



New Mexico Children,  
Youth & Families Department

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**CYFD Receives National Recognition for Racial Equity Work**

*The Department's Juvenile Justice Division was Honored for 21-Day Equity Challenge*

SANTA FE – New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department's Juvenile Justice Services Division and several Bernalillo County juvenile justice stakeholders were honored at a conference on October 16<sup>th</sup> for their participation in an "equity habits" challenge, a project of The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

Out of 34 Jurisdictions nationwide, CYFD and Bernalillo County had the largest number of people participating over the 21-day challenge. In all, 138 New Mexicans who work with juvenile justice-involved youth have remained active in using a new online tool designed to help reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system by building competencies among staff and stakeholders who interact with youth.

In a statement recognizing New Mexico, The Annie E. Casey Foundation wrote that the state's high rate of participation is "a testament to [New Mexico's] belief that lifetime learning around race equity practice is a necessary part of juvenile justice system improvement work and an essential ingredient for improving the wellbeing of youth and families in our communities."

In May, CYFD's Juvenile Justice Services Division received a \$15,000.00 award from the Annie E. Casey Foundation for their racial equity work. CYFD has since invested that money in taking this learning to scale. "We are honored that the Annie E. Casey Foundation sees the work we're doing as leading change when it comes to reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system," said Nick Costales, Deputy Director of Field Services for CYFD's Juvenile Justice Services Division. "However, this work requires our full community's support in order to be effective. To that end, we are investing this generous award into our efforts to train and support more stakeholders to engage in the introspection, collaboration and procedural changes we need in order to advance racial equity in the juvenile justice system in New Mexico."

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