



Press Release

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ECECD Spotlights Child Care Quality and Sustainability with a Cost of Care Survey

SANTA FE – Today, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) announced the opening of its second [Child Care Cost Survey](#), a key component ECECD will use to set child care assistance rates based on the true cost of quality care – not just what families can afford.

“New Mexico is making significant investments in child care because we understand the cost of quality child care is out of reach for most families, and that providing quality care is essential to improving outcomes for young children and their families” said **ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky**. “We’ve made child care free for a majority of New Mexico families through our child care assistance program and calibrated our rates to support a living wage for the early educators who care for young children during their most rapid and critical period of development.”

Child care owners, directors, and family child care providers across the state are encouraged to participate in the survey. ECECD works with Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies (P5FS) to better understand how much it truly costs to deliver early care and education that meets state

standards and compensates the workforce sufficiently.

Past surveys helped inform rate increases for entry level child care workers to \$15/hr and \$20/hr for lead teachers. Participation in ECECD's Child Care Assistance Program has increased 107% since 2021, with copays waived for all eligible families.

"As a multi-site child care provider, I encourage every program to participate in this survey," said **Crystal Tapia Romero**, Executive Director of the New Mexico Early Learning Academy and Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Council member. "Each program is unique and has many variables that allow it to run successfully. Our participation in the cost of care survey is vital in informing decisions, allocating resources, and advocating for our industry's needs. Our insights drive positive change, ensuring quality care for our youngest learners."

ECECD's survey and accompanying input sessions will allow early care and education providers, including child care centers, family and group homes, Tribal, registered home providers, as well as preschool and school age programs, to share current expenses and the true cost of care.

The survey is available in English and Spanish. Input sessions will be held in English and Spanish (and other languages as requested). Learn more about the process through this [short overview](#).

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Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham launched the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) in 2020, making New Mexico among the first states to consolidate all early childhood programs and services under a single cabinet-level agency. Under this administration, ECECD has led the nation by expanding access to free New Mexico PreK, overseeing the largest investment in early childhood infrastructure in state history, and implementing cost-free child care for a majority of New Mexico families. Learn more about how ECECD supports children, families, and the early childhood professionals that serve our communities at nmececd.org. On Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as [@NewMexicoECECD](#).