



A statewide advocacy organization has released new data showing how children fared during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

New Mexico Voices for Children held a press conference with Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Feb. 3 to announce the release of the *2020 New Mexico KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a resource meant to help lawmakers understand the needs of families as they start the legislative session.

“We have a real opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our children this year,” Lujan Grisham said, emphasizing that the Land Grant Permanent Fund and a public education budget are top priorities during the current session.

Education, family and community, health and economic security are the four main topics covered in the document each year. Those topics include the issues of child poverty and teen birth rates.

With the pandemic front and center in people’s lives, KIDS COUNT also covers issues ranging from how many families lost health insurance to infection rates according to income levels. Officials stressed in a news release this week that the coronavirus-specific data is not comparable to data in the report from 2019.

KIDS COUNT Data book examines COVID-19 impact on kids

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“We hope these data will inform the deliberations on the budget by the Governor and Legislature this legislative session,” James Jimenez, executive director of New Mexico Voices for Children, said.