3)
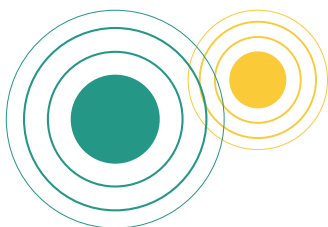
Table 16. Other reason for no access to special education programs

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Financial Stress	"Lack of enough money"	4% (n=1)
Wait Time	"Long wait times and unresponsive from support services"	9% (n=2)
Services Unavailable	"Daycare referred our son to services because of behavior issues, eval showed behavior issues were a result of being gifted, but we were told gifted services are not available at his age"	17% (n=4)
Lack of Knowledge Regarding Programs & Application Process	"Not sure how to"	13% (n=3)
Issues with Special Needs Services	"The school wants my child to have more severe symptoms to qualify for services"	17% (n=4)

Table 17. Other reason for no access to Family Support and Early Intervention programs

Themes	Quotes	Frequency
Services	"The services we need are not offered"	30% (n=6)
Available information	"I learned too late about the services we could have used, like home visiting"	25% (n=5)
Income	"FIT recommends child care for improving my daughters development but its expensive and we do not qualify for Child Care Assistance"	20% (n=4)
Location	"These services are never available where I live. I am in a rural area and they never go to our home"	20% (n=4)
Lack of Accommodation	"Failed to accommodate for special needs"	10% (n=2)

Table 18. Other reason for no access to food support services

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Eligibility	• General Eligibility • Income specific eligibility • Citizenship requirements or fear of losing immigration status • Unaware of qualifying status	"My income is just above the limit for being able to qualify, yet my family is on a lower income overall. It would be helpful to also have partial Eligibility for families like mine who are right above the income limits." "Our income rose so that we don't qualify for certain services, however food prices rose dramatically so that they cost us a much higher percentage of our income than before." "My immigration status, they say access to these programs like food stamps can affect when you are trying to get your citizenship." (Translated from Spanish comment) "Don't know if we qualify."	**85% (n=74)**
Insufficient Assistance	• Amount of assistance too low • Increase in cost of food • Reduction in services	"I don't receive enough I receive all support services and the sudden reduction in snap has been hard to deal with…" "Inflation has made things more difficult. Before inflation I was getting by just fine with my SNAP benefits"	**9% (n=8)**
Access to Resources, Services, or Information	• Access to Financial Resources or Services • Knowledge about access to resources • Wait time to have case viewed	"Never got a call back to reschedule my WIC recertification and when I called I didn't get an answer." "Lack of money" "The wait time to get my case viewed is over a month."	**8% (n=7)**
Limitations on Food Options	• Food allergy options limited	"Options for our food allergies have not been available or are extremely limited."	**1% (n=1)**

Figure 25. Sources of program access prevention, 2022– 2023 comparison*

	Child Care	Preschool	Child Care Assistance	Special Education	Family Support and Early Intervention	Food Support
I am not aware of services like this in my area	-3%	-9%	-1%	-11%	-12%	-5%
I do not have access to transportation needed to use the service	6%	6%	6%	4%	10%	3%
I do not have time to use the services available in my area	8%	8%	5%	15%	9%	6%
I do not think the service would improve my family's well-being	6%	6%	5%	7%	6%	3%
I would feel judged for using these services	5%	7%	6%	3%	10%	4%
Signing up for the services is too complex or time consuming	3%	5%	-1%	0%	-3%	7%
The services are not offered at a time my family can use them	2%	6%	6%	1%	7%	6%
The services are not responsive to my family's language or culture	3%	6%	4%	-1%	2%	4%
The services are too expensive	8%	2%	2%	2%	-4%	7%
The services did not provide before- and after-school care options	3%	-2%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wait times to use the services are too long	0%	-1%	-3%	-8%	-3%	0%

* Note for interpretation – scores represented as negative indicate a drop in the number of people agreeing with the statement on the left for the program indicated by the column. Those indicated as a positive number indicate an increase of the number of people agreeing.)

When comparing the reasons for which respondents might not have been able to access services between 2022 and 2023, interesting results emerged. Firstly, respondents' awareness of services in their areas significantly improved across all programs. Secondly, wait times to use services also showed substantial improvement across all programs (except for Food Support, where 2022 results were already low).

Net Promoter Scores

Net Promoter Scores (NPS) measure the loyalty of consumers to a program or organization. NPS scores are obtained through a single question and reported as a number within the range of -100 to +100. Any score above 0 indicates that the program has significantly more promoters—those who rate their likelihood of recommending the service to a friend or colleague at 9 or 10 out of 10—than detractors, who rate their likelihood of recommendation at 6 or less. A higher score on this measure is considered desirable. The NPS scores across all programs range from 55 for the WIC program to 13 for Tribal Head Start or preschool programs.

The comparison in 2023 between Head Start programs with an NPS of 46 and Tribal Head Start or preschool programs with an NPS of 13 is noteworthy and may signal the need for further investigation into how these programs are meeting the needs of the families they serve.

The Tribal Head Start NPS is 33 points lower than the Head Start NPS
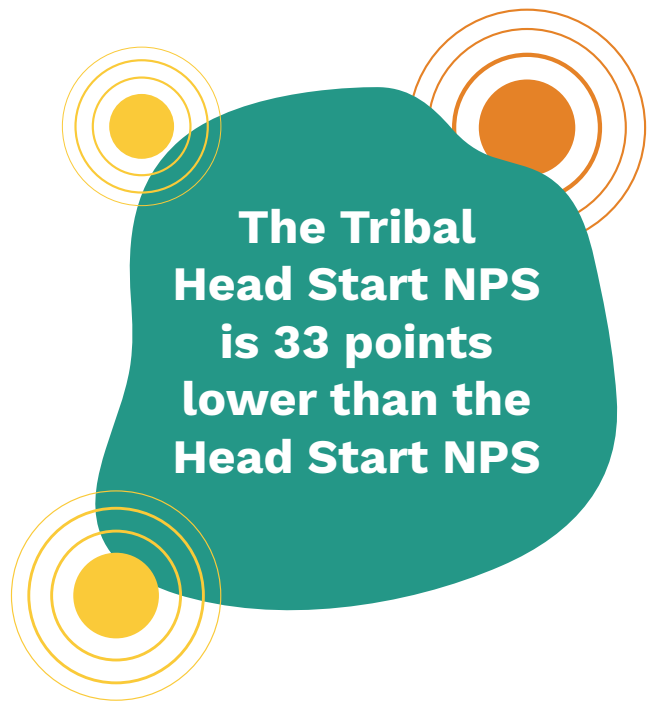
Figure 26. Programs net promoter score comparison, 2022 and 2023
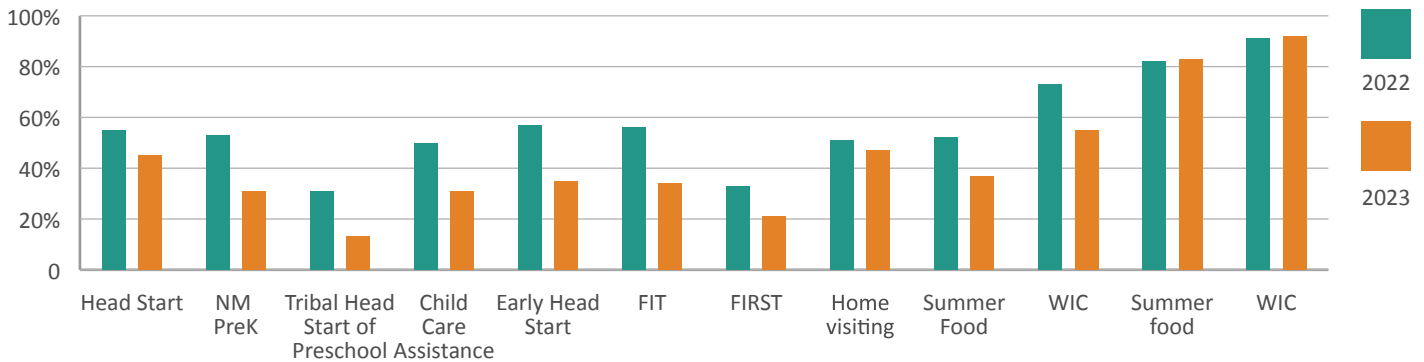
However, we should exercise caution in interpreting these results, as in some cases—like WIC—respondents are rating a single program, while in the case of Head Start and preschool programs, respondents experience different specific preschool and Head Start centers that implement a particular type of program.

There are no readily available industry benchmarks for NPS scores in early childhood services, so the primary use of these scores is to observe trends over time. Across all programs, we notice a downward trend in NPS scores from 2022 to 2023, which calls for further investigation. The 2022 survey was conducted at the beginning of that year, capturing experiences from 2021 and early 2022—a period that coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation may have influenced people's willingness to recommend programs and services. In contrast, the 2023 survey collected experiences from 2022 and early 2023, when life and operations had returned to normal.

Respondent Needs

Scale of Needs

In the third section of the survey, respondents were asked about specific needs related to child care, early childhood services, food and housing insecurity, and access to medical care and insurance. The complete list of needs presented to respondents is listed in the figure below. Respondents indicated the frequency with which they experienced each need in the last 12 months on a five-point scale that ranged from never to always. The "% Experienced" column indicates the percentage of respondents who indicated they had experienced that need at any point during the past 12 months, while the " % Often or Always" column indicates the percentage of respondents who reported experiencing that need often or always during the past 12 months.

The most frequently experienced need among respondents in both 2023 and 2022 was the need for child care to allow an adult to work outside the home. In 2022, 74% of respondents indicated that finding child care was a significant factor in enabling an adult in the household to work outside of the home. This figure increased by 5% to 79% in 2023. One in three respondents (34%) indicating this need occurred often or always remained consistently high from 2022 to 2023. Similarly, a comparable number of respondents indicated that adults in the household had to miss work to care for a sick child, and they were worried about accessing necessary services or support in caring for their children. Both of these indicators also increased from 2022 to 2023, by 3% and 6% respectively.

In 2022, worries about medical care were the least cited needs from respondents; however, these showed the most significant increase in need from 2022 to 2023. We observe an 11% increase in respondents worried about accessing medical care in case of emergency, rising from 54% to 65%. Those concerned about paying for medical care increased by 12%, from 58% to 70%—placing this among the top six concerns of respondents, with three out of five experiencing this worry in the past 12 months. More than two out of five respondents (41%) indicated that their family was not covered by health insurance at some point in the last 12 months in 2022. This figure increased by 12% to 53% in 2023, meaning that more than one in two respondents' families lacked health insurance in 2023.

While child care was the most frequently cited need among respondents, a majority also reported experiencing food and housing insecurity at some point during the last 12 months, and we observed significant increases in these reports from 2022 to 2023. Experiences of food insecurity among families in New Mexico are notably high and have increased from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, almost two out of three households (62%) indicated they experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months. This figure increased by 9% to 72% in 2023. Regarding housing insecurity, it ranked as the second and third least reported concern among respondents in 2023. However, housing insecurity was still reported at significant rates, and reports increased by 7-8% from 2022 to 2023, with more than one in two households (54%) experiencing worries about housing insecurity at some point in the previous 12 months.

In the comparison between the 2022 and 2023 data on needs, we observe increases in all areas, ranging from a 12% increase in the need for health care items to a 3% increase for child care items.

Average increases in need from 2022 to 2023 by area:

- Child care: 5.3%
- Food insecurity: 8.5%
- Housing insecurity: 8%
- Health care access and insurance: 11.7%

53% of respondents lacked health insurance at some point in 2023
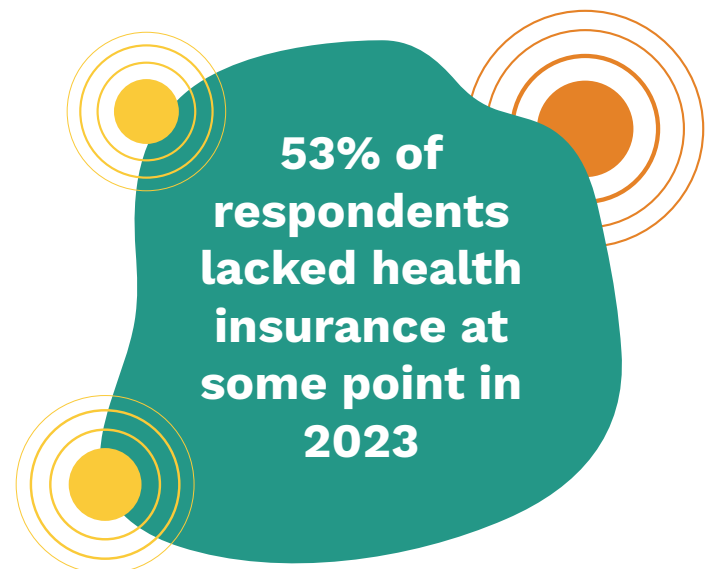
The average increase in indicated need across the six items with the greatest increase is 10.1%, which includes items related to health care, food insecurity, and housing insecurity. On the other hand, the average increase in indicated need across the six items with the least increase is 6%, covering child care access and housing insecurity.

Figure 27. Comparison between 2022–2023 needs experienced by respondents in the past 12 months, reported as percent of respondents

	Experienced			Often and Always		
	2022	2023	Change	2022	2023	Change
Finding child care was a major factor in whether or not an adult in our family was able to work outside the home.	74%	79%	↑5%	34%	-34%	0%
I worried that an adult in our family would have to miss work in order to look after a child who was not sick	73%	76%	↑3%	26%	25%	↓1%
I worried about getting services or support to effectively care for my child	70%	76%	↑6%	23%	26%	↑3%
I worried that my child needed care and support that I could not provide without help	65%	72%	↑7%	22%	23%	↑1%
I worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more	62%	71%	↑9%	18%	19%	↑1%
I worried about paying for medical care in case of illness or emergency	58%	70%	↑12%	18%	23%	↑5%
The food our family bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more	62%	70%	↑8%	14%	16%	↑2%
I worried that the cost of housing would force me to not buy or cut back on my family's necessities (food, clothing, etc.).	59%	68%	↑9%	18%	21%	↑3%
I worried that my family would not have access to medical care in case of illness or emergency.	54%	65%	↑11%	15%	21%	↑6%
I worried that our family wouldn't have a place to sleep that met our basic needs.	46%	54%	↑8%	13%	15%	↑2%
I worried about being forced to move from the place where we were living.	47%	54%	↑7%	12%	15%	↑3%
My family was not covered by health insurance	41%	53%	↑12%	12%	16%	↑4%

Analysis of Open-Ended Needs Answers

In addition to the items included in the scale of needs questions mentioned earlier, respondents were given the opportunity to provide an open-ended response detailing any additional needs they were experiencing. Out of the total 378 participants who responded to the question, 244 simply replied with "No" or "None," making their responses unanalyzable. Therefore, the analysis focused on 134 responses. A table displaying the breakdown of themes from these responses can be found below

Table 19. Thematic analysis of open-ended needs responses.			
Themes	**Subthemes**	**Quotes**	**Frequency**
Access to and availability of services	• Community programs for toddlers, children, and parents • Geographically accessible child care (tribal and rural areas) • More affordable child care options • Increased options for quality child care and preschool • Support classes for parents • Easier access to support for grandparent caregivers	"Eunice NM does not have any licensed daycares and it is such a battle. I had to resign at my position due to the lack of support as far as a daycare in my hometown instead of having to do the drive to Hobbs NM." "We need more affordable, accessible, quality daycares!" "Need care center in my area." "High quality child care centers usually have a long waiting list."	**39% (n=52)**
After school care, activities, and additional summer and holiday break programs	• Flexible options for full-time and weekend working parents • Summer and holiday coverage • Additional free activities for children	"We will have a problem finding adequate child care when our children start PreK/kindergarten and do not have school the full day on Wednesdays." "Child care in the summer and around holidays. Child care the accommodates the hours of working parents" "I can't afford the summer program."	**29% (n=39)**
Access to medical services and specialty providers	• Medical Services • Psychological, Mental Health, and Behavioral Health support • Speech and OT therapy providers • Affordable specialty services	Una proveedora de servicio de cuidado y asistencia para niños con discapacidad." English Translation: "A service provider and assistance for children with disabilities." "Speech therapy, physical therapy and counseling to work on emotions." "We need affordable speech therapy for home-schooled children."	**19% (n=26)**
Financial assistance	• Food allergy options limited	"Options for our food allergies have not been available or are extremely limited."	**1% (n=1)**

Themes	Subthemes	Quotes	Frequency
Financial assistance	• Higher earning threshold for eligibility for services • Financial assistance programs for daycare • Assistance with Kinder program • Housing • Extending copay waivers	"I believe we need to come up with a system that allows single parents to earn more without being taken off services." "I wish there were some subsidies." "Please extend the copay waiver. It has been such a great help and decreased my stress. I am a teacher and I cannot afford to pay for child care alone and not qualify for food stamps."	**12% (n=16)**
Support and Services for Special Needs Children	• Daycare/ Preschool for special needs children • Inclusion efforts/supports for special needs children	"Autism Therapy" "Special needs child care with smaller class as many children can cause a special needs child to overstimulate." "Early assessments of learning difficulties." "For community in general- better inclusion efforts in PreK!!"	**6% (n=8)**
Nutrition related services and access	• Healthier and/or more varied food options for allergies etc. • More food assistance	"The cut in food stamps that are needed. Not enough money to last." "Vegetarian vegan food options soy milk tofu." "I recently applied for food stamps for my kids. Got approved for only $117 a month for both kids. I have a mortgage all bills debt with credit cards and more expenses and I just got approved for so little to feed my kids."	**5% (n=7)**
Improved access to information about services	• Information about resources available for children and eligibility requirements • Language accessible resources/services	Provide language access based on needs not numbers. My family and I are here but lost in laws and policies that do not care about diversity. Help us be visible again, help us have our voices back again." "I'd love a better definition of "need". My family would benefit from these programs, but I don't know if we qualify."	**4% (n=5)**
Other needs	• More experienced and knowledgeable workers • Longer parental leave • Delivery of services/food at home • Improved lottery system • Developmental trackers for children	"It would also be nice to see more daycare centers with professional/qualified staff but so many are not paid well and there is a huge turnover rate." "More availability of special education/services bridging the gap between 3y to Kindergarten" "Yes I am the great grandmother and watch my 4 year old granddaughter while her mother is at work. And something I don't have gas to get to the program maybe if they can sign up and deliver to home even if we have to do a home visit because I am 65 and it's hard sometimes to walk. Also maybe have a drop off closer to living resident."	**6% (n=8)**

Appendices

Appendix 1. Methodology

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The survey was developed collaboratively between Project ECHO and ECECD staff in 2021-2022, and was first administered in Spring 2022. To connect with families representing New Mexico's diverse population, the survey was made available in three languages: English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. In 2022, screening questions were included in the electronic version to ensure respondents lived in New Mexico, had experience with early childhood programs in the state, and were taking the survey in good faith. In 2023, with the introduction of Qualtrics as the survey platform, the screening questions were removed and replaced by embedded data directly collected by Qualtrics. These embedded data include device longitude and latitude location, duplicated response scores, fraud scores, and captcha scores. These measures were implemented to detect and eliminate suspicious activities, ensuring the validity and reliability of the collected surveys.

To assess the survey's validity and reliability before its initial deployment, the ECHO team conducted focus groups with a sample of the target population. A total of four online focus groups were conducted via Zoom, involving 27 participants over ten days, from January 28th to February 9th, 2022. Among these focus groups, three were conducted in English with 18 participants, while one was conducted in Spanish with nine participants.

Each focus group commenced with a brief description of the survey and its purpose. Participants were then directed to take the survey in real-time and were encouraged to ask questions or seek assistance through the chat or by unmuting if they encountered any challenges during the survey. After completing the survey and recording survey-taking times, the participants were asked the following open-ended questions, with additional promptings to facilitate the flow of discussion:

- Were there any parts of the survey that were unclear or where you didn't understand what was being asked of you?

- Did you find yourself "running out of steam" at any point while taking the survey?

- Is there anything relevant about early childhood services that we didn't ask about but should?

- Are there any other challenges you faced in taking this survey that we haven't addressed so far?

- Do you have any other thoughts about this survey that we haven't addressed so far?

Based on the feedback received from these focus groups, duplicative survey questions and sections were removed, and one section was reorganized to ensure a better experience for participants while taking the survey. Moreover, several questions were rewritten to enhance clarity and understanding. The survey design was maintained consistently from its initial 2022 deployment to the 2023 deployment to ensure the validity of the instrument in measuring trends over time.

To enhance the usability of the survey interface and safeguard it from automated responses, we transitioned the instrument from RedCap to Qualtrics. Throughout this transition, all questions were retained, and the branching logic from the 2022 implementation was replicated.

TIMELINE

A research timeline was developed in collaboration with ECECD. The timeline includes a strategic outreach planning phase from December 2022 to January 2023, a survey platform transition and outreach materials development phase from February to March 2023, and a distribution and outreach phase from March to May 14th, 2023. After the survey was closed, the data was cleaned, and then we proceeded with analysis and reporting. More information about the steps within each phase can be found in the following table.

Research Timeline, 2023	
Dates	**Activities**
November to January	**Transfer of the survey from Redcap to Qualtrics**
November	**Survey outreach strategy planning in partnership with MediaDesk**
March 22	**Survey launch through Qualtrics**
April 18	**Introduction of survey completion gift cards in partnership with MediaDesk**
May 8	**First batch of gift cards distribution**
May 18	**Survey closed** **Second batch of gift cards distribution**
May 18 - 25	**Survey response validation and preliminary analysis dashboard**
June 2	**Third and final batch of gift cards distribution**

SURVEY OUTREACH AND DISTRIBUTION

For the 2023 edition of the Family Engagement Survey, the planning and execution of survey outreach and distribution were carried out in collaboration with MediaDesk. The primary strategic goal was to ensure that the Family Survey captures diverse responses that represent New Mexico's population both demographically and geographically. The main target audiences were parents and primary caregivers of young children, service providers and professionals working with young children, as well as ECECD leadership and state legislators.

To achieve this goal with the established audiences, MediaDesk focused its efforts on core tactics, starting with the development of a strong visual identity, an outreach kit, a stand-alone website, and a social media campaign. After the survey launch, MediaDesk provided support by implementing targeted tools and strategies to reach specific demographic segments. These tools and strategies included a texting campaign, a digital ad campaign, and in-person outreach support with branded swag at specific events.

During the data collection period we observed that response rates were slow and not demongraphically representative of families across the state. In order to reach our survey goals, we implemented a $5 gift electronic giftcard for New Mexico-based families completing the survey. The giftcard amount was determined collaboratively with ECECD in 2022, but first successfully implemented in 2023. Additional incentives, including swag like stickers and mugs, were provided to respondents who completed the survey at in-person events.

Following the completion of the data analysis, MediaDesk further assisted in communicating the results to partners, policymakers, and respondents through post-survey briefs. They also offered support with the final report design and outreach efforts to effectively disseminate the survey findings. The partnership between Project ECHO and MediaDesk around the Family Engagement survey will be reconducted for subsequent surveys.

In order to assess the evolution of survey demographics and response rates, the teams at Project ECHO and MediaDesk held weekly meetings. During these meetings, the Project ECHO team presented recent changes in survey completion and demographics evaluation, while the MediaDesk team shared insights on social media and website traffic. With this information exchange, both teams were able to communicate effectively and make necessary adjustments to the outreach campaign strategy.

Within each pathway, multiple outreach channels and activities were conducted, including social media advertising, phone calls, emails, and distribution of flyers and papers. Additionally, multiple information sessions were organized. For detailed information about each outreach pathway, channel, and activity, please refer to the table below.

Survey Outreach and Distribution		
Outreach Pathways	**Outreach Channel**	**Outreach Activities**
Electronic	Social Media	• Social Media Campaign • Community Organization Social Media shares
Electronic	Emails	• 1,069 organizations contacted several times via email regarding survey outreach
Electronic	Newsletters	• Survey sent to all Health Sciences Center UNM employees on April 28, 2022
Media	Radio and Print	• Earned media • Free radio PSAs
Paper	Paper Distribution	• Flyers distributed to child care centers and other parent serving organizations
In Person Events	Tabling at events reaching parents	• Be My Neighbor Day • Family Leadership Conference • Duke City Easter Egg Hunt • Duke City Foodie Fest • Family Fun Night • Community Block Party

As part of one of the program's objectives, Project ECHO and MediaDesk collaborated closely with ECECD to plan outreach to the early childhood community and promote family engagement for the annual survey. The partnership with the ECECD communications team was highly effective and responsive. Together, the teams coordinated social media outreach and worked with ECECD to directly communicate with the public and early childhood professionals through their channels.

DATA ANALYSIS

Electronic survey responses were collected via Qualtrics, an online survey program licensed through the University of New Mexico. Data was compiled and validated after the survey was closed. Responses were filtered to exclude automatically generated responses and those not within the target respondent group. Participants' location was verified by matching the provided county and zip codes. Additionally, open-ended answers were reviewed by multiple researchers, with any responses that included only nonsensical responses (strings of characters that did not create words, responses that clearly did not respond to the prompt, etc.) excluded from the final analysis.

Multiple sample subsets were created, each with their own set of filtering criteria. The main filtering difference lay in Qualtrics' built-in fraud score: the most conservative sample subset only retained a fraud score of zero while the least conservative sample subsets retained a wider range of fraud scores. Following the data cleaning and filtering, key items on all three different subsets were compared using Tableau, a data visualization software. Based on this preliminary analysis, it was concluded that all three subsets followed similar patterns on all key items analyzed. Therefore, the least conservative subset with the largest number of surveys was retained for the final analysis. A final data set containing a total of 3496 valid responses was created in Excel and formatted to allow for uploading into Tableau and SPSS. Descriptive statistics were created for key survey items, with cross-tabulations carried out using subgroups based on race/ethnicity, geography, household income, and educational attainment. Multiple categories within a subgroup were combined in cases of low numbers of responses to allow for analysis (urban and rural subgroups for geography, for example). A combination of SPSS, R, and Excel were used to complete the data cleaning, filtering, and analysis.

Appendix 2. Demographics of survey respondents

Respondents were presented with demographics questions about themselves and about their households. Overall, 3495 participants from all 33 counties of New Mexico completed the Family Engagement survey. All submissions were made electronically through Qualtrics.

GEOGRAPHY

Nearly half of respondents lived in Bernalillo County. There was slight overrepresentation of respondents from the Albuquerque and Santa Fe metro areas, and slight underrepresentation from the northwestern and southeastern portions of the state. For comparative purposes, participants' location was grouped into four categories following the New Mexico's Health Indicator Data & Statistics guidelines. Counties were grouped into either a Metropolitan, Small Metropolitan, Mixed Rural and Urban, and Rural category based on their population. According to this classification, 30% of our respondents live in a metropolitan area, 18% in small metropolitan area, 32% in a mixed urban and rural area, and 15% in a rural area.

Figure 28. Number of surveys by county
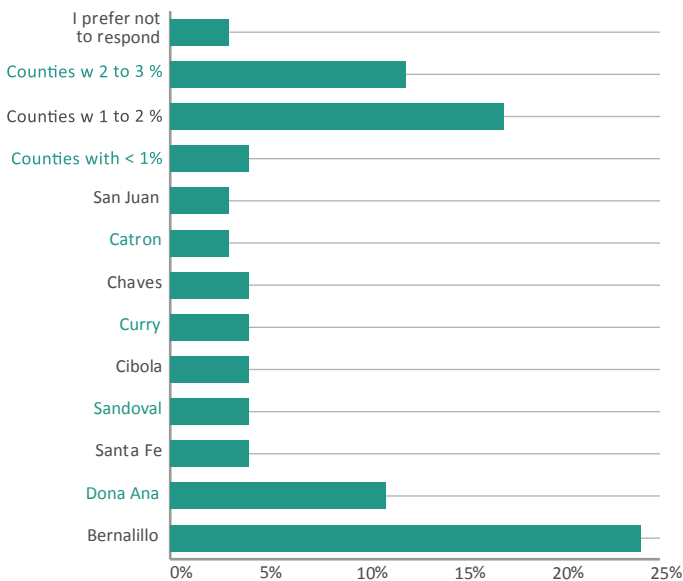
Counties with <1% include: Taos, Socorro, Mora, Torrance, Quay, Sierra, Union
Counties with 1 to 2% include: Luna, San Miguel, Los Alamos, Otero, Valencia, Colfax, De Baca, Roosvelt, Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Rio Arriba, Harding
Counties with 2 to 3% include: Eddy, McKinley, Grant, Lea, Lincoln

Figure 29. Survey responses by geographical area
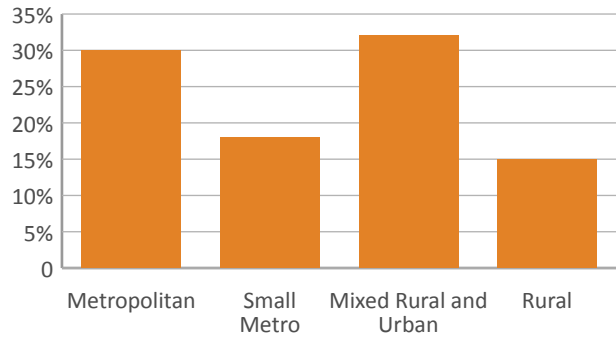
Metropolitan includes: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, Valencia
Small Metro includes: Doña Ana, San Juan, Santa Fe
Mixed Rural and Urban includes: Cibola, Chaves, Curry, Eddy, Grant, Lea, Los Alamos, Luna, McKinley, Otero, Rio Arriba, Roosevelt, San Miguel, Taos
Rural includes: Catron, Colfax, De Baca, Guadalupe, Harding, Hidalgo, Lincoln, Mora, Quay, Sierra, Socorro, Union

RACE/ETHNICITY

Figure 30. Survey responses by race/ethnicity
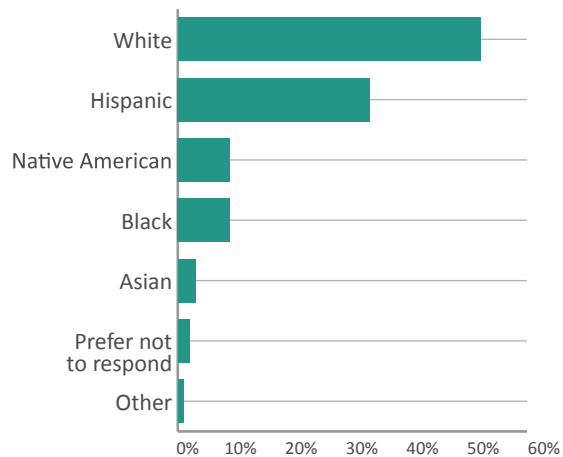
Among the 3496 respondents, the most represented races and ethnicities were White with 52%, followed by Hispanic with 33%. For comparative purposes, participants identifying as Black, Asian, or Others were categorized as Non-White. Lastly, Native American participants had the opportunity to specify their tribes. Among the 152 Native Americans, the most cited tribes are Navajo (n= 92), Mescalero (n= 6), Zuni (n= 5), and Acoma (n=4). Other tribes included Santo Domingo Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, and Laguna Pueblo.

Regarding participants' household income, the two most represented income categories were $40-49k and $50-59k each accounting for 11% of the participants, respectively. For comparative purposes, participants' incomes were categorized into three distinct groups: Under $50k, From $50k to $99k, and Over $100k. Following this grouping, 41% of participants belonged in the first category, while 37% and 17% belonged in the second and third category respectively. Lastly, four income groups were also created based on the 2023 Federal poverty levels guidelines. Specifically, the four groups were: Under 100% of poverty line, Over 100% of poverty line, Under 200% of poverty line, and Over 200% of poverty line. Participants whose income were below or equal to $30k were grouped in Under 100% of poverty line. Participants whose income were below or equal to $60k were grouped in Under 200% of poverty line.

Figure 31. Survey responses by income
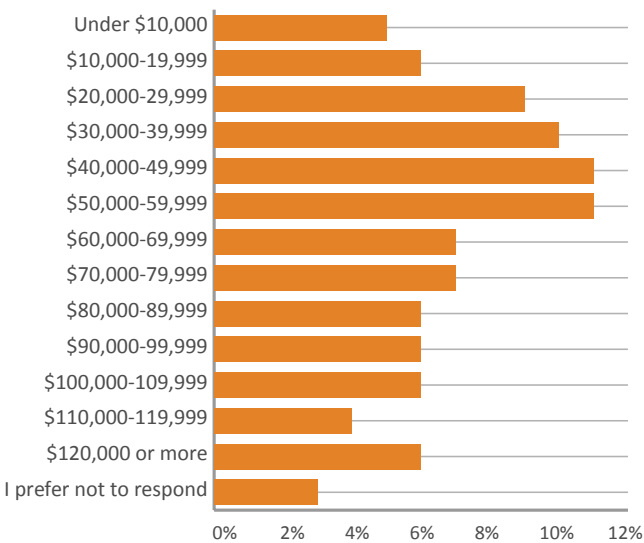
Figure 32. Survey responses by income category
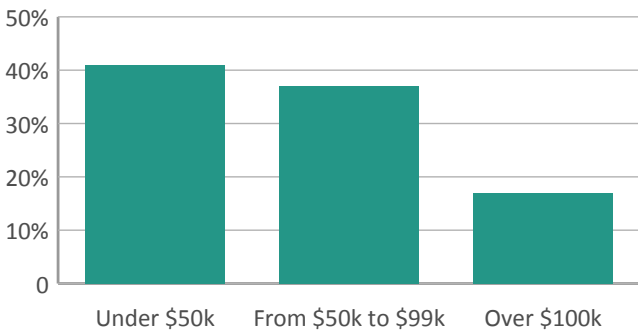
Figure 33. Survey responses by poverty level thresholds
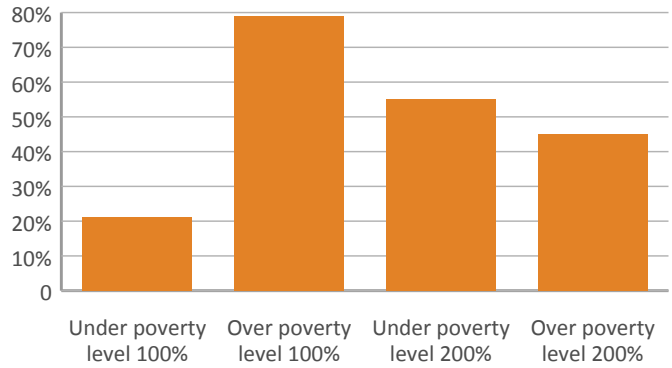
EDUCATION

Regarding participants' education level, the most prominently represented levels were Bachelor's degrees, accounting for 26% of participants, and individuals with some college experience but no degree completion, accounting for 23%. In total, 57% of all participants had attained a post-secondary degree, encompassing Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Professional, or Doctorate degrees.

For comparative purposes, participants were grouped into three distinct categories by education attainment levels: High School, Associate's and Bachelor's, and Graduate and Professional degrees. The High School category includes participants with limited high school education or less, those with a high school diploma or GED, and those with some college education but no degree. Participants in the Graduate and Professional degrees category are participants with a Master's, Doctorate, or Professional degree.

Figure 34. Survey responses by education attainment
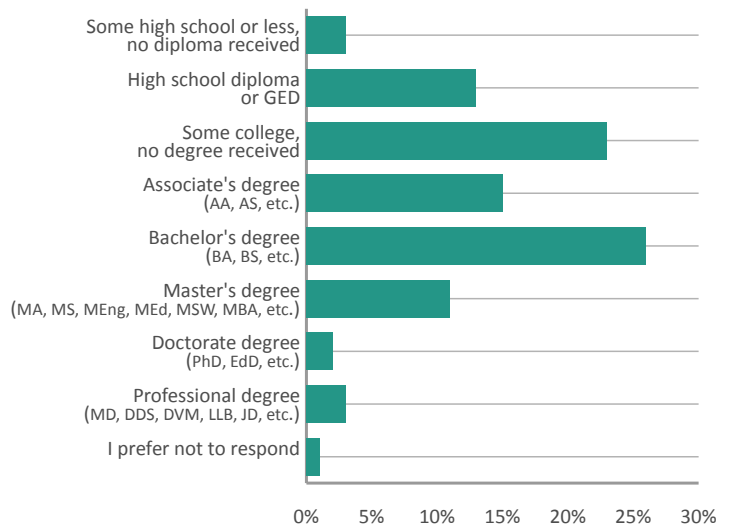
Figure 35. Survey responses by education attainment, grouped
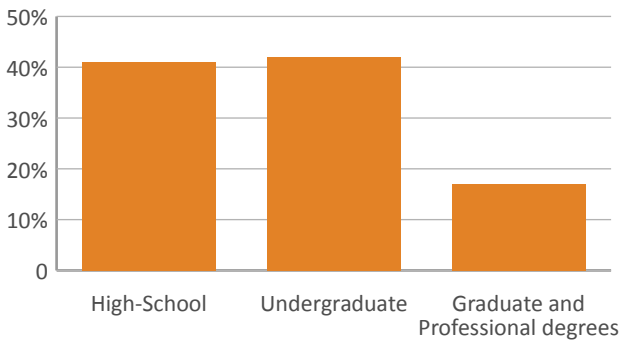
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Participants were asked how many people lived in their household, including both related and unrelated household members. Overall, 30% of participants responded living with four household members, 34% responded living with three household members, and 17% responded five household members. The average participants' household size was 3.9. Regarding the number of children under 18 currently living in respondents' household, 42% responded one child, 32% responded two children, and 14% responded three children. The average number of children under 18 was 1.85.

Figure 36. Survey responses by household size
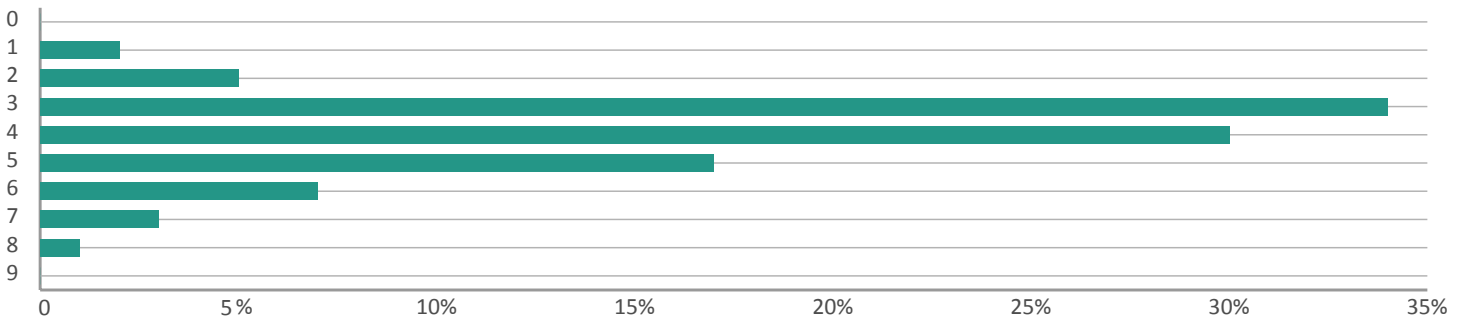
Figure 37. Survey responses by number of children under 18 currently living in the household
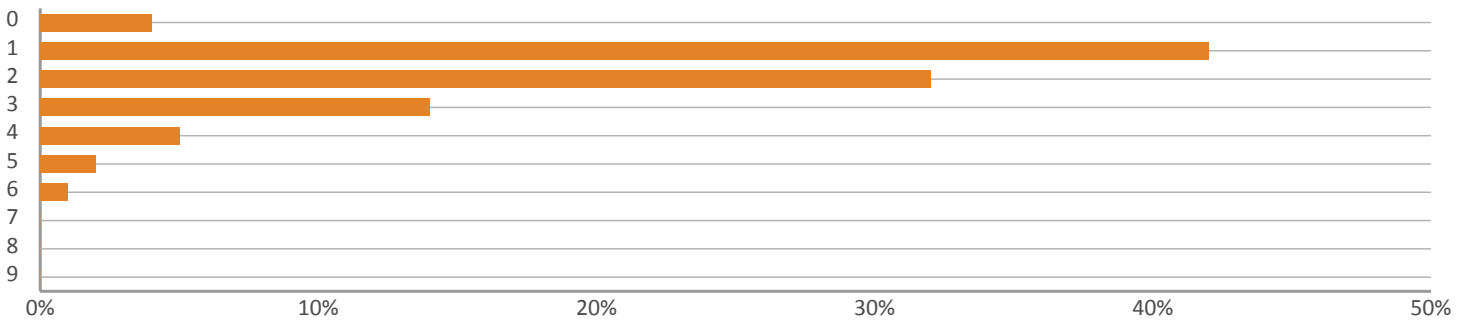
Appendix 3. Usage of Specific Programs by Race/Ethnicity, Household Income, and Geography

FAMILY SUPPORT AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Figure 38. Family support and early intervention programs usage
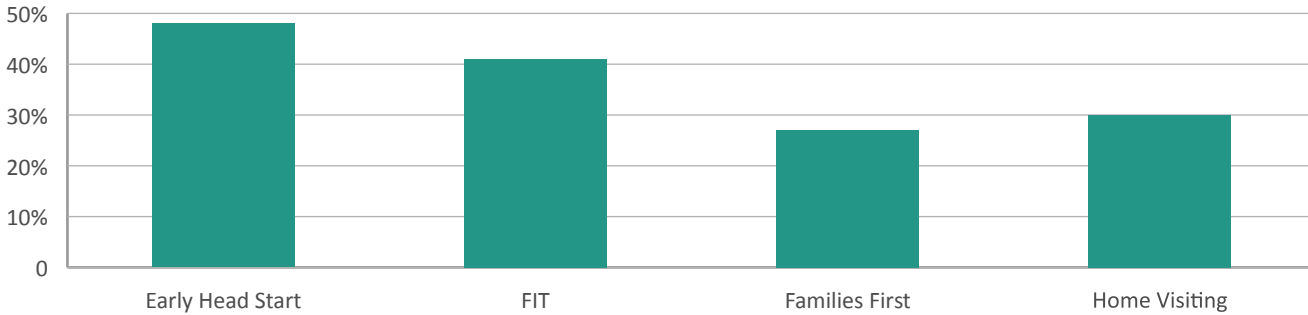
Figure 39. Usage of family support and early intervention programs by race/ethnicity.
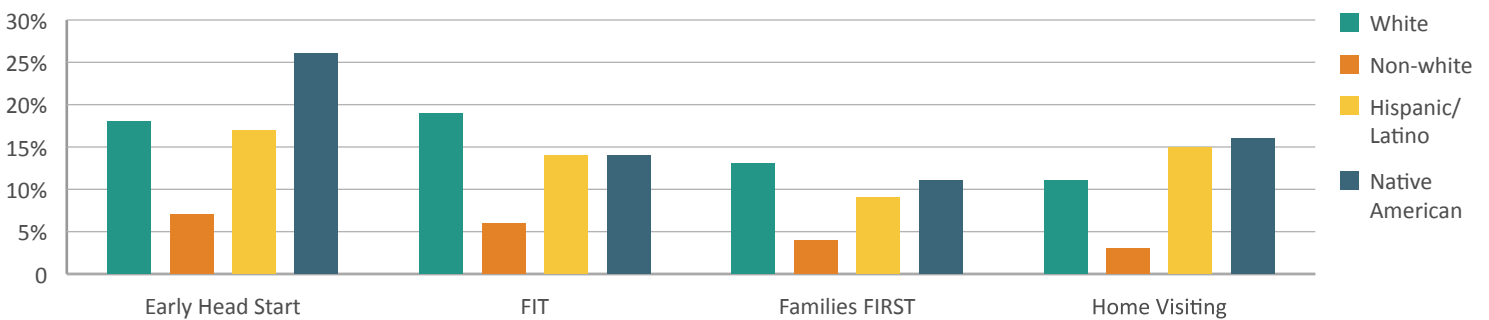
Figure 40. Usage of family support and early intervention programs by household income.
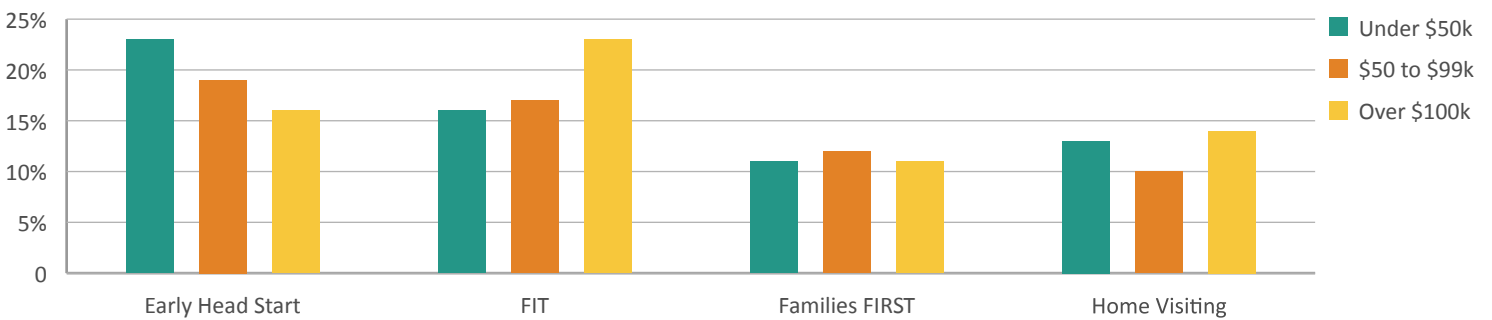
Figure 41. Usage of family support and early intervention programs by poverty levels.
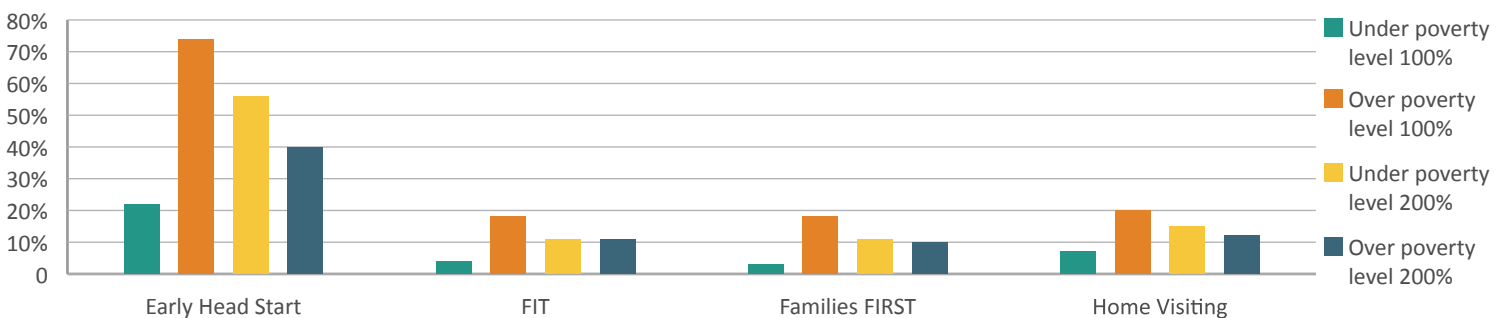
Figure 42. Usage of family support and early intervention programs by education level.
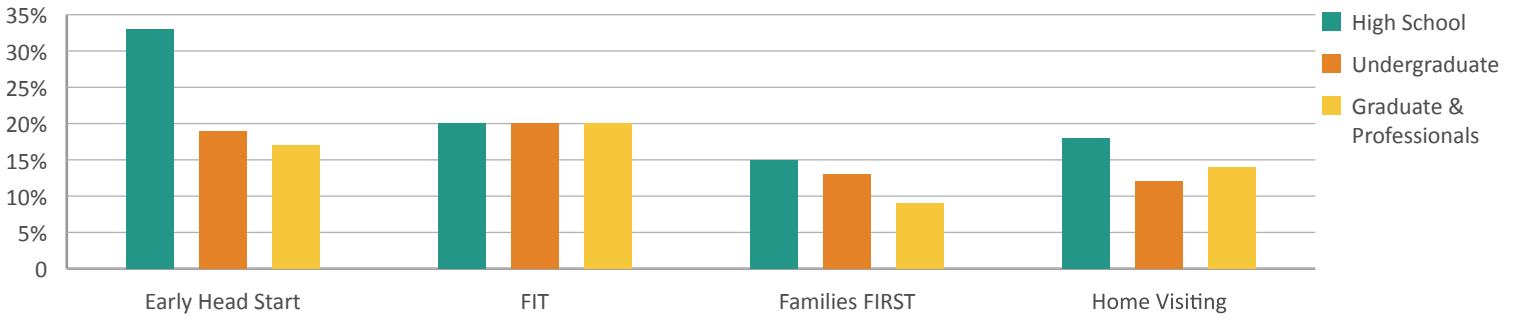
Figure 43. Usage of family support and early intervention programs by location.
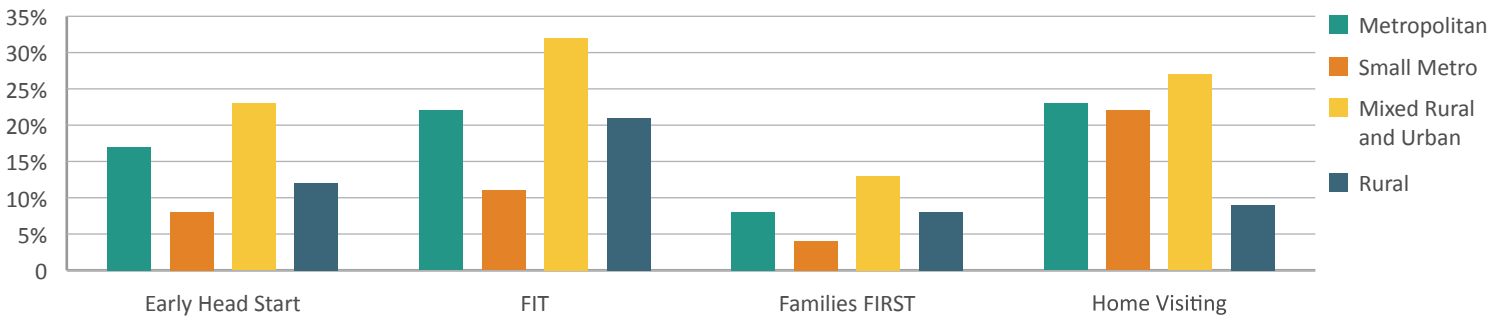
FOOD SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Figure 44. Usage of food support programs.
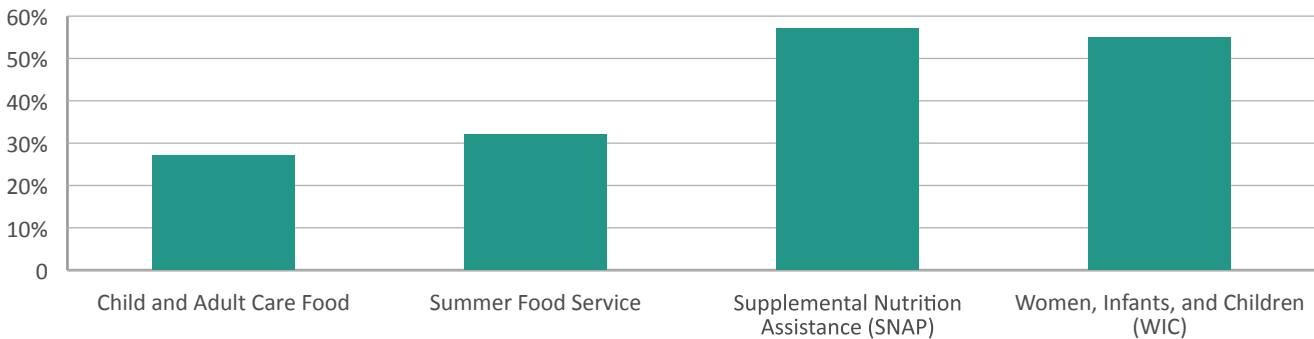
Figure 45. Usage of food support programs by race/ethnicity.
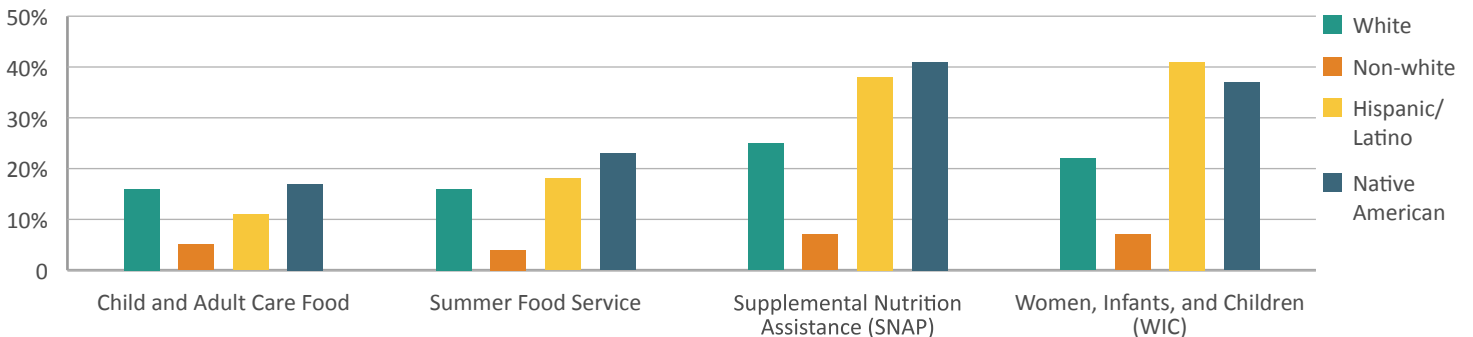
Figure 46. Usage of food support programs by household income.

Legend: Under $50k, $50 to $99k, Over $100k
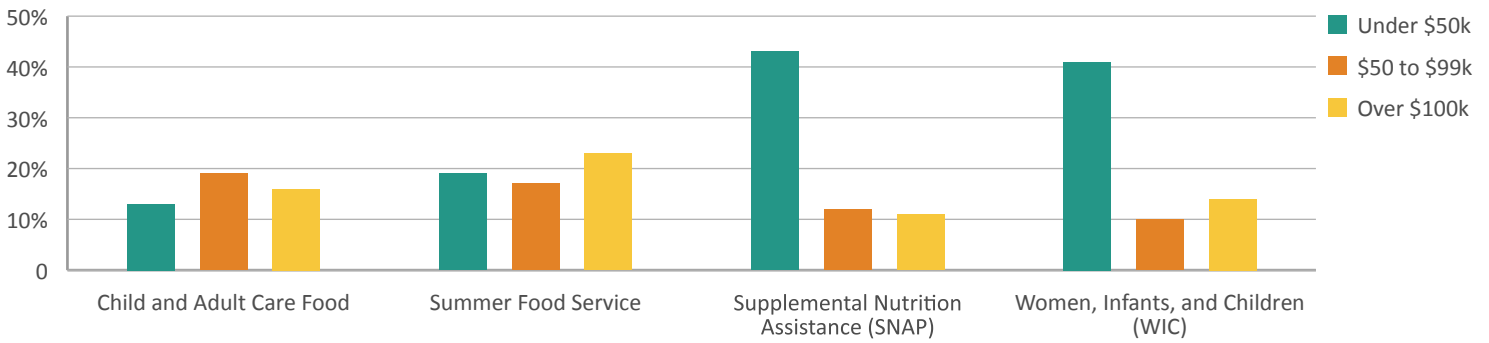
Figure 47. Usage of food support programs by poverty levels.

Legend: Under poverty level 100%, Over poverty level 100%, Under poverty level 200%, Over poverty level 200%
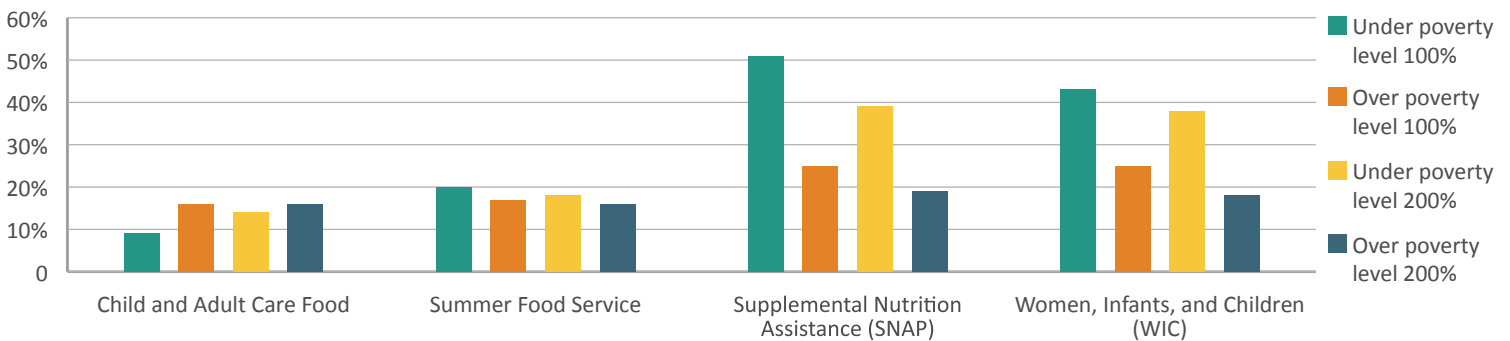
Figure 48. Usage of food support programs by education level.

Legend: High School, Undergraduate, Graduate & Professionals
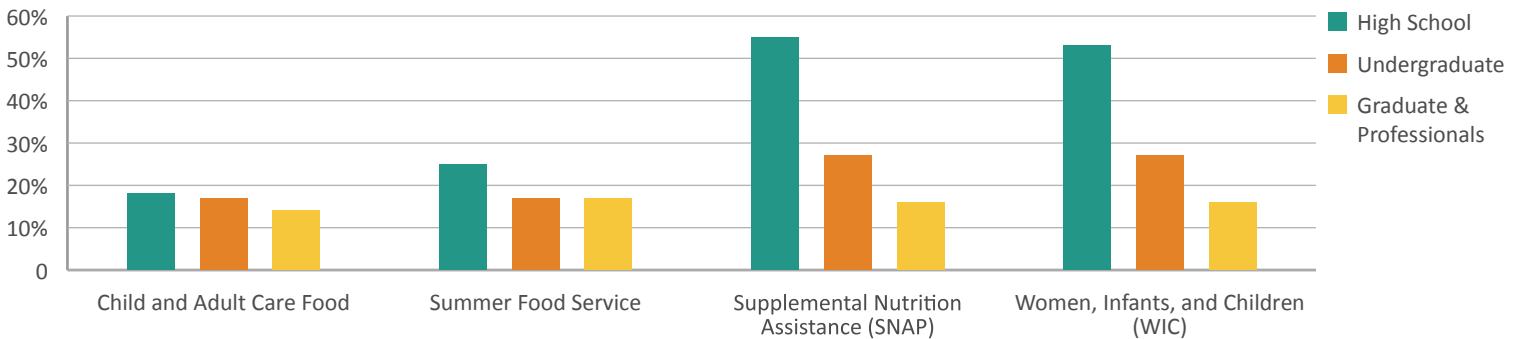
Figure 49. Usage of food support programs by location.

Legend: Metropolitan, Small Metro, Mixed Rural and Urban, Rural
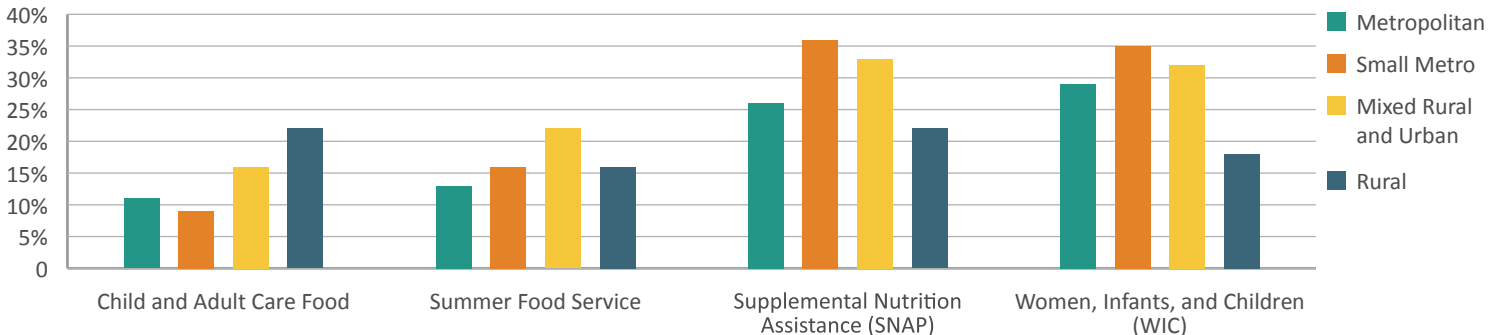
Figure 50. Usage of food support programs.
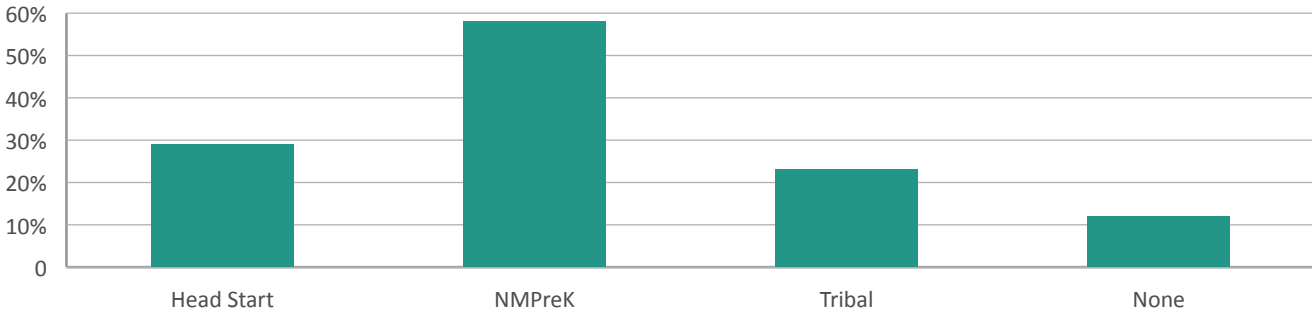
Figure 51. Usage of preschool programs by race/ethnicity.
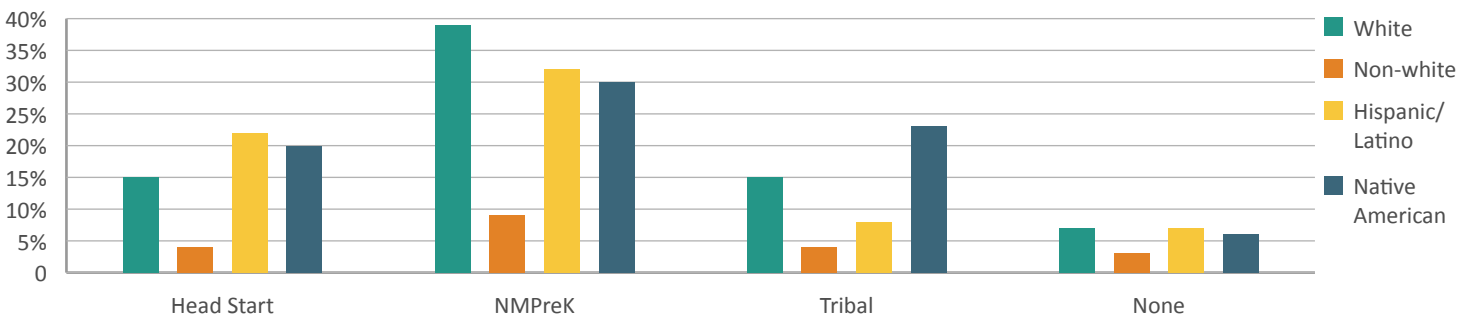
Figure 52. Usage of preschool programs by household income.
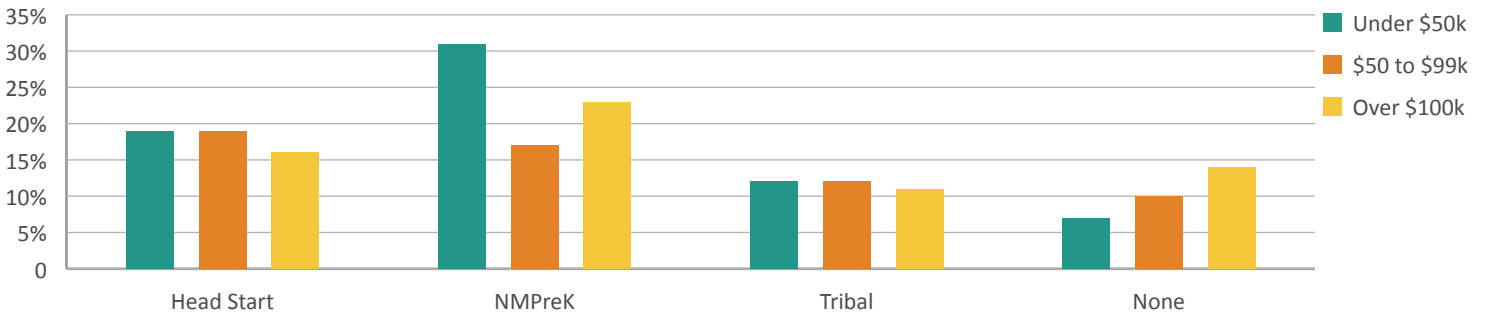
Figure 53. Usage of preschool programs by poverty levels
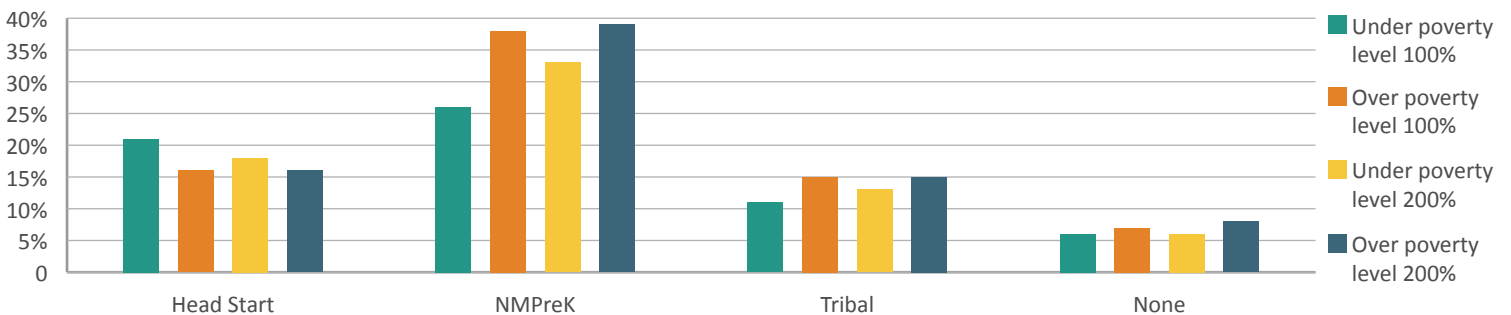
Figure 54. Usage of preschool programs by educational level

Legend:
- High School
- Undergraduate
- Graduate & Professionals
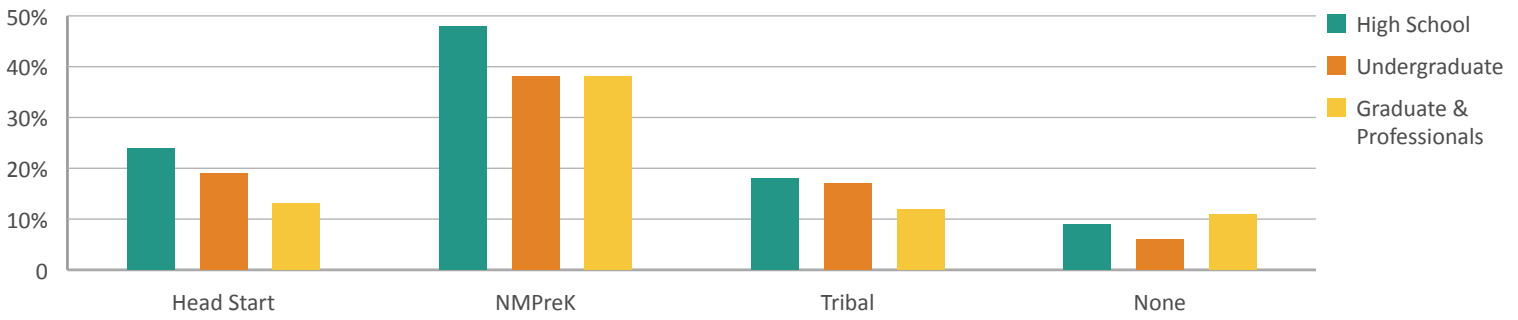
Figure 55. Usage of preschool programs by location

Legend:
- Metropolitan
- Small Metro
- Mixed Rural and Urban
- Rural

Appendix 4. List of Figures

Appendix 5. List of Tables

Appendix 6. Survey Instrument

New Mexico Early Childhood Family Engagement and Satisfaction Survey

Share your voice to shape early childhood services in New Mexico.

For instruction in languages other than English, please scroll down.

Thank you for sharing your voice as a parent, guardian or caregiver to child(ren) five years old or younger. This survey will help shape the future of early childhood care and services in New Mexico.

This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete.

When you complete the survey, you will have the choice to enter your email address or phone number to be eligible to receive a $5 gift card. The first 3,000 respondents will be sent an electronic gift card after the survey closes. Your contact details will only be used to distribute gift cards, and will not be included in any further analysis of survey responses.

To respect the privacy of everybody who takes this survey, individual responses to the survey will not be shared. Survey information reported publicly will be pooled so that no individuals can be identified from the information.

If you would like to complete the survey in electronic form, please scan this QR code:

1. Please choose the language in which you would like to take the survey.

   a. English
   b. Español
   c. Tiếng Việt

2. Do you identify as a parent, legal guardian, or primary caregiver for at least one child age five or younger?

   a. Yes
   b. No

3. Do you currently live in New Mexico?

If you answered YES to BOTH questions, please continue with survey on next page.

If you answered NO to EITHER question, please do not complete the survey. Thank you for your time.

4. How many children five years old or younger currently live in your household?

   a. 0
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4
   f. 5
   g. 6 or more

5. How many children between six and 13 years old currently live in your household?

6. How many children between 14 and 17 years old currently live in your household?

Awareness of Early Childhood Programs and Services

Please rate your familiarity with the following programs and services using the five-point scale below. Then, answer any questions that follow.

7. Child Care Assistance program

   a. 1 - I have never heard of the program and know nothing about the services it provides.
   b. 2
   c. 3 - I have heard of the program and know basic information about the services it provides.
   d. 4
   e. 5 - I am very familiar with the program and the services it provides.
   f. Early Head Start program

8. Early Head Start program

9. Families FIRST program

10. Family Infant Toddler program

11. Head Start program

12. Home visiting program

13. New Mexico PreK program

14. Preschool special education programs

15. Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program

If all programs and services rated 1, then go to Question 16.

If any programs and services are rated 2-5, then go to the next question.

16. Where did you learn about the Child Care Assistance Program? Choose all that apply.

    a. Child care organization
    b. Community organization
    c. Friends or family members
    d. Health care provider
    e. Internet search
    f. Local school
    g. Moments Together website (www.momentsnm.org)
    h. Newspaper or magazine
    i. Radio
    j. Social media
    k. Television
    l. I do not remember
    m. Other

17. From which community organization did you hear about the Child Care Assistance Program?

18. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Child Care Assistance Program.

19. Where did you learn about the Early Head Start program? Choose all that apply.

20. From which community organization did you hear about the Early Head Start program?

21. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Early Head Start program.

22. Where did you learn about the Families FIRST program? Choose all that apply.

23. From which community organization did you hear about the Families FIRST program?

24. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Families FIRST program.

25. Where did you learn about the Family Infant Toddler program? Choose all that apply.

26. From which community organization did you hear about the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program?

27. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program.

28. Where did you learn about the Head Start program? Choose all that apply.

29. From which community organization did you hear about the Head Start program?

30. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Head Start program.

31. Where did you learn about the home visiting program? Choose all that apply.

32. From which community organization did you hear about the home visiting program?

33. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the home visiting program.

34. Where did you learn about the New Mexico PreK program? Choose all that apply.

35. From which community organization did you hear about the New Mexico PreK program?

36. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the New Mexico PreK program.

37. Where did you learn about preschool special education? Choose all that apply.

38. From which community organization did you hear about preschool special education programs?

39. Please indicate from which other source you learned about preschool special education programs.

40. Where did you learn about the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program? Choose all that apply.

41. From which community organization did you hear about the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program?

42. Please indicate from which other source you learned about the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

Use of and Need for Early Childhood Services

This section focuses on early childhood programs and services that you and your family have used or have a need. On the following pages, please answer the questions about the indicated services.

Please click the check mark below to continue.

Child Care Services

Child care services include child and day care centers, registered child care providers, and other child care provided outside your home. Please do not include family members who provide child care, in-home nannies, or babysitters as you answer this question.

1. Have you used child care services to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

Answer questions below.

Go to Question 20.

2. How have the child care services your family has used impacted your family's well-being?
   a. Significantly increased family well-being
   b. Increased family well-being
   c. No impact on family well-being
   d. Decreased family well-being
   e. Significantly decreased family well-being

3. What was most valuable to your family about the child care services you used? Choose all that apply.
   a. I did not feel judged for using these services
   b. I was able to use services when my family needed them
   c. It does not take much time to use the services in my area
   d. It was easy to get transportation to use the services
   e. Signing up for the services was easy
   f. The services are responsive to my family's language or culture
   g. The services provided before- and after-school care options
   h. The services were affordable
   i. The services were offered at convenient times
   j. The services did not help my family
   k. Other

4. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the child care services you used.

5. What could have been improved about the child care services you used? Choose all that apply.
   a. I felt judged for using these services
   b. I had to wait too long to use services my family needed
   c. I had trouble getting transportation to use the services
   d. It takes too much time to use the services in my area
   e. Signing up for the services was too complex or time consuming
   f. The services did not offer before- and after-school care options
   g. The services were expensive
   h. The services were not responsive to my family's language or culture
   i. The services were offered at inconvenient times
   j. No improvements are necessary
   k. Other

6. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the child care services you used.

7. Do you and your family have additional needs for child care services for your children age five or under that aren't being met by the services you currently use?

8. Have you and your family needed child care services for your children age five or under but been unable to access them?

9. What has prevented you from accessing all the child care services your family needs? Choose all that apply.

   a. I am not aware of services like this in my area
   b. I do not have access to transportation needed to use the service
   c. I do not have time to use the services available in my area
   d. I do not think the service would improve my family's well-being
   e. I would feel judged for using these services
   f. Signing up for the services is too complex or time consuming
   g. The services are not offered at a time my family can use them
   h. The services are not responsive to my family's language or culture
   i. The services are too expensive
   j. The services did not provide before- and after-school care options
   k. Wait times to use the services are too long
   l. Other

10. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing child care services.

11. Do your children age six to 13 use child care services (after school care, etc.)?

12. Please describe any notable positive or negative experiences you had while accessing and using child care services for your children age six to 13.

13. Have you and your family needed child care services for your children age six to 13 but been unable to access that support?

14. Please describe any challenges or barriers that have prevented you from accessing child care services for your children age six to 13.

Preschool Programs

Preschool programs include services provided by:

- After school programs (for five-year-old children)
- Child care centers (both non-profit and for-profit)
- Head Start
- In-home child care providers (including licensed family care providers or registered providers)
- New Mexico PreK
- Tribal Head Start or preschool programs

1. Have you used preschool programs to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

2. Please indicate if your children have participated in any of the listed programs. Choose all that apply.

   a. Head Start
   b. New Mexico PreK

c. Tribal Head Start or preschool program
d. My children have not participated in any of these programs

For each program selected, complete the following questions. If you selected none, please go to Question 34.

3. How likely are you to recommend the Head Start program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

4. How has the Head Start program impacted your family's well-being?

5. How likely are you to recommend the New Mexico PreK program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

6. How has the New Mexico PreK program impacted your family's well-being?

7. How likely are you to recommend the tribal Head Start or preschool program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

8. How has the tribal Head Start or preschool program impacted your family's well-being?

9. What was most valuable to your family about the preschool programs you used? Choose all that apply.

10. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the preschool programs you used.

11. What could have been improved about the preschool programs you used? Choose all that apply.

12. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the preschool programs you used.

13. Do you and your family have additional needs for preschool programming that aren't being met by the services you currently use?

14. Have you and your family needed preschool programs but been unable to access them?

15. What has prevented you from accessing all the preschool programming your family needs? Choose all that apply.

16. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing preschool programs.

Child Care Assistance Program

The Child Care Assistance Program provides subsidies to income-eligible families to pay a portion of child care costs. The subsidies are provided by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department.

1. Have you used the Child Care Assistance Program to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

2. How has the Child Care Assistance Program impacted your family's well-being?

3. How likely are you to recommend the Child Care Assistance Program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

4. What was most valuable to your family about the Child Care Assistance Program? Choose all that apply.

5. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the Child Care Assistance Program.

6. What could have been improved about the Child Care Assistance Program? Choose all that apply.

7. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the Child Care Assistance Program.

8. Do you and your family need additional financial support to pay for child care services you're your children age five or under that isn't being provided by the Child Care Assistance Program?

9. Have you and your family needed financial support to pay for child care services for your children age five or under but been unable to access that support?

10. What has prevented you from accessing all the financial support your family needs to pay for child care services for your children age five or under? Choose all that apply.

11. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing financial support to pay for child care services for your children age five or under.

12. Do you receive subsidies from the Child Care Assistance Program to pay for child care for your children age six to 13?

13. Please describe any notable positive and/or negative experiences you had while utilizing the Child Care Assistance Program for your children age six to 13.

14. Have you and your family needed financial support to pay for child care services for your children age six to 13 but been unable to access that support?

15. Please describe any challenges or barriers that have prevented you from accessing financial support to pay for child care services for your children age six to 13.

Special Education Services

Special education services include enrollment in programs that provide special education for your child, which may include the development of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or 504 plan.

1. Have you used special education services to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

2. How have the special education services your family has used impacted your family's well-being?

3. What was most valuable to your family about the special education services you used? Choose all that apply.

4. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the special education services you used.

5. What could have been improved about the special education services you used? Choose all that apply.

6. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the special education services you used.

7. Do you and your family have additional needs for special education services that aren't being met by the services you currently use?

8. Have you and your family needed special education services but been unable to access them?

9. What has prevented you from accessing all the special education services your family needs? Choose all that apply.

10. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing special education services.

Family Support and Early Intervention Services

Family support and early intervention services help caretakers ensure they have the resources and support needed to ensure their child(ren)'s healthy learning and development. Family support and early intervention programs include:

- Early Head Start programs serve children under the age of three and pregnant women, providing child development and family support services to low-income families.
- The Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program provides professional evaluation of a child's development and a family services coordinator who connects families with resources to enhance a child's learning and development.
- The Families FIRST program connects families with a nurse in their area who provides support, advice, and connections to resources through a child's first three years of life.
- Home visiting programs provide trained professionals who come to families' homes to provide parenting support and information, answers to parenting questions, and connections to resources.

1. Have you used any of the family support and early intervention services listed above to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

2. Which family support and early intervention services have you used?
   a. Early Head Start program
   b. Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program
   c. Families FIRST program
   d. Home visiting program

3. How likely are you to recommend the Early Head Start program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

4. How has the Early Head Start program impacted your family's well-being?

5. How likely are you to recommend the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

6. How has the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program impacted your family's well-being?

7. How likely are you to recommend the Families FIRST program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

8. How has the Families FIRST program impacted your family's well-being?

9. How likely are you to recommend the home visiting program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

10. How has the home visiting program impacted your family's well-being?

11. What was most valuable to your family about the family support and early intervention services you used? Choose all that apply.

12. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the family support and early intervention services you used.

13. What could have been improved about the family support and early intervention services you used? Choose all that apply.

14. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the family support and early intervention services you used.

15. Do you and your family have additional needs for family support and early intervention services that aren't being met by the services you currently use?

16. Have you and your family needed family support and early intervention services but been unable to access them?

17. What has prevented you from accessing all the family support and early intervention services your family needs? Choose all that apply.

18. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing family support and early intervention services.

Food Support Services

Food support services aim to make sure every family has proper nutrition available to them. Food support services include:

- The Child and Adult Care Food Program is a federal program that provides reimbursements for meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled at participating child care centers and family care homes.
- The Summer Food Service Program provides nutritious meals to children during the summer months.
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal program that provides food-purchasing assistance for low- and no-income people. SNAP is sometimes referred to as food stamps.
- The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program provides free healthy foods, ideas for healthy eating and maintaining good health habits, support for nursing families, and connects families with other community services.

1. Have you used food support services to meet the needs of you and your children age five or younger?

2. Which food support services have you used?
   a. Child and Adult Care Food Program
   b. Summer Food Service Program
   c. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
   d. Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

3. How likely are you to recommend the Summer Food Service Program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

4. How has the Summer Food Service Program impacted your family's well-being?

5. How likely are you to recommend the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program to another family? (1 = not at all likely, 10 = extremely likely)

6. How has the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program impacted your family's well-being?

7. What was most valuable to your family about the food services you used? Choose all that apply.

8. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that was valuable to your family about the food support services you used.

9. What could have been improved about the food support services you used? Choose all that apply.

10. Please indicate anything else not mentioned above that could have been improved about the food support services you used.

11. Do you and your family have additional needs for food support services that aren't being met by the services you currently use?

12. Have you and your family needed food support services but been unable to access them?

13. What has prevented you from accessing all the food support services your family needs? Choose all that apply.

14. Please indicate any reason not mentioned above that prevented you from accessing food support services.

Other Early Childhood Needs

Are there any other services that you need to care for your children age five or younger that have not been mentioned in the previous sections? If so, please list those needs here.

If you have no additional needs, please leave this box blank and click the check mark below to proceed.

If you have no additional needs, please leave this box blank and proceed to the next question.

Other Household Needs

Please indicate how frequently each of the following situations occurred for you within the last 12 months.

1. The food our family bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more.
   a. Never
   b. Rarely
   c. Sometimes
   d. Often
   e. Always

2. I worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.

3. I worried that an adult in our family would have to miss work in order to look after a child who was not sick.

4. Finding child care was a major factor in whether or not an adult in our family was able to work outside the home.

5. I worried about getting services or support to effectively care for my child.

6. I worried that my child needed care and support that I could not provide without help.

7. I worried that our family wouldn't have a place to sleep that met our basic needs.

8. I worried about being forced to move from the place where we were living.

9. I worried that the cost of housing would force me to not buy or cut back on my family's necessities (food, clothing, etc.).

10. I worried that my family would not have access to medical care in case of illness or emergency.

11. I worried about paying for medical care in case of illness or emergency

12. My family was not covered by health insurance.

Information About Your Household

Please provide information about your household below. Any information collected below will help understand the needs for early childhood services across the state. The answers you provide will not be used in any way to identify you.

1. What is the ZIP code of the home where you and your children primarily reside?

2. Choose the county where your home is located.
   a. I prefer not to respond

3. How would you describe yourself? Choose all that apply.
   a. American Indian or Alaska Native
   b. Asian
   c. Black or African American
   d. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
   e. White
   f. Some other race or ethnicity
   g. I prefer not to respond

4. Please indicate your tribal affiliation. If you are not affiliated with a tribe or choose not to respond, please leave this question blank.

5. How would you describe yourself other than the options provided in the previous question?

6. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
   a. Some high school or less, no diploma received
   b. High school diploma or GED
   c. Some college, no degree received
   d. Associate's degree (AA, AS, etc.)
   e. Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, etc.)
   f. Master's degree (MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA, etc.)
   g. Professional degree (MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD, etc.)
   h. Doctorate degree (PhD, EdD, etc.)
   i. I prefer not to respond

7. How many people currently live in your household? Please provide the total number including all adults and children.
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5
   f. 6
   g. 7
   h. 8
   i. 9
   j. 10 or more
   k. I prefer not to respond

8. What is your approximate total household income, counting all sources of income from all household members?
   a. Under $10,000
   b. $10,000-19,999
   c. $20,000-29,999
   d. $30,000-39,999
   e. $40,000-49,999
   f. $50,000-59,999
   g. $60,000-69,999
   h. $70,000-79,999
   i. $80,000-89,999
   j. $90,000-99,999
   k. $100,000-109,999
   l. $110,000-119,999
   m. $120,000 or more
   n. I prefer not to respond

9. If you would like to receive a $5 gift card for participating in this survey, please indicate how you would like to receive the gift card. To receive the gift card, you will need to provide either an email address or phone number. This information will be used only for sending the gift card and will not be shared for any purposes.
   a. Email
   b. Phone
   c. I do not wish to receive a gift card

10. Optional: Please provide the email address where you would like to receive your electronic gift card.

11. Or: Please provide the phone number where you would like to receive your gift card via text.

12. To receive the gift card, you will need to provide either an email address or phone number. This information will be used only for sending the gift card and will not be shared for any purposes. This is optional.

Survey Conclusion

Thank you for completing the survey.

To learn more about early childhood programs and services offered the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD), please visit their website at https://www.nmececd.org/.