

CONTACT:

Micah McCoy

Communications Director

(505) 629-9575 / micah.mccoy@ececd.gov.nm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2023

ECECD highlights free Home Visiting services for Breastfeeding Month

Home Visiting serves as a vital source of support for breastfeeding families in New Mexico

SANTA FE – August is National Breastfeeding Awareness Month, and the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) is highlighting its Home Visiting services, which provide an essential source of support, information, and resources for families breastfeeding a child. Studies have shown that breastfeeding benefits babies and mothers, supporting healthy growth and development and improving resistance against certain illnesses and diseases. Home Visiting is free to all New Mexico families, regardless of income, and is available for families with children ages prenatal to five. ECECD is expanding Home Visiting to serve more children in more counties across New Mexico – so finding a Home Visitor that meets your family's needs is easier than ever.

"Breastfeeding has significant health benefits for both mother and child, but breastfeeding difficulties are widespread among new moms," said ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. "It can be highly stressful for families when they encounter feeding challenges, and a trained Home Visitor can be an invaluable support."

ECECD's Home Visiting program connects parents and caregivers with a friendly expert for in-home visits to guide safe sleep, post-partum care and depression screenings, injury prevention, nutrition, child care, breastfeeding, and more. Of the 1035 children born to mothers enrolled in New Mexico Home Visiting programs prenatally in FY23*, caregivers successfully initiated breastfeeding with 94 percent (978) of babies born.

"Creating an environment of consistency and trust is the first step in Home Visiting," said Claribel Perez, Lead Home Visiting Program Manager of MECA Therapies, based out of Las Cruces, NM. "When you begin meeting with a family, you actively listen to their needs and touch back on those needs. From there, the relationship blossoms to where you can discuss more personal or sensitive topics and provide them with the support they need."

"I wouldn't be where I am today without my Home Visitor," said Samantha Mendoza, a MECA home-visiting client and mother of two in Las Cruces, NM. "Breastfeeding is a big goal for me, and without my Home Visitor I don't know where I would be. It was so challenging, and no one talks about how challenging it can be. I reached out to my Home Visitor, and she didn't give up on me. I called her crying, and she calmed me down because if I'm not calm, the baby's not calm. She came to my house as often as I needed her to and helped me to learn to latch my baby."

Families interested in obtaining free, personalized parenting supports through ECECD's Home Visiting program can find a local provider in their area and set up an appointment using the [Home Visiting Contact List](#). Learn more about ECECD's Home Visiting program and watch videos in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese that walk you through the application process at: <https://www.nmececd.org/home-visiting/>.

**Data reflects mothers enrolled in Home Visiting prenatally who responded to breastfeeding question*

###

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](https://www.facebook.com/NewMexicoECECD).