

On 9/25/2015 Bill Jaeger, VP, Early Childhood Initiatives, of the Colorado Children's Campaign, presented the latest data about the state of Children in Montezuma and Dolores counties.

The event was hosted by the Montelores Early Childhood Council, and attended by school district and board personnel, EC professionals, MECC staff, the press, and other members of the community.

Here are some selected slides.



KIDS COUNT!
in Colorado 2015
COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

KIDS COUNT in Colorado!
Montezuma and Dolores
County Highlights
September 25, 2015

From Plains to Plateaus:
Examining Child Well-Being Across Colorado Places

30 YEARS **BOLD** | COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN
Every Chance for Every Child

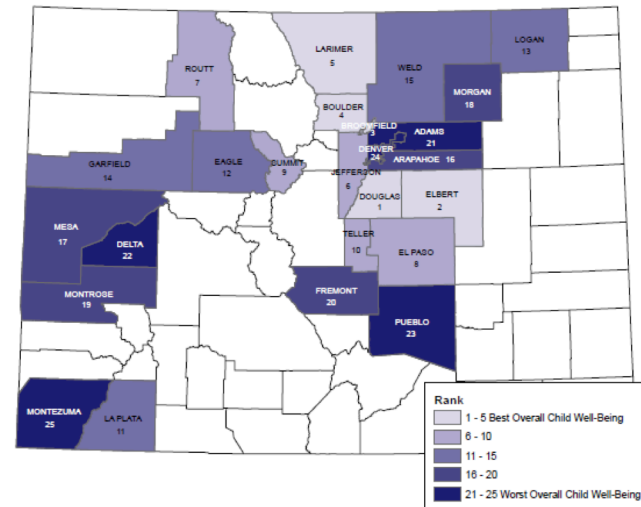
Montezuma county ranked last of the 25 largest counties in Colorado in the Child Well-Being Index, dropping 1 level from the previous year.

This slide summarizes the factors that make up the Child Well-Being Index.



2015 Colorado Child Well-Being Index Rankings

County	Rank	Change from 2014
Douglas	1	----
Elbert	2	----
Broomfield	3	----
Boulder	4	----
Larimer	5	----
Jefferson	6	----
Routt	7	Up 1
El Paso	8	Up 2
Summit	9	Up 4
Teller	10	Down 3
La Plata	11	Down 2
Eagle	12	Up 2
Logan*	13*	Down 2*
Garfield	14	Up 2
Weld	15	----
Arapahoe	16	Up 1
Mesa	17	Down 5
Morgan	18	Up 1
Montrose	19	Up 1
Fremont	20	Down 2
Adams	21	Up 2
Delta	22	Down 1
Pueblo	23	Down 1
Denver	24	Up 1
Montezuma	25	Down 1



Health Indicators

- Low birthweight births
- Uninsured children
- Overweight or obese children
- Infant mortality rate
- Teen birth rate

Family and Community Indicators

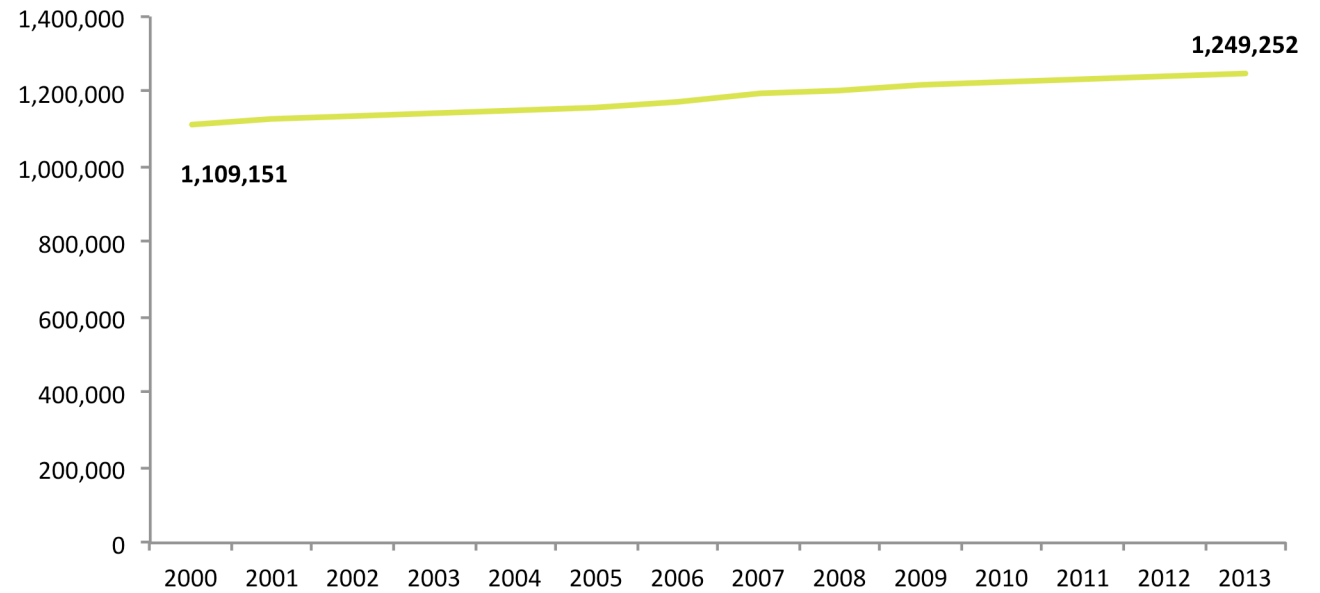
- Single-parent families
- Children in poverty
- Births to women with less than 12 years of education
- Families relying on low cost food

Education Indicators

- High school dropout rate
- Teens not attending school and not working
- Fourth-grade students reading below grade level



Colorado's child population is growing



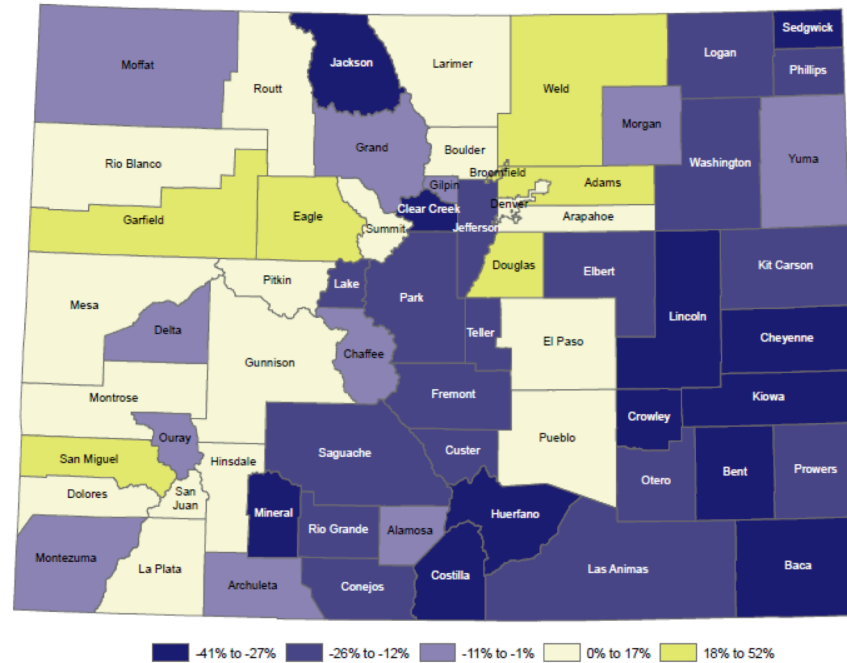
Between 2000 and 2013, Colorado's child population (under 18) grew by **13 percent** – the **eighth-fastest increase** in the country.

The number of children in Montezuma county declined at the same time that the overall number of children in the state grew.



...but that growth has not been distributed equally

Change in Child Population, 2000 - 2013



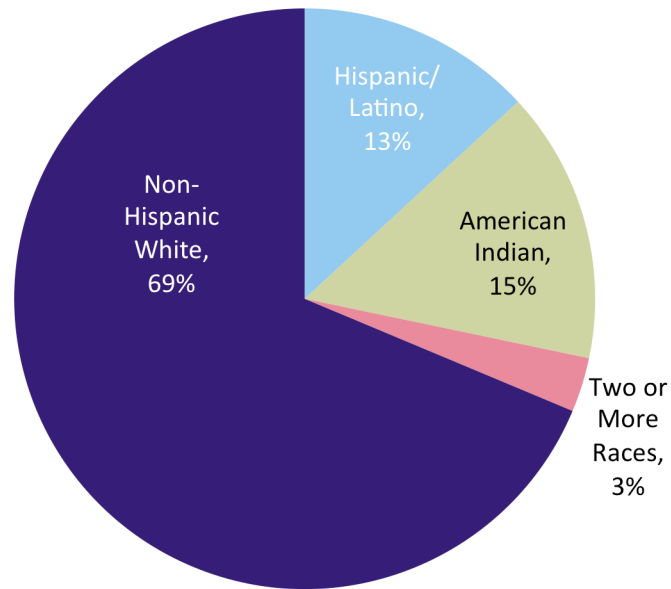
Montezuma County's child population **declined by 11 percent** (approximately 689 children) between 2000 and 2013.

Children of color are increasing in number across the state and in our two counties. By 2021, children of color will be the majority among Colorado kids.

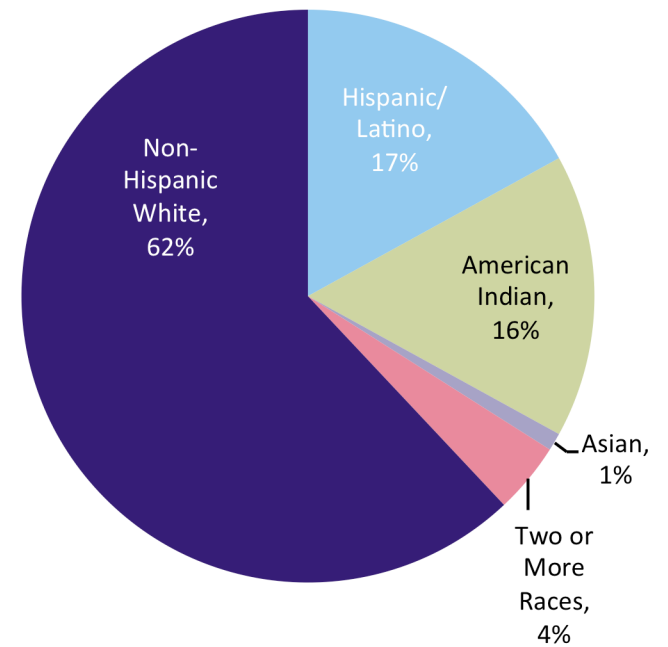


Similar trend occurring in Montezuma County

2000

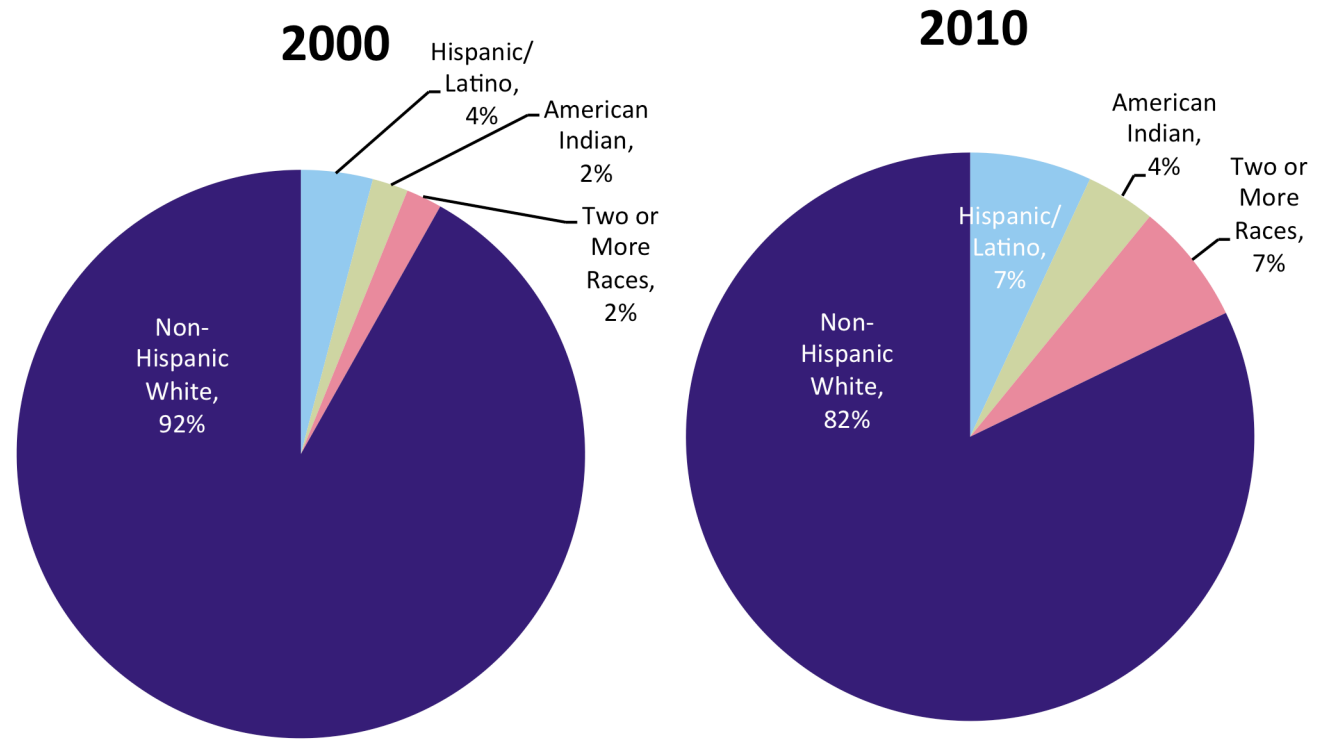


2010





...and in Dolores County

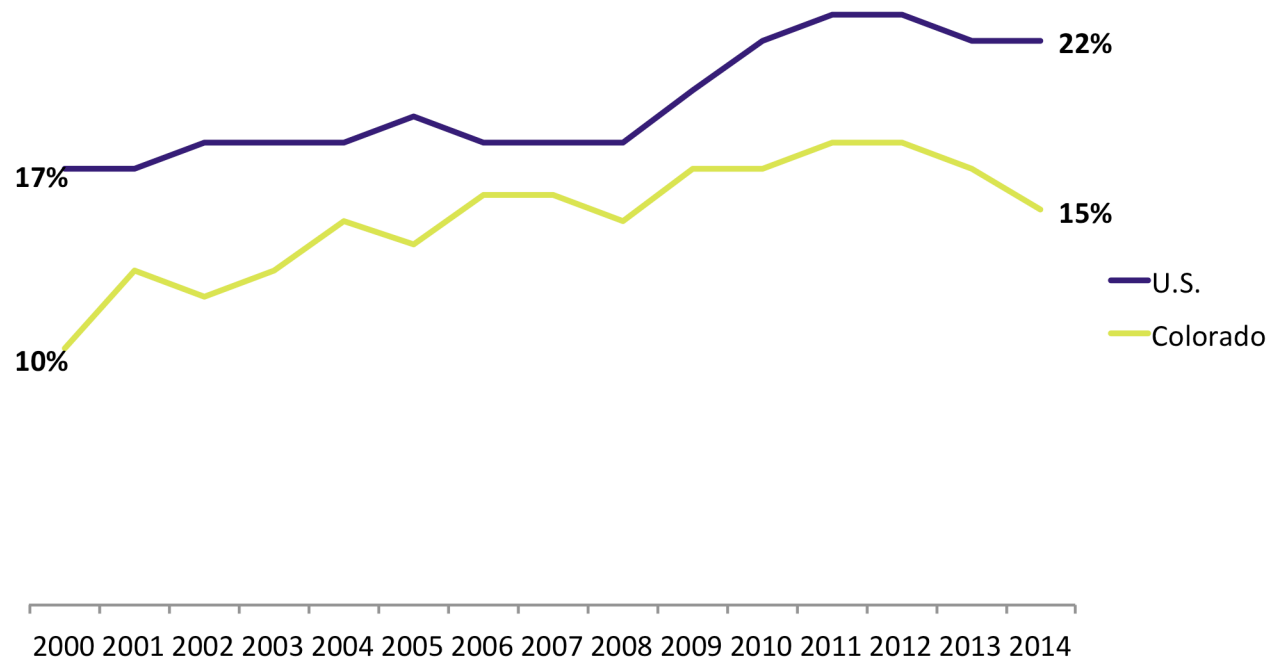


Some good news overall for the kids in our state, although 190,00+ children live in families that are having a hard time making ends meet.



In 2014, Colorado's child poverty rate declined for the second year in a row

Child Poverty Rates



Not such good news for the children on our counties, where the poverty rate is well above the state level.

What does it mean to be poor? It means that a family of four lives on \$23,850 a year.

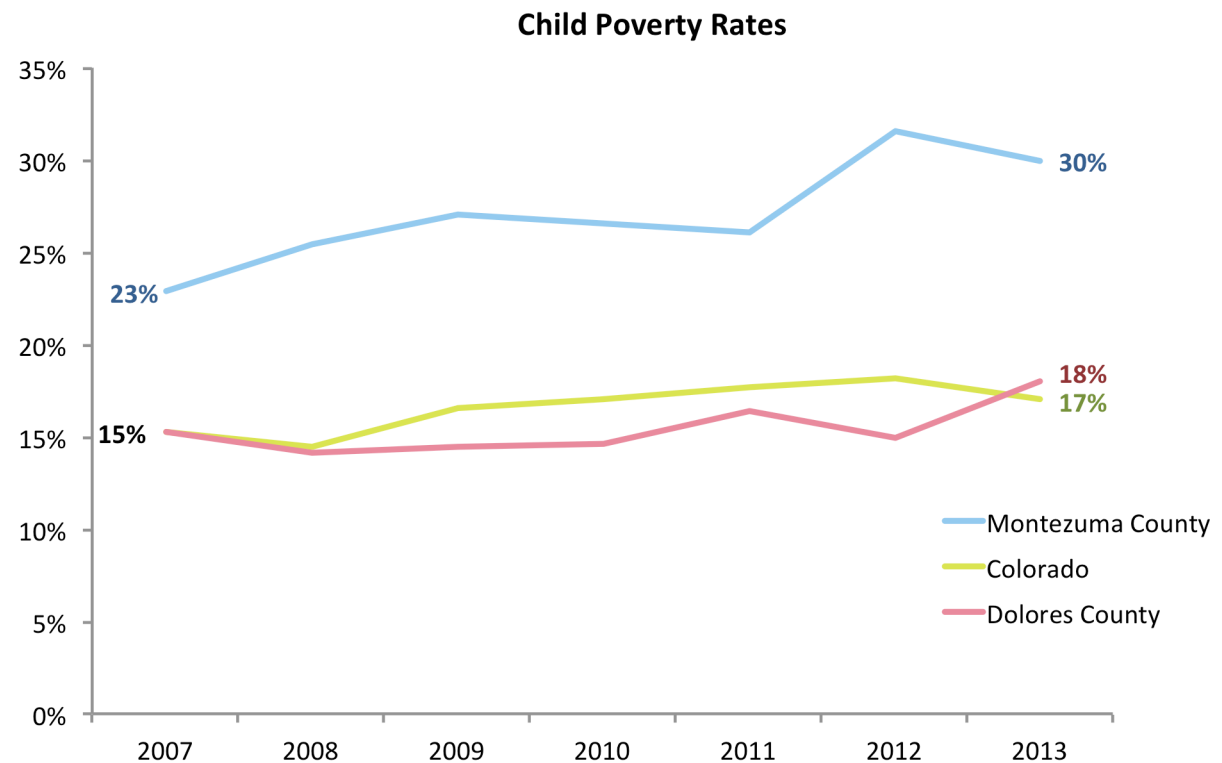
Yet what does it cost for a family of four to live in Montezuma county, including paying taxes, health care, transportation, food, child care, housing, and miscellaneous?

It costs \$55, 956!

And in Dolores county? It costs \$52, 956!



Child poverty rates in Montezuma and Dolores County remain higher than their pre-recession levels

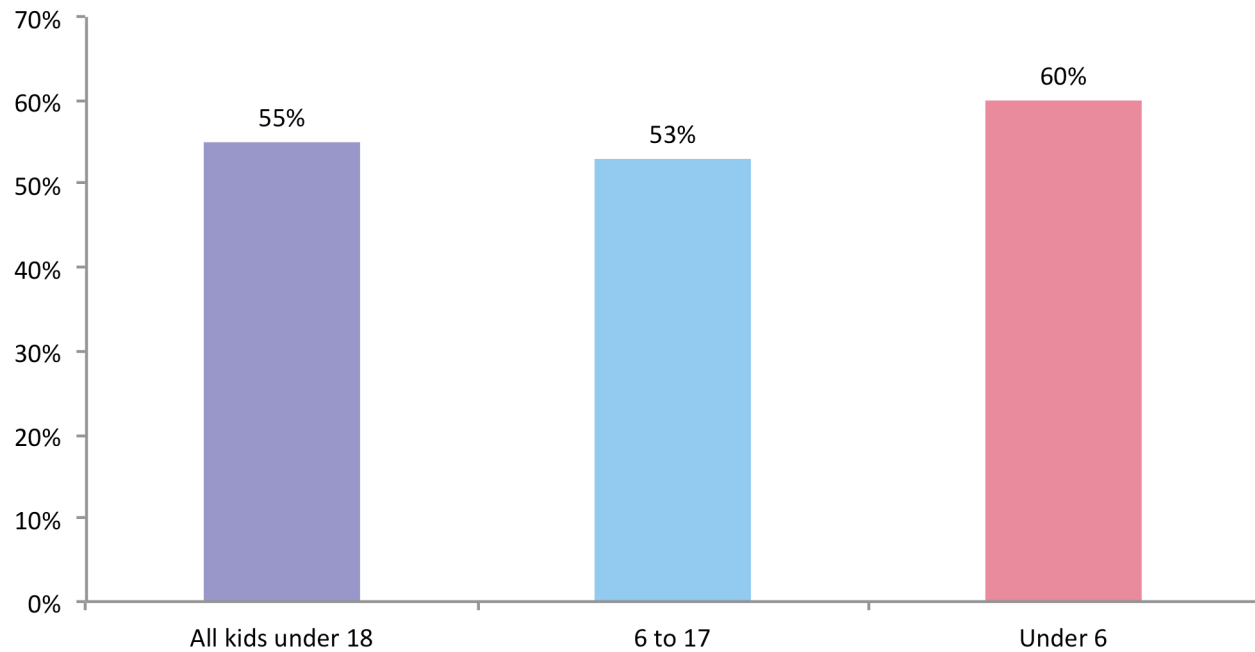


Almost 2/3rds of children under 6 years-of-age live in poverty in Montezuma county.



More than **half** of Montezuma County children live in low-income families

Montezuma County Children Living Below 200% FPL, 2009-2013



New in this year's Kids Count presentation was information about toxic stress in early childhood, and the life long effects on the developing brain.



Toxic stress can derail the healthy development of a child's brain

Children facing **risk factors like chronic abuse, neglect, and caregiver substance abuse** are more likely to experience toxic stress.



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) not only affect brain development and health, they affect success in school and life.



Adverse childhood experiences, brain development and lifelong health

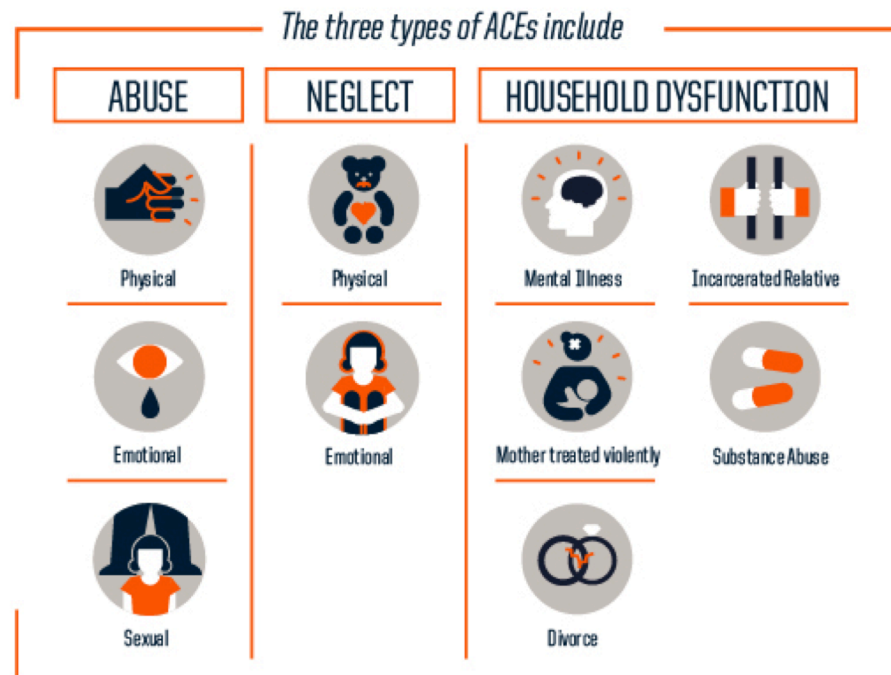


Image courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Toxic stress actually changes the physical structure of the brain in areas that control regulation, learning skills, and social relating skills.

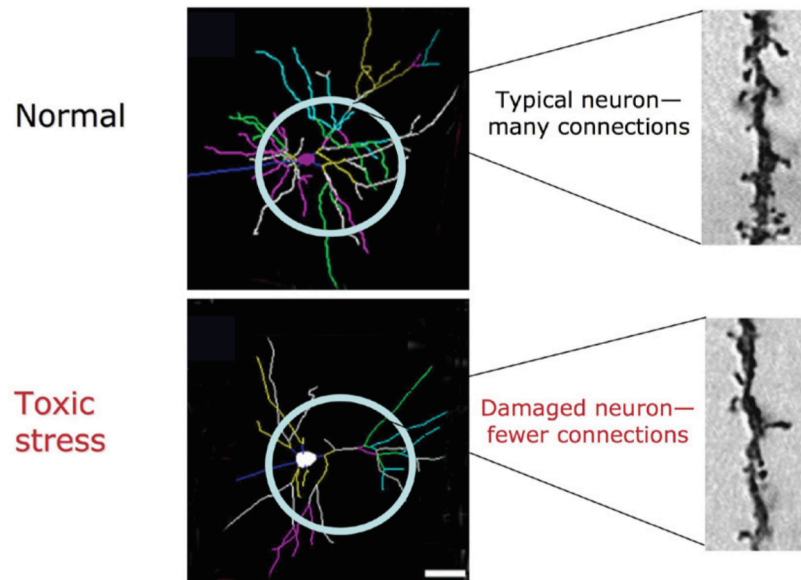


This is your brain on toxic stress...



Center on the Developing Child
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Persistent Stress Changes Brain Architecture



Prefrontal Cortex and
Hippocampus

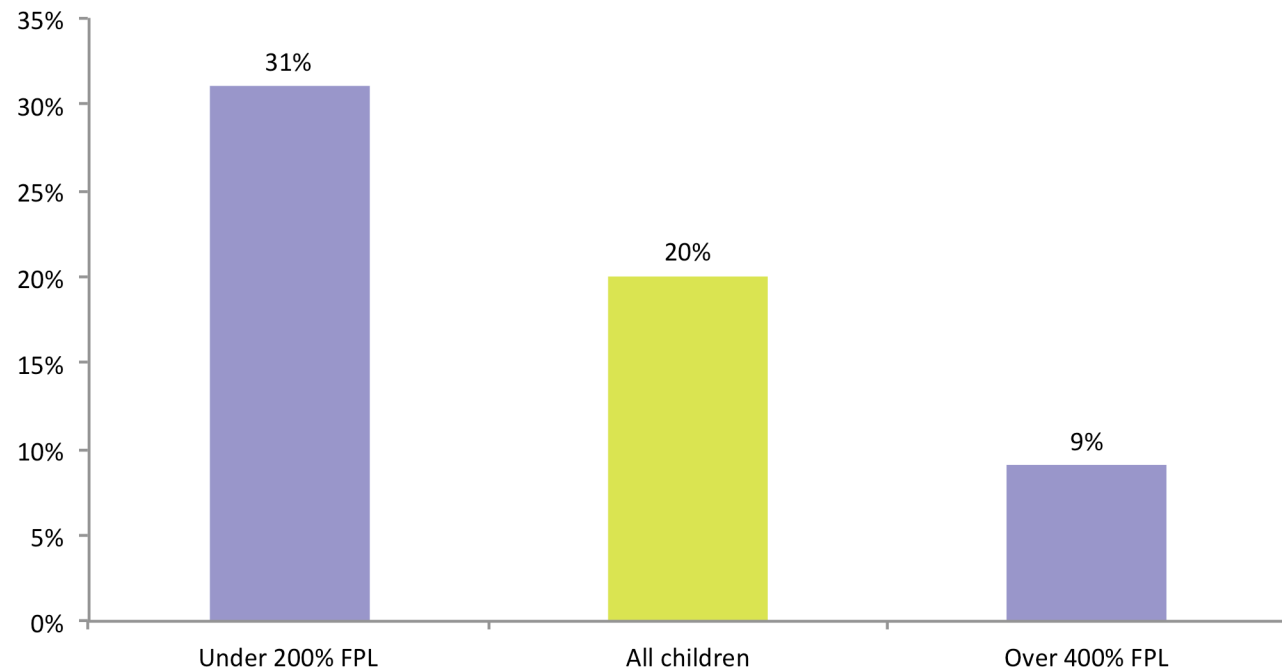
Sources: Radley et al. (2004)
Bock et al. (2005)

9% of Colorado kids have been exposed to two or more adverse childhood experiences by the age of 6.



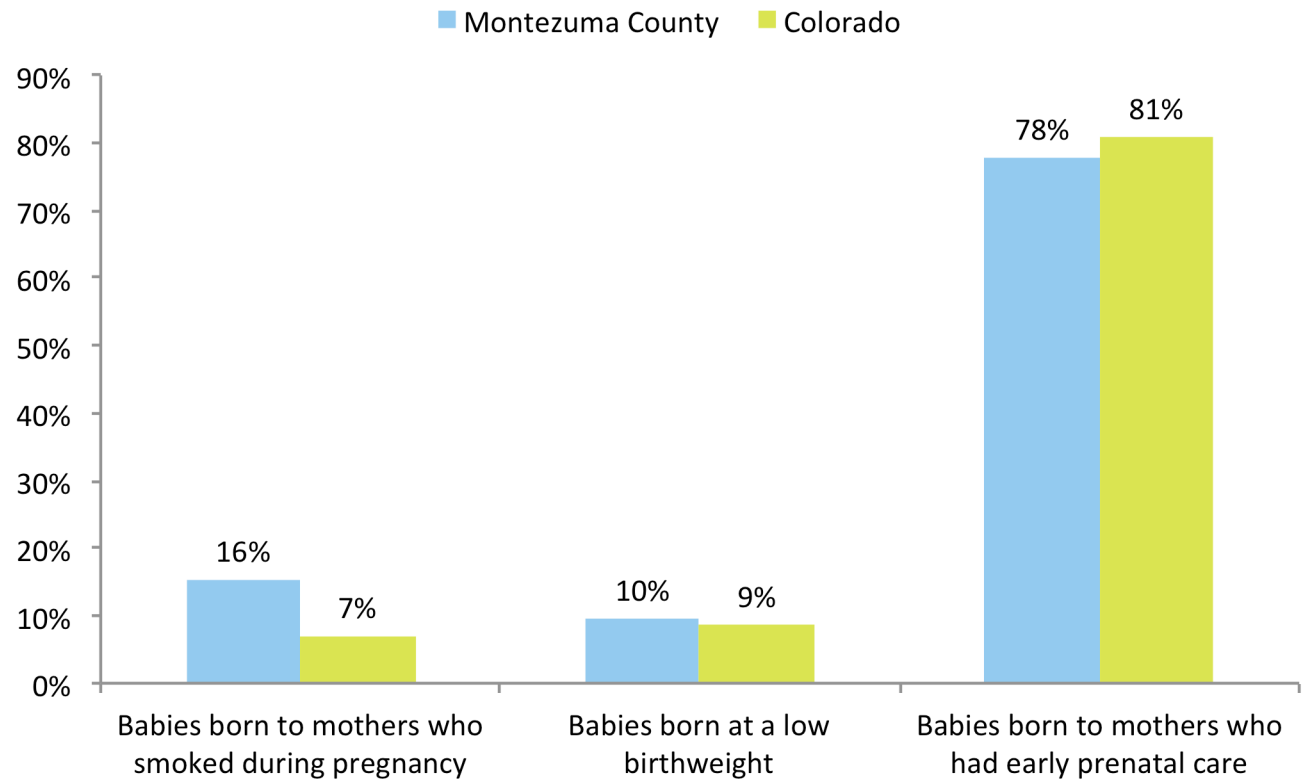
By age 18, one in five Colorado kids has been exposed to two or more ACEs

Colorado Children Under 18 Who Faced Two or More Adverse Experiences, 2011-2012





Montezuma County lagging behind on important “healthy start” indicators

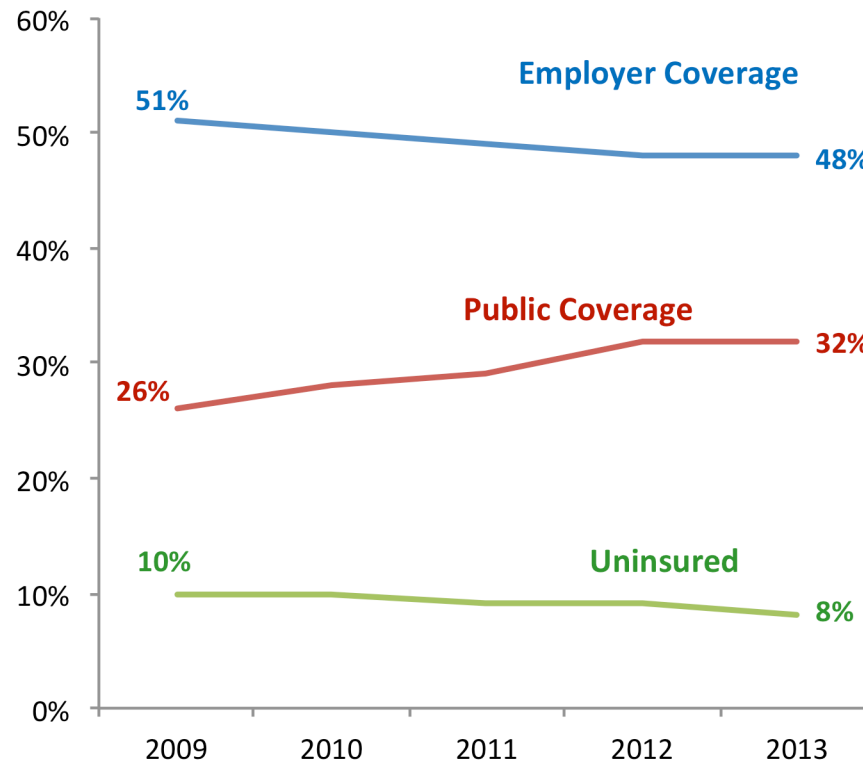


Between 2008-2014 more than 100,000 Colorado kids got health insurance, thanks to public programs.

Having health insurance means that families can take better care of their kids by getting them seen by a health care provider when they're sick. Kids who get health care when they need it miss less school.



How are Colorado kids covered?



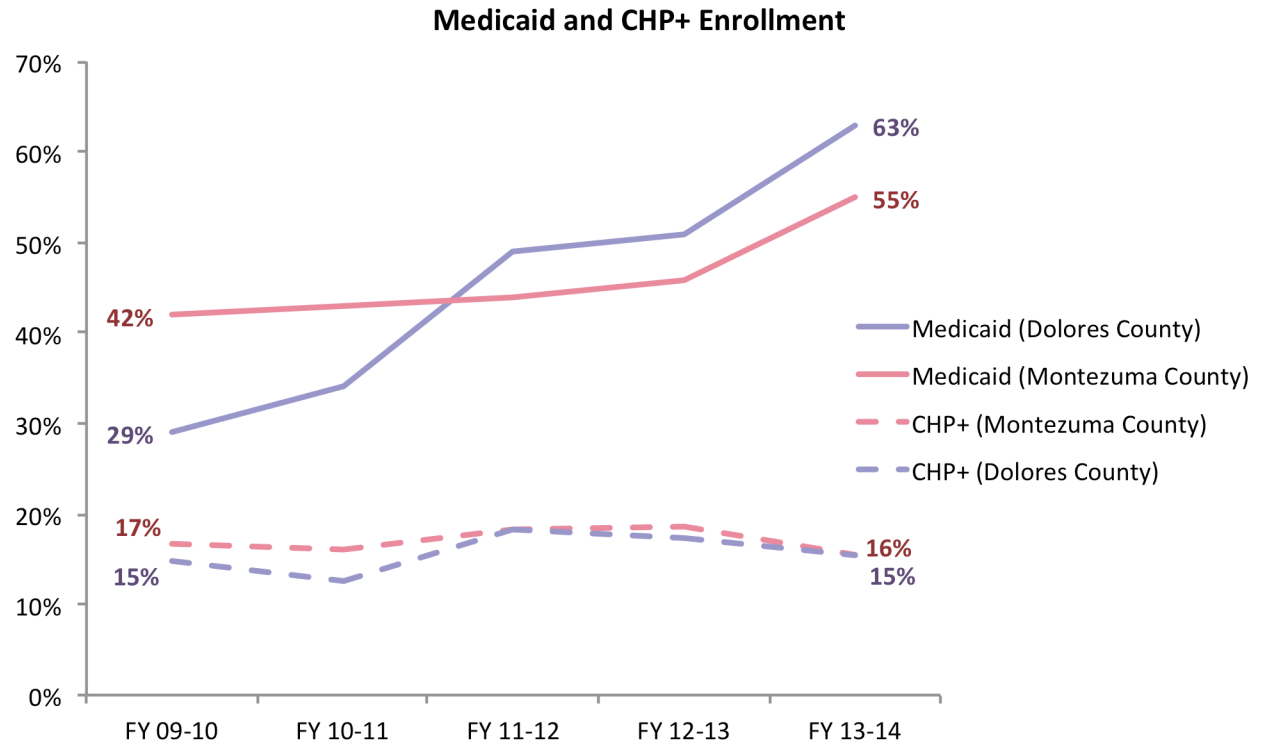
As the number of Colorado children covered by private insurance declines...

Public programs like **CHP+** and **Medicaid** are covering more families.

A majority of children in both Montezuma and Dolores counties rely on public programs for health care.



Public coverage programs are critical to Montezuma and Dolores County kids

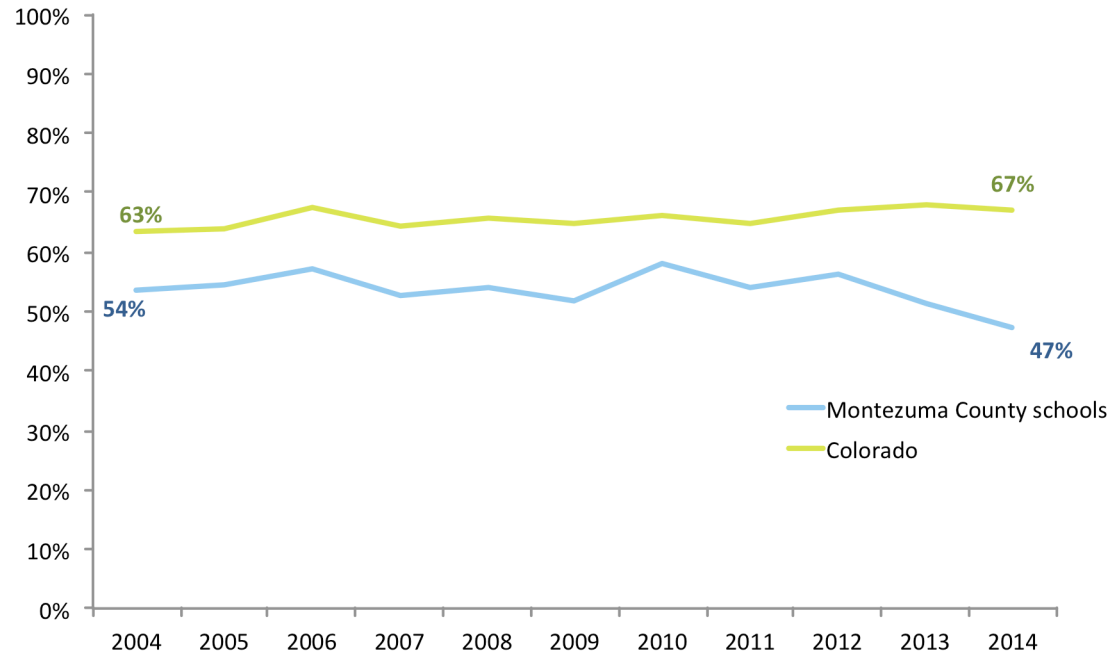


Montezuma county kids aren't doing well in reading. Remember, success in literacy and reading begins in the "cradle" and on the laps of parents! Read to your children every single day. You won't regret it.



Early literacy: Fewer than half of all Montezuma County 4th graders reading at grade level

4th Graders Reading at Grade Level

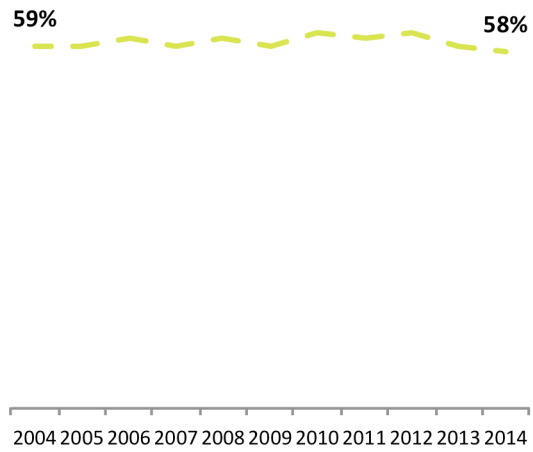


And even worse in math.

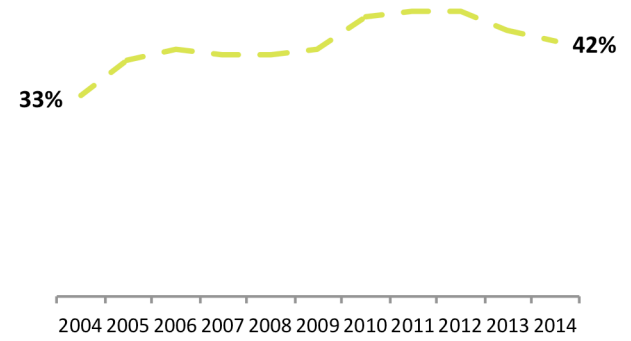


Montezuma County's student achievement data show mixed results

CSAP/TCAP Reading Proficiency



CSAP/TCAP Math Proficiency



Here are the results for Dolores County.



Trends are less clear in Dolores County

CSAP/TCAP Reading Proficiency



2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

CSAP/TCAP Math Proficiency

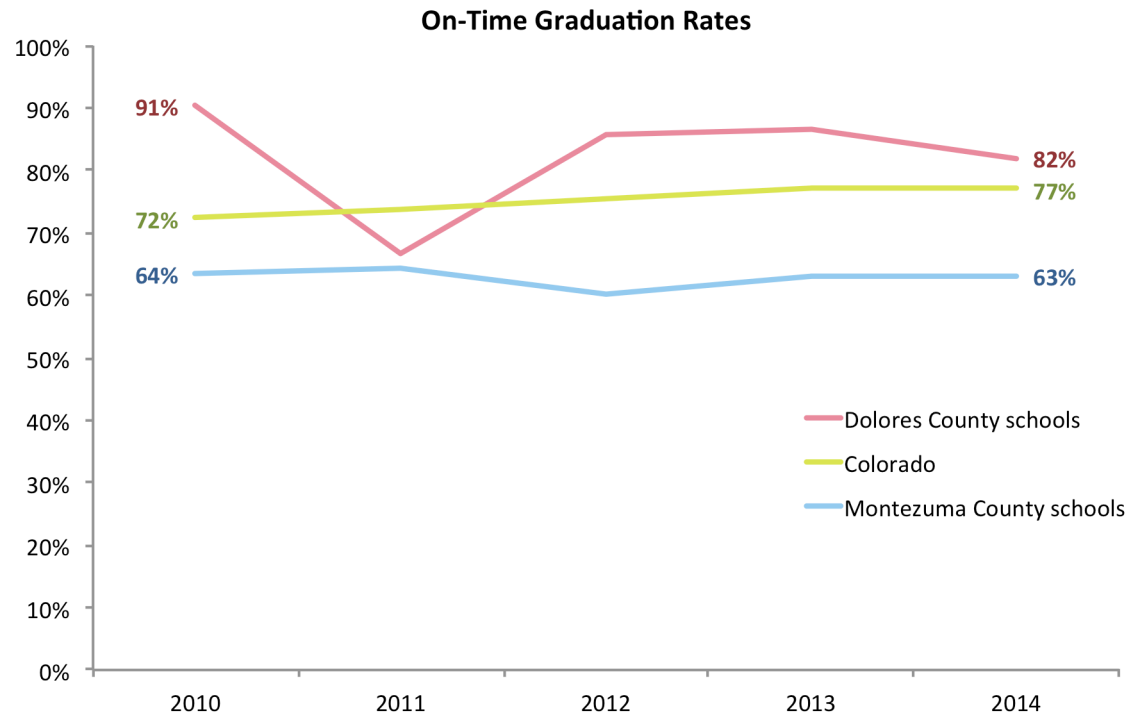


2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

Many kids in Montezuma county drop out of high school or take more than 4 years to complete high school. The outlook is very poor for those without a high school degree to have success in life.



Only six out of 10 Montezuma County high schoolers graduated on time in 2014

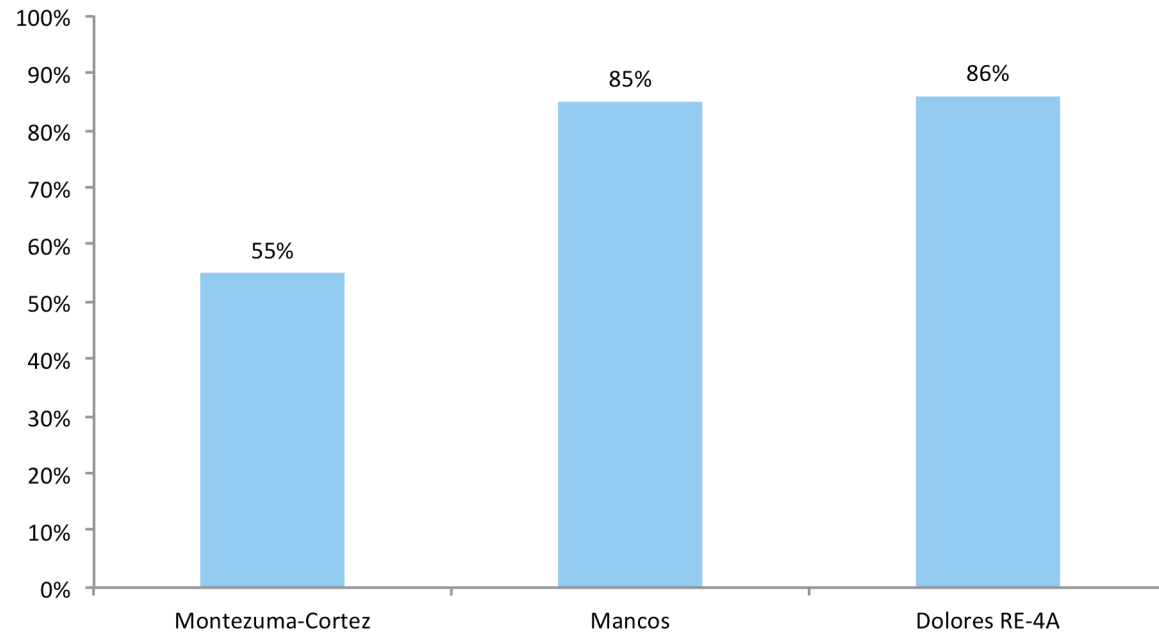


Here are the graduation rates by district.



Graduation rates are particularly low in the Montezuma-Cortez school district

2014 On-Time Graduation Rates by School District

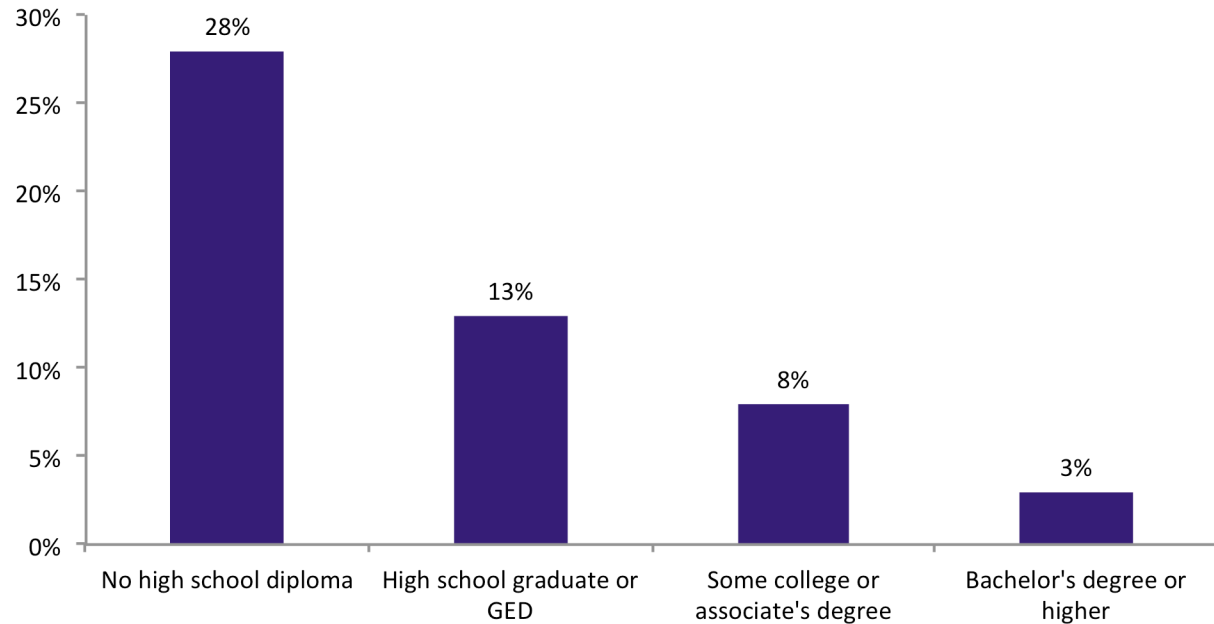


A high school diploma makes success in employment much more likely. And the revised GED exam is much harder than the "old" one, and many more non-graduates are failing. In fact, Colorado is seeking to buy an easier exam so more students can attain a GED. It's better for all if people graduate from high school!



Today's children must graduate from high school to give tomorrow's children the best opportunities for success

Colorado Families in Poverty by Educational Attainment of Householder, 2013



We hope your wondering, "What can I do?" Write a letter to the editor, get involved in local early childhood and K-12 programs, make your voice heard. One thing you can do is become a Family Leader by participating in the Family Leadership Training Institute. Free classes, with a meal and childcare, begin in January. Just type Family Leadership Training Institute into the search box of our website & you will be directed to more information.



What is Effective Advocacy?

