



Office of the Governor
MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Lujan Grisham opens *new state employee child care facilities*
Centers will support state workers and families, continue to expand New Mexico's affordable child care availability

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Monday celebrated the opening of two child care facilities for state employees in Santa Fe.

The governor held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Joseph Montoya Building, which houses employees from five different state agencies and is providing 44 slots for children ages two to five. A second facility is also opening this week in the Lamy Building with eight slots in an infant-toddler classroom. The 52 new slots between the two new facilities comprise a 2% increase in licensed child care availability in Santa Fe.

“Affordable and accessible child care can be a barrier for working families and workforce growth all across the country, including here in New Mexico – that’s why we’ve been one of most innovative states in addressing this issue,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “By opening child care centers in state government facilities, we are not only supporting state workers and their families, but also supporting our efforts to recruit and retain top talent in state government so that we can continue providing the highest quality service to our fellow New Mexicans. This administration is all about finding new solutions to age-old problems, and we will continue to deliver on that commitment.”

Building on her administration’s work to expand child care availability and affordability throughout New Mexico, Gov. Lujan Grisham directed state agencies to identify available spaces in state government buildings that could be converted and licensed as child care facilities to support New Mexico state employees and workforce recruitment and retention. The General Services Department (GSD) and Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) worked in tandem to build out and supply the space as a turnkey child care center, reviewing applications from multiple licensed providers to operate the facility. Little Explorers Child Development Centers, which currently operates two highly rated centers in Rio Rancho and Albuquerque, will serve as the provider for both state facilities.

“The model we’re using at these facilities is what we hope to see more of around the state. We want communities to see that they can forge these partnerships and create their own child care supply to meet the unique needs of their families and local economies – and the State of New Mexico will be an

eager partner in these projects,” said **ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky**. “We are already funding over a dozen local early childhood coalitions throughout New Mexico to help build strong collaboration between state and local government, the private sector, and nonprofits. Working together, we can build a world class system of early childhood programs and services that will see every New Mexico family thrive.”

“The General Services Department is honored to play a role in seeing the governor’s vision for on-site child care for state workers come to fruition,” said **GSD Cabinet Secretary John Garcia**. “This center will help retain and recruit government employees and, more importantly, nourish the bonds between parents and their children.”

Gov. Lujan Grisham previously enacted the largest expansion of child care assistance in New Mexico’s history, making tens of thousands of New Mexico families eligible for cost-free child care through the state’s Child Care Assistance Program. The Lujan Grisham administration has also made record investments to increase child care capacity throughout New Mexico and meet the need of working parents, awarding \$157 million to over 1,000 child care businesses across the state in order to ensure a strong and stable child care industry that supports both child wellbeing and workforce development.

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IMG 0743: CYFD employee Will Schwettmann, who is utilizing the new child care facility for his daughter at no cost thanks to the state's Child Care Assistance Program, speaks in the new facility at the Montoya

Building. At right are representatives from Little Explorers Child Development Centers. At left is Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky.

