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Dept. of Health Marks Improvements in Family Infant Toddler Program
Program Provides Early Intervention Services for Young Children at risk of Delays

(Santa Fe) -- The New Mexico Department of Health's Family Infant Toddler Program improved in all eight performance indicators measured in an annual report card submitted to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs. The report card examines several aspects of the program, including how local providers perform, to ensure the highest quality services are being provided. The Department of Health uses the information to build on successes and identify areas that need improvement.

"It is critical to support developmental skills in infants and toddlers who have or who are at risk for delays and disabilities," said Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD. "We consistently evaluate this program to ensure we are providing the highest quality of services and meet federal guidelines."

The FIT Program helps families with children from birth to three years old who are at risk for a developmental delay through an array of early intervention services that are provided in the home and other community settings, including child care and Early Head Start. Early intervention provides parents and other caregivers ideas and activities to promote the child's development throughout the day. In 2009 the FIT Program served more than 12,000 children and their families at an average per child cost of \$2,700.

The report shows that New Mexico ranks 3rd in the nation for the percentage of children served. This is the result of increased referrals from medical providers, child care and other early childhood providers and parents themselves. Also, New Mexico has been successful in promoting standardized developmental screening of young children, improving children's outcomes, and providing timely early intervention services.

The report card also provides parents with information regarding the performance of the FIT provider serving their family.

The full report can be found online at www.fitprogram.org under "Documents and Reports."

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