

# Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool

BUILDING HEALTHIER TOMORROWS TODAY

## Our work

We partner with preschools in New Mexico to make healthy eating and physical activity a part of their daily routine. Together, we engage families, create wellness policies, promote staff wellness, organize healthy lifestyle challenges, and support Farm to Preschool activities. Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool is a program of the NM Department of Health.

## Why it matters

Nearly 1 in 4 children ages 2 to 5 in the United States are overweight or obese. Children who are obese are more likely to develop diabetes and heart disease as adults. Preschools and families can help children grow into healthy adults by teaching them to eat healthy and stay active.

## Our reach

**475+** Preschool partners

**275** Preschools with wellness policies

**150+** Preschools that participated in Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool Challenge

## Our vision & strategies

We envision a New Mexico where all children can establish lifelong habits for healthy eating and physical activity during preschool. To achieve our vision, we use these strategies:

- 1) **Wellness policies:** Preschool wellness policies are written plans that support healthy eating, physical activity, breastfeeding, family engagement, reduced screen time, and staff wellness. We partner with preschools and the NM Early Childhood Education and Care Department to create these policies and put them into action.
- 2) **Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool Challenge:** We encourage preschools to join the Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool Challenge. In this 4-week initiative, preschools aim for 2 hours of physical activity each day and less screen time.
- 3) **Family 5210 Challenge:** We encourage families to participate in the Family 5210 Challenge. This 4-week initiative helps build healthy habits at home.
- 4) **Farm to Preschool:** We partner with preschools to offer Farm to Preschool activities, which include serving local food, gardening, and lessons on healthy eating.



# Farm to Preschool

## What is Farm to Preschool?

Farm to Preschool programs ignite a passion for healthy eating by connecting children, families, and communities to gardening, local foods, and local farmers. Farm to Preschool activities include

- purchasing local produce for meals and snacks;
- growing edible gardens;
- teaching children how to grow food and eat healthy; and
- engaging families and communities in activities about local food, gardening, and healthy eating.

We offer training and resources to providers who want to start Farm to Preschool at their preschool. We have experience working in NM's Farm to School movement and can share best practices with preschool providers.

## Benefits of Farm to Preschool

The early years of a child's life are an opportunity to shape lifelong habits for eating healthy. Farm to Preschool activities like tastings and gardening lessons help children try new healthy foods. These activities can make a positive impact on obesity and hunger in NM.

Farm to Preschool offers many other benefits:

- Children engage in fun, hands-on activities to learn how food is grown.
- Local produce is fresher and more nutritious for growing children.
- Buying local produce supports NM's farmers and families.

## Additional information

For more information about Farm to Preschool or other healthy preschool strategies, please contact:

### Northern New Mexico

Michelle Chavez  
chavezm@caasnm.org  
505-413-2883

### Southern New Mexico

Alberto Zavala  
albertoz@caasnm.org  
575-527-8799 ext. 165

**New**  
*to Healthy Kids  
Healthy Preschool  
in 2020*



Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool, New Mexico Department of Health, 2021. For more information, visit:

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/phd/pchb/hknm/>

