



AMERICA'S PROMISE - THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH

100 BEST COMMUNITIES



Section 1: Contact Information

Primary Contact Information:

Venessa Finn
Business Analyst/Coordinator for Youth Business Grant Program
Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation
190 Central Park Square
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Congress Contacts:

Rep. Tom Udall
321 North Connelly Street
Clovis, NM 88102-0868

Senator Pete V. Domenici
120 South Federal Place
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Senator Jeff Bingaman
Suite 101
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Secondary Contact Information:

Barbara Marcille
Program Director
Los Alamos Teen Court
Teen Court
2300 Trinity Drive
Los Alamos, NM 87544

State Representatives Contacts:

Gov. Bill Richardson
Office of the Governor
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Rep. Jeannette Wallace
1913 Spruce Street
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Demographic

Visit the US Census Bureau American Fact Finder <http://factfinder.census.gov> or <http://www.dataplace.org>

Poverty rate for community: **2.9**

Child Poverty rate for community:

All Ages 0 - 18: **2.3**

Ages 0 - 5: **1.0**

Population size: Please enter the numeric values below

Total Population: **18343**

Youth Aged 0 - 18: **4751**

Race and Ethnic breakdowns:

White Non Hispanic: **82.1%**

Black or African American Non Hispanic: **0.4%**

American Indian and Alaskan Native: **0.6%**

Asian: **3.6%**

Asian Combination: **0.2%**

Hispanic or Latino of any race: **11.7%**

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: **0%**

Some other race: **1.4%**

Two or more races: **2.3%**

Urbanicity: **Urban**

Section 2: Commitment, Collaboration, Awareness, Data & Advocacy

The America's Promise Alliance believes that, as a nation and as communities, we can help more young people get the support and opportunities they need if we do a few things better:

- ? Engage committed partners and individuals from all sectors, and enable them to collaborate more effectively toward shared goals and plans
- ? Raise awareness of kids' needs, using relevant data, and drive people to act and advocate to make kids a top priority

Engaging Committed Partners and Collaborating Effectively Across Sectors

1. Describe the child and youth focused **one-on-one or small-group partnerships** (e.g. school-business, city-school, public-private, faith-based-nonprofit, school-community) and their results (e.g. resulted in significant new financial investments, new or expanded numbers of volunteers or other human resources, etc.)

Fifteen years ago, The Los Alamos YMCA and Los Alamos Public School District (LAPS) entered into a partnership to trade space at LAPS facilities to operate child care and community programs for a YMCA Wellness Plan for all school district teachers, substitutes and employees. The YMCA also operates after-school programs on-site at all five elementary schools in Los Alamos. As a United Way agency, the YMCA offers scholarships to families who cannot afford child care program fees. Homework tutoring, community service opportunities, sports, arts and crafts, and cooking are just some of the activities that the children enjoy.

The Youth Environmental Services (YES CORP) is a program specifically for ages 11-17 that is a combination of volunteer service, environmental education and work experience. This program focuses on trail improvement, landscaping and watershed restoration in Los Alamos. The program is another partnership between the YMCA, which administers the program, and Los Alamos County, which provides the trained adult leaders.

In addition, each year Los Alamos County and the YMCA organize "Senior Appreciation Night" (SAN). This program began as an attempt to provide an all-night activity for graduating high school seniors as a deterrent to under-aged drinking and other undesirable activities. Each year for the past 12 years, the County and the YMCA work with local businesses and service organizations to sponsor an all-night carnival, games, dancing, movies, food free of charge to graduating seniors. Research indicates that 70% of each graduating class participates each year.

2. Are there one or more standing, **community-wide collaborations** (e.g. Children's Commission, Taskforce, positive youth development coalition) working on behalf of children and youth in your community?

Yes

- a. If so, please describe the group(s), including how long they have existed, the sectors involved (e.g., local elected officials, media partners, schools, nonprofits, faith groups, young people), the leadership for the collaboration(s) and any successes that the group(s) has/have had in serving children and youth in your community.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB) was established in 2004 in resolutions adopted by the School Board and County Council. JJAB includes over 30 representatives from youth, education, legislative, law enforcement, judiciary, social and health services, media, recreation, and other areas of the community. JJAB galvanizes community resources to research gaps in youth services and fund programs. JJAB has had success with many prevention and intervention programs.

The Community Health Council (CHC) was formed in 2001 to identify and address health issues through ongoing research, and coordination of services. The 22 members include the LA Medical Center, crisis centers, counseling agencies, the schools, Maternal and Child Health, and more. Many of CHC's initiatives target youth. An ongoing project is the administration of community mental and physical health surveys. This research helps organizations develop and raise funds for programs that accurately target youth needs.

The DWI Planning Council is made up of a coordinator, law enforcement officials, LAPS representatives, and service organizations. These organizations work together to reduce underage drinking through educational and law enforcement efforts.

3. Does your community have one or more major forums specifically for **public and private funders** to develop joint funding priorities to benefit children and youth, such as a regional area grantmakers association, or a public-private coordinating council?

Yes

a. If so, who leads and participates, what is its/their mandate, and what are its/their accomplishments?

The Community Health Council (CHC) member agencies work collaboratively for the benefit of the community. The funding for this program is primarily from the New Mexico Department of Health, and also from a variety of grants for projects like restorative justice circles. The CHC gathers local, state and national data, compiling it in the Community Health Profile. The data is weighed on a variety of factors to determine priorities. The CHC has been endorsed by county government and is administered by the Los Alamos Family Council.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Board is supported by the funds from the Children, Youth, and Families Department and Los Alamos County. JJAB programs include parent education, intervention programs for truancy, delinquency, and substance abuse, juvenile community corrections, coordination of activities such as dances and "open gym" for teens, and youth leadership workshops.

The JJAB is lead by Municipal Judge Alan Kirk who has been the Chair since its inception. The JJAB is endorsed by both the County Council and the Los Alamos School Board.

4. Is there an established mechanism to cultivate and support **youth leadership** and/or to give youth a voice in policy decisions in your community?

Yes

a. If so, please describe these mechanisms, including how long they have been in existence, how they function, what kind of decisions or opportunities young people have access to and specifically how policy decisions have been influenced.

Leadership Los Alamos and the Los Alamos Juvenile Justice Advisory Board sponsor an annual 2-day workshop for high school students called "Building Leadership Skills." This program includes a professional facilitator who works with the teens on developing skills for building relationships, increasing confidence, and positive and effective communication. The group also participates in outdoor team challenge activities including a ropes course. The participants select community service projects and work throughout the year with adult leaders to plan, raise necessary funds, and complete their projects. This program was started in 2005.

Kiwanis Club of Los Alamos sponsors youth clubs such as Key Club at the high school, Builder's Club at the middle school, and K-Kids at the elementary schools. Kiwanians attend the youth club meetings and, along with school faculty members, work with the youth to complete community service projects and participate in youth-mentoring-youth projects such as "Read and Lead". The Kiwanis Club also sponsors youth each year to attend "Key Leaders Conference", a national training program that focuses developing leadership skills.

5. Does your community follow a **comprehensive plan** for addressing the needs of children and youth in your community?

Yes

a. If so, please describe the plan, the process to develop the plan, including any needs assessment performed, the partners that were involved, when it was originally created, whether it has been revised to reflect changes in your community and the child population, and how the plan has been used to create better policies and programming.

Los Alamos is governed by a County Council, which consists of seven members elected at large for four-year, staggered terms. The County Council first adopted a Comprehensive Plan by resolution in 1964. The plan was truly comprehensive in scope covering population, land use, housing, traffic circulation, business districts, schools, recreation, public buildings, capital improvements, implementation, and a market analysis. A second comprehensive plan was adopted in 1976, and the third version, parts of which are still in effect, was adopted in 1986 and 1987.

The fourth and current Comprehensive Plan was developed in 2005, based on a Vision Statement adopted by Council in 2002. A committee of citizens of Los Alamos County created this Comprehensive Plan, with assistance from a Comprehensive Plan Project Team, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Los Alamos County Community Development Department staff. It serves as the roadmap for all County Council decisions, budgeting, policy, and otherwise.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines objectives for our county, and many of these are specifically targeted at making Los Alamos a community that truly benefits our youth. Following are objectives that are part of the current Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan.

- **The County should complete a comprehensive review of all county youth-related activities and programs, and implement code revisions to include youth representatives as voting members on oversight committees.**
- **The County should work with local organizations involved with youth to identify or create youth organizations that will provide regularly scheduled activities and events and leadership development opportunities using “best practices” in youth development.**
- **The County should work to develop transportation systems that accommodate the needs of young people.**
- **The County, with the youth, should plan and implement strategies for intergenerational activities.**
- **The County should conduct and publish periodic community-wide assessments of youth interests, needs, and skills with recommendations for improving services and opportunities for youth.**
- **The County should work with the youth to create and publish a comprehensive database of the resources available to the youth.**
- **The County should work with the youth and local businesses to develop specific marketing and job-finding strategies and opportunities oriented toward youth.**
- **The County government should work with the community and non-profit organizations in creating and maintaining education opportunities and/or centers.**
- **The County and/or a public-private consortium should plan and develop appropriate venues for conferences and the performing arts, which will serve as the heart of our world-class center of learning.**
- **The County should encourage the development and implementation of a plan for improved connections between the Laboratory, homes, public buildings and institutions of higher learning, including bicycle and pedestrian circulation systems, adequate, state of the art communication systems, and gathering places to encourage social and intellectual intercourse.**
- **The County's Park and Recreation programs should support recreational activities that improve physical condition, such as hiking, swimming, tennis, and skating.**
- **Walking distance to neighborhood parks should not exceed an established standard of one-quarter mile and minimize crossing of arterials.**

Raising Awareness, Using Data, and Driving Action

1. Has your community created one or more public awareness campaigns to promote positive youth development? Do your community's youth efforts receive regular coverage in the local media (i.e. through a regular column in the local newspaper or regular programming on local cable access)

Yes

a. For each campaign, please describe the content of the campaign, when it was conducted, the audience to whom the campaign was directed, and any results you documented from the campaign. For any regular news coverage, please describe the location and length of the coverage, topics covered, and how often this coverage appears.

There are many opportunities for public awareness campaigns and communication in Los Alamos. The local newspaper, the Los Alamos Monitor, regularly publicizes youth events and meetings of youth -related councils. Each week there is a special section of the paper devoted to youth happenings. A reporter is dedicated to education and juvenile justice issues.

The local movie theater runs an "Everyone Doesn't Drink" campaign, produced by the DWI Council. The Community Health Council and the DWI Council fund a "Sticker Shock" program, where volunteers place stickers on bottles of alcohol in local stores to notify purchasers that providing alcohol to minors is a felony in this state. These efforts provide an environmental approach to address the issue of youth alcohol abuse.

Results of local research, including Developmental Assets surveys, the PRIDE Survey and the Community Health Survey are included in the Community Health Profile, which is presented to many groups and is covered in the newspaper. The paper carries articles about the Developmental Assets, and flyers go home to parents of K-6th grade students bi-weekly.

2. Does your community collect, analyze and/or report data on the well-being of children and youth in your community?

Yes

a. If so, please describe how long you have collected data, what data you collect and the age range it represents, how you report the data, and who uses the data.

The group now known as the Community Health Council has collected a needs assessment in the community since 1994. A specific study called the Community Health Profile (CHP) has been conducted and analyzed annually since 2002. The CHP is presented to county government and variety of other organizations throughout the year. It includes data on youth from conception through the teen years.

The Los Alamos Public Schools conduct the PRIDE survey and the Search Institute survey among Los Alamos public school students. The data is analyzed and used by the Community Health Council, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board and the DWI Council in determining needs and risks for our community. These groups also track data for their individual programs and work collaboratively in many areas.

Collectively, this data is used by agencies to apply for funding, by organizations to determine priority areas, and by state government to evaluate health outcomes. The organizations come together like pieces of a puzzle, each working on specific areas that add value to the community as a whole.

3. How are children and youth a **policy priority** for your community? What policies or regulations have been passed or are in place to support children and youth and what time period do they cover? Describe which public leaders are supportive and how they demonstrate their support.

As described in Section 1, #5, The Los Alamos County Council adopted a Vision Statement in 2002 that consists of 14 directives. Four of those directives directly impact youth and improve their quality of life in our community.

- **Expand Education:** "We will build on our unique strengths and traditions of science, environmental studies, archaeology, and art to create a world-class center of learning that gives the community and the Laboratory the feel of a campus."
- **Engage Citizenship:** "In refining and implementing this Vision, our government will be responsive to the community be actively engaging all citizens, young and old, in planning and governance."
- **Enhance Youth Activities:** "We will engage young people in planning and delivering more activities and programs for kids and teens, including intergenerational activities."
- **Improve Recreation:** "We will maintain and carefully improve outdoor recreation that addresses the needs of a diverse population. This includes hike and bike trails. We will maintain, improve, and expand indoor recreational activities and programs."

Most of the other Vision Statement directives benefit our youth, such as Improve Mobility, Provide Health-care, Protect the Environment, Diversify Housing, and Preserve our Past. The directives that embody our Council's Vision Statement ensure ongoing support and services for children and youth.

In addition, the members of the Los Alamos County Council and the Los Alamos School Board both unanimously approved resolutions in endorsing the JJAB in 2004. The mission of the JJAB is "to determine where the juvenile justice system needs support, to engage the community in solutions, to galvanize community resources for prevention and immediate intervention, thereby improving the lives of our youth and their chances for success, and building a healthier community. Both the School Board and the County Council provide funding for the JJAB and its programs.

Overcoming Challenges

1. Does your community have any initiatives that help ensure young people in your community graduate from high school and are ready for college or the workforce (e.g. school readiness, academic achievement, youth employment initiatives, dropout prevention, or dropout recovery)?

Yes

- a. If so, please describe the initiative(s), any outcomes achieved, the partners involved, and how your community comes together to help your young people succeed?

On our high school campus, we have a full-time college and career coordinator who matches each student with an advisor, separate from his or her guidance counselor. The students meet with this advisor several times per year to discuss their student educational plan and outline their post-high school plans. Our high school also has Advanced Placement classes in social studies, psychology, English, and science. For students wishing to fulfill requirements early, Los Alamos High School provides opportunities for students to complete coursework through Brigham Young University and other accredited universities. We also have a work-study program that transports youth to employment opportunities in our community.

Our local Juvenile Justice Advisory Board works collaboratively with the Los Alamos Police Department, Community Health Council, Teen Court, DWI Planning Council, the schools, hospital, mental health agencies, local non-profits, business owners, local judges, Juvenile Parole and Probation Officers, and County Council members to determine strategies to keep our youth active, engaged, in school, and away from drugs and alcohol. We survey youth in grades 4th -12th grades using both the Pride and the Search Institute surveys. These surveys provide a picture of what types of behaviors our youth are participating in and where the risks are. From there, programming is developed to help fill gaps once they are identified. Our district's Prevention Specialist serves as an active Juvenile Justice Advisory Board member and works with all of these agencies to provide assistance and support the efforts within the Los Alamos schools.

2. Provide an example of how your community has overcome another specific challenge or set of challenges affecting its children and youth. What policies and programs have you implemented and what results has your community seen?

The JJAB determined that Los Alamos needed to better address the issue of juvenile offenders with shoplifting, possession of alcohol or marijuana, battery, and/or other misdemeanor infractions. Juvenile offenders from LA were referred to the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office (JPPO) in Santa Fe, which sees a high volume of juvenile offenders and many serious level offenses, and did not have the resources to devote much time to the Los Alamos referrals. Often by the time a formal intervention took place, the types of offenses had escalated and a pattern of delinquency had developed.

In partnership with the JJAB, the JPPO, the Los Alamos Police Department, and the courts, Teen Court was started here in 2005, and a new system of referral was developed. This became a way to hold young offenders accountable at an early stage, give youth the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions, foster communication, and focus on building competencies rather than just on punishment, thereby decreasing teens' chances of re-offending or progressing to more serious or violent behaviors.

In the first year of operation, over 120 cases were referred to Teen Court and 25 high school students were active as volunteer jurors or attorneys. Los Alamos Family Council, the Family Strengths Network, and Corazon Behavioral Health offer counseling, educational programs, and substance abuse evaluations, testing, and treatment programs work with the Teen Court to provide sentencing options. The program has received many accolades, and both case referrals and youth volunteer involvement continue to increase.

Section 3: Resources Youth Receive

Children and youth need a variety of resources in order to thrive. America's Promise calls these the **Five Promises**. For each of the Promises (listed below), please explain how you are working to ensure that all children and youth receive these resources in your community.

Please provide examples of programs, initiatives and/or policies and specifically include indicators or data collected that illustrate how you provide these resources to children and youth and progress made, including **trend data**

The examples listed below may or may not exist in your community. You have the freedom to be creative in your responses and report programs and initiatives that may exist only in your community. Please make sure that the data you include reflect the outcomes of young people in the community as was described in Section 1b - for example, if the community applying for this honor is a city, please do not include county data OR you may change the geographic area being considered for this honor to support the data available.

Caring Adults:

Definition: Every child and youth needs and deserves support and guidance from caring adults in their families, schools, and communities, including ongoing, secure relationships with parents and other family adults, as well as multiple and consistent formal and informal positive relationships with teachers, mentors, coaches, youth volunteers, and neighbors.

Answers could include adults or older young people participating in formal mentoring programs; PTA membership; guidance counselor-to-student ratio; etc.

The Los Alamos Family YMCA is the largest provider of youth programs in Los Alamos. In 2005, the YMCA served 2,418 youth (1yr – 17 yrs) in a variety of sports and recreational programs. Almost all of these programs are taught or coached by adult volunteers who believe in mentoring and providing guidance to youth. All volunteer coaches attend a mandatory training clinic focused on serving youth. In 2005, 392 individuals volunteered 30,000 hours in Y programs and as policy volunteers.

Kiwanis Club of Los Alamos is a service club of 60 members with a focus on serving youth and promoting service to community in youth. Their motto is "Serving the Children of the World". In 2005-06, the Kiwanis Club of Los Alamos gave out \$28,000 in grants to youth-serving organizations and scholarships to college bound students who demonstrated outstanding community service. Kiwanians clocked over 1585 volunteer hours in youth-oriented activities.

Safe Places:

Definition: Every child and youth needs and deserves to be physically and emotionally safe everywhere they are - from the actual places of families, schools, neighborhoods and communities to the virtual places of media - and to have an appropriate balance of structured, supervised activities and unstructured, unscheduled time.

Answers could include drug-free school zones, number of safe play spaces, programs to reduce overall violence and other crimes in community - particularly toward children and youth, availability of out-of-school time activities or programs, availability of before and after-school care, availability of extracurricular activities, etc.

The Los Alamos Family Council, in partnership with Los Alamos County and with additional funding provided by the United Way, provides two Youth Activity Centers for children from 3rd grade to 8th grade. Many children in our community are alone during out of school hours while their parents are at work. The goal of the Activity Centers is to provide adult supervision and social interaction for these children after school, on school holidays, and during the summer months. The director of this program has been working with the children at the Youth Activity Centers for 24 years. The centers provide safe, friendly, and supportive environments in which these children can interact with their peers, and offer them the freedom to participate in activities that interest them. Teens over 8th grade are invited to volunteer as Counselors in Training, allowing them the opportunity to serve as mentors for the younger children.

A Healthy Start:

Definition: Every child and youth needs and deserves the healthy bodies, healthy minds, and healthful habits and choices resulting from regular well-child/youth health care and needed treatment, good nutrition and exercise, comprehensive health knowledge and skills, and role models of physical and psychological health.

Answers could include health insurance rates of children or number enrolled in state Child Health Insurance Plans (SCHIP), immunization rates for infants, physical education or health education classes in schools, availability of healthy, nutritious food in school, and availability of community recreation centers, etc.

Children and teens don't have to be in trouble to receive services & programs in Los Alamos. The following are programs developed in Los Alamos for risk prevention and for support to youth and families.

- WHO program: 1st, 3rd, 5th, 8th grades (We Help Ourselves) provided to the Los Alamos Public Schools by Family Strengths Network**
- Building Youth Leadership Skills Workshop provided by the JJAB**
- United Way Youth Campaign**
- Open Gym open after basketball games, provided by LAPS/JJAB**
- Middle and high school student are eligible for free vouchers to see a private therapist (in addition to school counselors), provided by LAPS**
- Life Skills Educational Class, provided by the Los Alamos Family Council/JJAB**
- Truancy/Chronic Tardy Intervention, provided by LAFC/JJAB**
- Girls Circle Program provided by FSN/JJAB**
- Family Solutions Class for Parents and Teens: FSN/JJAB/DWI Planning Council**
- Parent-to-Parent Confidential Forum, provided by FSN/JJAB**

Effective Education:

Definition: Every child and youth needs and deserves the intellectual development, motivation, and personal, social-emotional, and cultural skills needed for successful work and lifelong learning in a diverse nation, as a result of having quality learning environments, challenging expectations, and consistent formal and informal guidance and mentoring.

Answers could include percent of qualified teachers; percent of schools meeting/not meeting No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards; apprenticeship or Job-Shadowing opportunities; availability of computers and/or Internet in schools and throughout community; etc.

The Los Alamos Public School System is one of the few school districts in New Mexico where all schools have made AYP for the last two years. Standards-based achievement test scores, SAT scores, and ACT scores by Los Alamos students rank at the top in New Mexico and nationally. LAPS offers many AP classes, as well as opportunities in the fine arts, including drama and music, and a comprehensive athletic program.

A very high percentage of LAPS teachers are “highly qualified,” as defined by NCLB, and many have a master’s degree or above.

Over 90 percent of Los Alamos High School graduates go on to higher education and a large percentage go on to graduate school. A number of students have the opportunity to work in the community and at the National Laboratory, and many have mentors that provide experience and exposure to what is happening in the work world.

Opportunities to Help Others:

Definition: Every child and youth needs and deserves the chance to make a difference - in their families, schools, communities, nation and world - through having models of caring behavior, awareness of the needs of others, a sense of personal responsibility to contribute to larger society, and opportunities for volunteering, leadership and service.

Answers could include civic and character education; volunteer opportunities geared toward children and youth; service-learning opportunities in school; faith-based organization and community organizations; mandatory service requirements; and leadership opportunities for children and youth in the community; etc.

As described in Section 1, #4, teens that participate in the Building Leadership Skills program are actively involved in service learning. With adult guidance and assistance as necessary, they select projects that they identify as needs in the community and plan solutions. They have raised funds and worked with county and school officials to complete projects such as repairing the sound system at the high school football field, improving the safety of overpass walkways, and replacing the sign in front of the high school.

Teen Court is a program that was implemented in 2005 in Los Alamos. This program gives teens an opportunity to serve on a jury or work as an attorney for cases involving infractions committed by their peers, and enables them to have a positive impact on their community. The sentence determined by the jury always includes community service hours and jury duty sessions for the defendant.

All Five Promises or Multiple Promise Delivery:

Definition: Research shows that the more Promises children and youth receive, the more likely they are to become productive citizens in their community and the less likely they are to exhibit risky behaviors.

Answers could include opportunities for young people to receive comprehensive services at a specific site or a strategy to connect youth/families to the supports/resources they are lacking.

The YMCA after school program described in Section 1, #1, has continued to grow at 5% rate each year for past 7 years. Scholarship information to families in need is promoted by school counselors and well as Y staff. The number of families on scholarship has remained proportional to enrollment growth. YMCA Summer Camp provides full-time care for school aged children during summer months. Camp has grown 5% each year for past 7 years. The YMCA Counselors-in-Training Program targets youth entering 8th/9th grade and provides them with training to become future camp counselors. YMCA Leaders-in-Training Program targets youth entering 6th/7th grades, and emphasizes positive life and leadership skills in a service-learning self-discovery venue.

The two Youth Activity Centers in Los Alamos County, described under Bullet 2, “Safe Places,” provide activities and programs to help children develop necessary assets and competencies, and prevent risky behaviors. The LAPS, LA County, and the JJAB have joined forces to offer prevention and intervention programs to youth and families at no cost to them. Programs include substance abuse evaluations and treatment, “Family Solutions” classes for parents and teens, a “Parent to Parent” forum, and “Girls Circles” for teen and adolescent girls.

Section 4: Children and Youth Outcomes

Please complete Section 4 by providing locally collected data that describes measurable outcomes for young people in your community. Please make sure that the data you include reflects the outcomes of young people in the community as was described in Section 1b - for example, if the community applying for this honor is a city, please do not include county data OR you may change the geographic area being considered for this honor to support the data available.

If your community does not collect information related to the preferred data point, please substitute any relevant local data that the community has collected. When possible, please include **trend data** to show progress over time.

1a. Educational Attainment - High School completion is one of the most important indicators for the America's Promise Alliance to gauge how well our nation's young people are doing.

Please report: High school graduation or completion rate

Reference for preferred data point: For local information, please check: School District records; County or City Board of Education; State Department of Education; School Matters <http://www.schoolmatters.com/> ; or Editorial Projects in Education Research Center <http://www.edweek.org/dc06> . To find state-level data for comparison purposes please visit <http://Nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states>

Graduation Rate (%) : 94% of Los Alamos High School seniors graduated in 2005; compared to 56.7% within our state.

Please describe how this rate was calculated: Total number of graduates divided by the number of seniors enrolled on the 40th day of the same year.

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department, www.edweek.org

Year: 2005

1b. Educational Attainment/Achievement - Succeeding in school (e.g., attaining competency in math, reading and science, graduating high school and attending college) is associated with better job prospects, higher income, stronger civic engagement and reduced reliance on public assistance.

Preferred Data Point examples: College or post-secondary enrollment; Math or English Proficiency test scores or early school readiness indicators such as cognitive and non-cognitive skills

If preferred data points are not available, other data points could include: pupil-teacher ratio; NAEP scores; state standardized test scores, Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)

Reference for preferred data point: For local information, please check: School District records; County or City Board of Education; State Department of Education; School Matters <http://www.schoolmatters.com/>; or Editorial Projects in Education Research Center <http://www.edweek.org/dc06>. To find state-level data for comparison purposes please visit <http://Nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states>

Community Indicator Data Point: 89% of Los Alamos High School graduates pursue higher education degrees, compared to 56.7% within our state.

Source: Los Alamos Public Schools 2005-06 Exit survey, www.schoolsmatter.com

Year: 2006

2. Psychological Health - The absence of depression and anxiety and the presence of optimism and hope is associated with higher quality parent-child and peer relationships as well as higher levels of educational attainment.

Preferred Data Point Suicide attempts
example:

If preferred data point
examples are not available, Depression; agency referrals for service rates
other data points reported
could include:

Reference for preferred data State or County Department of Public Health, please visit <http://www.drugabusestatistics.samhsa.gov/states.htm> for state-level information that may be
point: used for comparison purposes. State-level information may also be found at:
<http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/thechild/state.htm> or at the CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/map_page.htm

Community Indicator Data Point: In 2003, 8.8% of 6th - 12th grade students surveyed reported thinking “often” or “a lot” about committing suicide.

Source: 2003 PRIDE Survey Report

Year: 2003

3. Physical Health - Early childhood health factors such as lead exposure, not having the full battery of immunizations and low birth-weight are associated with long-term deficits in physical and cognitive functioning. Later health factors, such as obesity, set children up for health problems in adulthood.

Preferred Data Point Teen birth rate
examples:

If preferred data point
examples are not available, Child and youth mortality rate; immunization rate
other data points reported
could include:

Reference for preferred data State or County Department of Public HealthPlease visit <http://www.drugabusestatistics.samhsa.gov/states.htm> for state-level information that may be
point: used for comparison purposes. State-level information may also be found at:
<http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/thechild/state.htm> or at the CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/map_page.htm

Community Indicator Data Point: Teen pregnancy rates in Los Alamos County decreased from 16.1% to 6.9% between 2002 and 2003.

Source: NM Department of Health, State Center for Health Statistics

Year: 2003

4. Healthy Behaviors - Increases in pro-social activities and behaviors (e.g., vigorous physical activity and a nutritious diet) and decreases in negative behaviors (e.g., drug and alcohol use, violence, and sexual activity) are associated with safer neighborhoods, safer schools and improved long-term prospects for young people.

Preferred Data Point examples: Rates of children as crime victims or drug/alcohol use

If preferred data point examples are not available, other data points reported could include: Smoking; violent/criminal behavior; teen birth rates; STD's reported; enrollment in non-academic activities to build social skills; # of young people engaged in youth or intramural sports.

Reference for preferred data point: State and/or Local Department of Public Health; Department of Juvenile Justice at the U.S. Department of Justice; Local law enforcement agency and/or court system. Please visit <http://www.drugabusestatistics.samhsa.gov/states.htm> for state-level information that may be used for comparison purposes. State-level information may also be found at: <http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/thechild/state.htm> or at the CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/map_page.htm

Community Indicator Data Point: In 2004, 57.7% of 12th graders at Los Alamos High School admitted to drinking beer.

Source: Los Alamos Public Schools 2005 PRIDE Survey Report

Year: 2004

5. Civic Engagement - Participating in civic activities is associated with better well-being for the participating individuals, such as academic and social outcomes, and better outcomes for the communities in which they participate.

Preferred Data Point examples: Volunteer rates; voting rates for 18-21 year-olds; membership in civic organizations; hours reported for service learning or other mandatory service requirements; membership in civic organizations or involvement in community wide activities

Reference for preferred data point: Local United Way; Local Department of Education; National Election Exit Polls for your State; Corporation for National and Community Service Learn and Serve; local Volunteer Center.

Community Indicator Data Point: For 2005-2006 school year, there was a total of 132 members actively involved in National Honor Society.

Source: LAHS annual National Honor Society Roster

Year: 2006

Section 5: Youth Voice

An essential component of your work in communities should be youth voice and leadership. To provide affirmation of that leadership and voice in your community, please have three youth who are active leaders in your community submit testimonials (either written or on video) supporting your application. These submissions will be uploaded below. Please include the young person's name, age and affiliation within the community in each submission. These testimonials should be truly the voice of the young person submitting them; they should not be scripted or written by adults.

For each testimony, the youth should address the following questions:

- ? What makes your community deserving of being named a 100 Best Community for Young People?
- ? What opportunities exist that allow young people to get involved in your community? Are there opportunities to work side by side or in partnership with adults?
- ? In your opinion, explain or describe the availability of age-appropriate opportunities for the young people in your community. Are these opportunities available for all young people (including youth with disabilities, immigrant and ESL youth, etc.) and do young people take advantage of what is offered?
- ? Provide a personal example of how your community has helped you.

As part of the testimonial, young people may also submit (not required) an additional items that they have created and illustrates why they believe their community is a great place to grow up. Examples include: art/drawing/poster, photo(s) or a photo collage with short descriptions, an original song, or any other item they have created themselves that helps tell the story of how their community is very supportive of young people.

Only these additional materials should be sent in hard copy form to the following address: America's Promise 100 Best Communities, Danielle Butler, 909 N Washington Street, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314. **All other materials should be uploaded as part of your community's application**

Youth 1: **Colin MacArthur**

Youth 2: **Julie Winkler**

Youth 3: **Analisa Sandoval**

Guidelines: for written documents, each submission should not exceed 500 words in length and be double-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12.

For on-line youth testimonial video submissions, the size of the overall video must not exceed 20MB in size. Applicants should mail video materials to America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth if either the video size is larger than 20MB or they do not have a high-speed broadband connection (via Cable Internet, DSL, or FiOS) to upload the submission over the Internet.

Acceptable video formats include Microsoft Windows Media Player, Apple QuickTime, and Audio-Video Interleaved (AVI). For audio only submissions, the acceptable file formats are MPEG audio (MP3) and Microsoft Wave Audio File (WAV). When mailing media to America's Promise, the video/audio submissions should not exceed 500MB in size.

Name: Colin MacArthur

Age: 16

Affiliation within the community: Los Alamos High School Student, Los Alamos Public Schools Student Intern, Youth Business Owner

As a community, Los Alamos provides a unique environment for youth interested in learning and expanding their horizons. Our schools provide both a safe and stimulating student environment: I have never felt threatened at school and always feel challenged by our Advanced Placement courses and teachers. But Los Alamos provides opportunities for youth beyond schooling; many community boards include youth members, charities often actively include youth in fundraising efforts, most community business offer work study and internship opportunities.

I grew up in Los Alamos; at an early age, my teachers identified my talent for using computers. My elementary school offered me an opportunity to aid in the computer lab. I also assisted in the computer lab at our middle school, overseeing the implementation of a new website and server-based computing architecture. The summer before my freshman year, I joined our school district's central office as the Student Intern for Technology in Administration. Through this internship, I have gained invaluable experience in technology project management, implementing website management systems for several school district websites.

I also own and operate a small internet consulting firm. Over the last year, I have repeatedly worked with the county and other community organizations to create websites and give presentations about teenage internet usage. These organizations have also given me an incredible breadth of experience.

Youth who are interested in expanding their horizons are consistently offered opportunities to learn and help their community. One of my close friends worked as a transitional web master at our school district. Several other friends are involved in Juvenile Justice Advisory Board's Los Alamos Youth Leadership program; they are constantly involved in community and school improvement projects. Other friends serve as attorneys for our Teen Court program: I always double take when I hear friends chatting about defense strategies over coffee at Starbucks. Los Alamos also offers an excellent youth entrepreneur program, offering start-up capital and knowledge to youth interested in starting small businesses. I feel that all of these opportunities are available to youth based on ability, not immigrant status or disability.

Los Alamos offers a wide variety of arts and recreation activities aggressively marketed towards and open to youth. High school varsity sports are popular events and several community organizations offer substance-free activities for after games. When I have the attention span, I enjoy attending the numerous performances by drama, dance and musical groups of Los Alamos. Almost all of these events include youth performers and are attended by youth (along side of adults in the community).

I feel that, for its size, Los Alamos provides a wide variety of services for youth interested in helping themselves or their community. I have grown and learned a great deal in partnership with the Los Alamos community. Indeed, I feel that Los Alamos has offered me opportunities that other communities might not have.

Name: Julie Winkler

Age: 16

Affiliation within the community: Key Club Historian, Building Leadership Skills

Participant 2005-06, Teen Court, Chess Club, LAHS Film Society

Los Alamos is one of the few towns that truly deserve to be considered one of the nations 100 best communities for youth. One of the best places to show the opportunities for students is at the high school, which offers numerous electives from a computer science course to a photo class, to auto shop. Many students choose to be members of the band, which just won first place in Battle of the Bands Competitions. At our high school anyone can learn a new trade and really excel at it.

However, not all lessons can be learned in the classroom. Many extracurricular activities, such as Key Club, an international community service program, are also available. As an officer of the club, I help plan events in the community and work with active adults. Every winter, Key Club works with Kiwanis, our adult counterpart, to organize a pancake breakfast with Santa at the local senior center. This fundraiser allows children to get photos taken with Santa. Money earned from this event goes toward presents for foster children in the area, to be presented at a party for the kids. Key Club members learn how to be responsible for a large event, and take lead. Several athletics programs exist for people of all ages. Children can go swimming for years with their older siblings, and then join the swim team even before entering high school. Several community groups help connect adults with teens, such as the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board that tries to find ways to end teenage drinking. Leadership Los Alamos is a program that involves adolescents in improving the town. Last year one of their projects

was adjusting the sound system for the football games. These programs allow kids to meet with judges, business owners, and even political leaders in order to encourage them to be involved within the community.

Teen court is a program that I am part of as an attorney. We have all sorts of court cases from traffic violations to possession of alcohol. Teens can work with a partner to either argue as defense or prosecution, and a real judge, and a jury of other teens hears the case, just like a real court. The adolescents that go through this process as defendants are sentenced to community service, and are given a chance their record to be wiped clean. This is a great opportunity because many teens make a mistake that they regret and are already punished enough without a criminal record. The real value for me in being in a program like this is that I can try new things. Los Alamos is a town where many parents are scientists, so teen court is what showed me I had other options for the future. Being interested in a career in law, I never would have been able to see that possibility if I had not tried being an attorney in teen court.

Name: Analisa Sandoval

Age: 17

Affiliation within the community: Hilltopper Cross Country Team (Member for 4 years, and Team Captain), Hilltopper Swim Team (Member for 4 years, and Team Captain), Hilltopper Track Team (Member for 4 years), Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, National Honor Society, Teen Court Attorney, Senior Class President, 2006 Graduate of Los Alamos High School (With Honors), and a Silver and Gold Award-Earning Girl Scout

Los Alamos is small. It can brag of only a handful of restaurants and one movie theater; yet Los Alamos teems with activity. Perched halfway up the slopes of the Jemez mountains it is a haven for those who live an active life and love the outdoors. From any point in town it takes less than five minutes to find a plethora of endless trails and picturesque canyons. You have to put effort into disappearing; you are never left alone too long. The entire community is linked by connections that create a silent support network that has the unique ability to self assemble in times of stress. Within seconds, the entire town, from the postmaster to the ice cream storeowner to your kindergarten friend, will rush unasked to your side if needed. You are safe, for nothing can touch you when you have an entire town behind you.

Los Alamos is small. We have one high school, and consequently, no predetermined rivalries. Instead of fighting other schools, we compete internally for the highest grades and title as best musician or team captain. These rivalries foster an attitude of activity and participation, and encourage each student to put forth his or her strongest foot. School sports are the center of weekend social activity. Consequently, the

differences in each student's culture, interests, or goals fall away in support for the one thing we all have in common: we are all Toppers, we all cheer in green and gold colors.

Los Alamos is small. As a teenager, we sometimes feel helpless, as if our lives do not have an effect on those around us. But in such a tight community the influence that one person has is easily identified. During my junior year of high school, I volunteered to serve an attorney for the newly established Teen Court. Each defendant is represented by another teenager and sentenced by a jury of peers. I was able to work alongside adults and my schoolmates and I thought I was doing my community a service. Yet it was actually my community that was doing me a service. At each hearing I was able to see adults who genuinely cared about the well being of the adolescent community, people who did not see the unruly teenager but the brilliance within each person. This gave me a sense of perspective, taught me patience, and gave me the opportunity to affect my community.

Los Alamos is small. When you leave, you cannot boast that you came from Beverly Hills or New York City. But, you can take with you the intangible gifts that are unique to Los Alamos. We have breathtaking sunsets that splash color across the sky each night. We have unity, opportunity, spirit, activity, and support. When you leave Los Alamos, a part of you is left, permanently laced within the networks of the small town. So that whenever you return you mesh flawlessly into the framework, just as a missing puzzle piece slides silently into place.

Section 6: Collaboration

Please list individuals and organizations from all sectors who participated in completing this application. Upon submission of name and e-mail address, each individual listed will be sent a certifying statement via e-mail that will allow them to certify that their organization was involved in the creation of the community's application.

Please Note: *These contacts should be willing to speak to America's Promise staff or reviewers on behalf of your community's application and should be aware that their organization participated in the application process.*

Name	Email	Title	Organization/Role	Collaborated
Education Sector				
Georgina Williams	g.williams @laschools.net	Prevention Specialist	Los Alamos Public Schools	False
Dr. James Anderson	j.anderson@laschools.net	Superintendent	Los Alamos Public Schools	True
Morris Pongratz	mpongatz@losalamos.com	School Board Vice Pres/ Youth Representative	Los Alamos Public Schools/ Kiwanis	True
Faith Sector				
Keith Lewis	gohorns_99@yahoo.com	Youth Pastor	United Church of Los Alamos	False
Nonprofit Sector				
Susan Mack	director@lafsn.org	Director	Family Strengths Network	True
Linda Daly	ldaly@laymca.org	President/ Director	Kiwanis/ The Family YMCA	True
Bernadette Lauritzen	teemeup@concentric.net	Coordinator	Community Health Council	False
Private Sector				
Jill Cook	jillc@lanb.com	Chief Credit Officer	Los Alamos National Bank	False
Kevin Holsapple	kevin@losalamos.org	Executive Director	LACDC/Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce	True
Patrick Sullivan	patrick@losalamos.org	Business Development Director	UNM-LA Small Business Development Center	False
Public Sector				
Julie Habiger	habigerj@lac.losalamos.nm.us	Public Information Officer	Los Alamos County	False
Mike Wismer	mwismer@losalamos.com	Councilor	Los Alamos County Council	False
Sharon Stover	sstover@cybermesa.com	Coordinator	Juvenile Justice Advisory Board	False
Youth Representatives				
Analisa Sandoval	asandoval914@hotmail.com	Student	Los Alamos High School	False
Julie Winkler	juliewinkler@gmail.com	Student	Los Alamos High School	False
Colin MacArthur	scooternews@earthlink.net	Student	Los Alamos High School	False

Section 7: Application Summary

Please take this opportunity to summarize or reinforce the topics or programs mentioned in your application. You should feel free to also report on anything that we did not ask about but that you feel adds value to your community's application.

Based on the questions that you have answered as well as other information that you believe is important for your application, **please tell us why your community should be considered one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People.**

Los Alamos, New Mexico is a western city of natural beauty and ideal weather. It is a small town with educated tastes. Los Alamos is a safe community with unity, spirit, and very low crime rates. It is a community with concern for children and high expectations. It is an ideal place for children to grow up.

Los Alamos is a small community in the northern mountains of our state. We are infamous as the home of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, but unique in many other respects. We have a diverse population, because people come from all over the world to work at the National Laboratory. We are located at a high elevation, and isolated from other communities due to the secrecy that surrounded the development of the National Laboratory during World War II. We are immersed in the Native American and Hispanic cultures of New Mexico, yet we are relative newcomers to the state.

There are some facts that have not been mentioned in the previous responses. In the year 2000, Offspring Magazine, the Magazine of Smart Parenting included the Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS) in a list of the 100 best school districts in the country and ranked LAPS as the top school district in the southwest. In the past few years, Los Alamos High School has also been ranked highly by Newsweek and Time magazines in their coverage of communities with excellent schools.

Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, a local not-for-profit organization has successfully run a Youth Business Grant Program (YBGP) for the past 21 years. The program was developed to assist the youth of our community in running a small business by offering grants for business expenses. The YBGP is made possible through the generous support of local business owners and volunteers. Youth grant recipients are mentored by business volunteers and are encouraged to utilize all resources within the community.

In terms of technology, the influence of the National Laboratory on the community is evident. The Los Alamos Public Library is state-of-the-art. The Los Alamos Public Schools have networked all of the schools and have a wireless environment at each school site. Computers are available through mobile laboratories, regular computer laboratories and in every school classroom. LAPS teachers communicate with students and parents via websites.

Reduction of risk factors for youth is important to our citizens. The Los Alamos High School "Green and Gold" calendar features information on the issue of underage drinking and featuring the 40 Developmental Assets. There is a 24-hour non-crisis information line called the Los Alamos Resource Directory (699-5969) to obtain information about local resources in the community. The first youth-oriented Town Hall Meeting was held this year, in March 2006. The Town Hall Meeting was a forum coordinated by the DWI Planning Council, and the theme was "Start Talking Before They Start Drinking." It included a teen panel and individual group question and answer sessions, and was very well attended.

Outdoor recreation is a huge part of the community, and something that spans the generations. There are fun-runs, bike races, and hiking events for all ages, all year around. Skiing and snowboarding are important activities in the winter here, and the community is very supportive of our local Pajarito Mountain Ski Club. Large crowds attend and support school and recreational sports events of all varieties. The elementary, middle, and high schools all let students and staff out early for the high school football Homecoming, and the entire town turns out for the annual parade and the game.

The Community Health Council orchestrates "Grandfriends" at the senior center, an intergenerational program that is gratifying to the seniors as well as the children. We have Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Lunch Buddies, and other adult-youth mentoring programs. The Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, the Family Strengths Network, the Los Alamos Family Council, the Community Health Council, and many other community groups have youth issues at the core of their missions.

This community truly cares about its youth. Adults are actively involved in planning for, working with, mentoring, considering the opinions of, and advocating for the youth of Los Alamos. Youth issues are a priority for the County Council, the YMCA, the Kiwanis Club, the Parks and Recreation Department, and a wide variety of non-profit agencies. Public, private, and non-profit groups in Los Alamos work collaboratively to ensure that needs are met for the youth in this community. Los Alamos, New Mexico deserves to be considered as one of the 100 Best Communities for Youth.

Alliance Partners

America's Promise Alliance Partners	Local Affiliate	Referenced In App
United Way of America	United Way of Northern New Mexico	Yes
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America	Los Alamos Lunch Buddies	Yes
Girl Scouts of the USA	Los Alamos Girl Scouts Units 22 and 23	No
National Association of Counties	Los Alamos County	Yes
YMCA	The Family YMCA	Yes
Kiwanis International	Kiwanis Club of Los Alamos	Yes
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce	No