NM scores poorly for children in all other racial, ethnic groups

ALBUQUERQUE— New Mexico's children — in all racial and ethnic groups except African American — lag behind their demographic cohorts across the nation when it comes to meeting key milestones that will help them achieve their unique potential. That's according to data in the *2017 Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children* report, released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The *Race for Results* report uses an index that measures children's progress on key education, health, and economic milestones, and across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state levels. The report's index uses a composite score of these milestones on a scale of one (lowest) to 1,000 (highest) to make comparisons. No state has all children in any racial group meeting all milestones.. However, nationally Asian and white children tend to fare better as a whole, while Hispanic, Native American, and Black children are less likely to be meeting milestones.

New Mexico's index scores for all groups, except one, were lower than the national average (see the accompanying fact sheet for scores). New Mexico's scores for Black children —who scored the lowest at the national level—were higher than the state's scores for both Native and Hispanic children. Only nine other states had higher scores for their Black children (six states had no data on black children). African-American children comprise just 2 percent of New Mexico's child population.

"It's good news that Black children in New Mexico are meeting more milestones," said James Jimenez, executive director of New Mexico Voices for Children, which runs the KIDS COUNT program for the state. "But New Mexico still has a ways to go to ensure that they're getting the same opportunities as their white counterparts."

New Mexico's lowest score was for Native American children. Only three other states had lower scores for their Native children (about half of the states had no data for Native American children). American Indian children comprise 10 percent of New Mexico's population.

"While it's disconcerting that all across the country children of color tend to have access to

fewer of the resources that help them thrive and reach their potential, it's even more concerning in New Mexico because children of color make up 75 percent of our child population," said Amber Wallin, KIDS COUNT Director for New Mexico Voices for Children. "When our kids of color are missing out on the opportunities that build success, it's a big problem for the state as a whole and doesn't bode well for our future."

There are some bright spots. For example, New Mexico's young Native American children are more likely to be enrolled in a preschool program than are their counterparts in the rest of the nation. And, our Hispanic young adults are more likely to have an associate's degree or higher than Hispanic young adults across the nation.

The Race for Results report also takes an in-depth look at children in immigrant families. These are both children whose parents are immigrants and kids who are immigrants themselves. While children from immigrant families tend to do less well than U.S.-born children in key education and economic measures, they do as well or better than U.S.-born children in other indicators, such as the share who live in two-parent families.

New Mexico doesn't have a particularly large share of children from immigrant families compared to the national average, despite sharing an international border with Mexico. A little more than 111,000 children (or 22 percent) in New Mexico live in immigrant families. The vast majority of those children (94,000 or 85 percent) are Hispanic. Nationally, 24 percent of kids are from immigrant families, although the vast majority of these children (88 percent) are American citizens.

The *Race for Result* report cites a variety of factors for why children of color and children from immigrant families tend to not fare as well as their white counterparts. Chief among them are centuries of public policies, such as redlining, that have put racial and ethnic minorities and some immigrants at a disadvantage. Although many of those policies have been changed, many practices have not, and families of color continue to be impacted by both the cumulative effect of generations of disadvantage and present-day conditions. Immigrant families are under significant threats as a result of policies recently enacted at the federal level.

The report includes several policy recommendations, such as ensuring that immigrant children are enrolled in early childhood care or education services, and enacting comprehensive immigration reform that minimizes deportations that split families apart.

This is the second *Race for Results* report by the Casey Foundation; the Foundation released the first report in 2014. However, index scores from the two reports are not comparable due to changes in some data collection.

The *2017 Race for Results* report is available at www.aecf.org/raceforresults/ . Additional information is available at
www.aecf.org/
. The website also contains the most recent national, state, and local data on numerous indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about
Race for Results
can use the Data Center at
datacenter.kidscount.org
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