

The logo for NMCAN features the letters 'NM' in a dark teal color and 'CAN' in white, all in a bold, sans-serif font. The text is set against a white, jagged, arrow-like shape that points to the right. The background of the slide is a solid teal color.

NMCAN

Partnering with young people (ages 14-26) to build community, promote equity, and lead change.

- Community building for healing, learning, and growing
- Leadership skill development (hard and soft skills)
- Advocacy for the creation of innovative systems that reflect the values, needs, and identities of young people and families



74% of cases for children entering out-of-home care are for neglect, not abuse.

(CFYD 360 Quarterly Report, 1st Quarter SFY 2022)

The definition of “neglect” in the New Mexico’s Children’s Code is vague, leaving too much room for personal interpretation. Part of it reads:

[a child] who is without proper parental care and control or subsistence, education, medical or other care or control necessary for the child's well-being because of the faults or habits of the child's parent, guardian or custodian or the failure or refusal of the parent, guardian or custodian, when able to do so, to provide them;

(Abuse and Neglect Act (32A-4-2, NMSA, 1978))



Poverty and neglect are often conflated when assessing the safety of children, but these are two distinct situations.

New Mexico must redefine its definition of neglect.

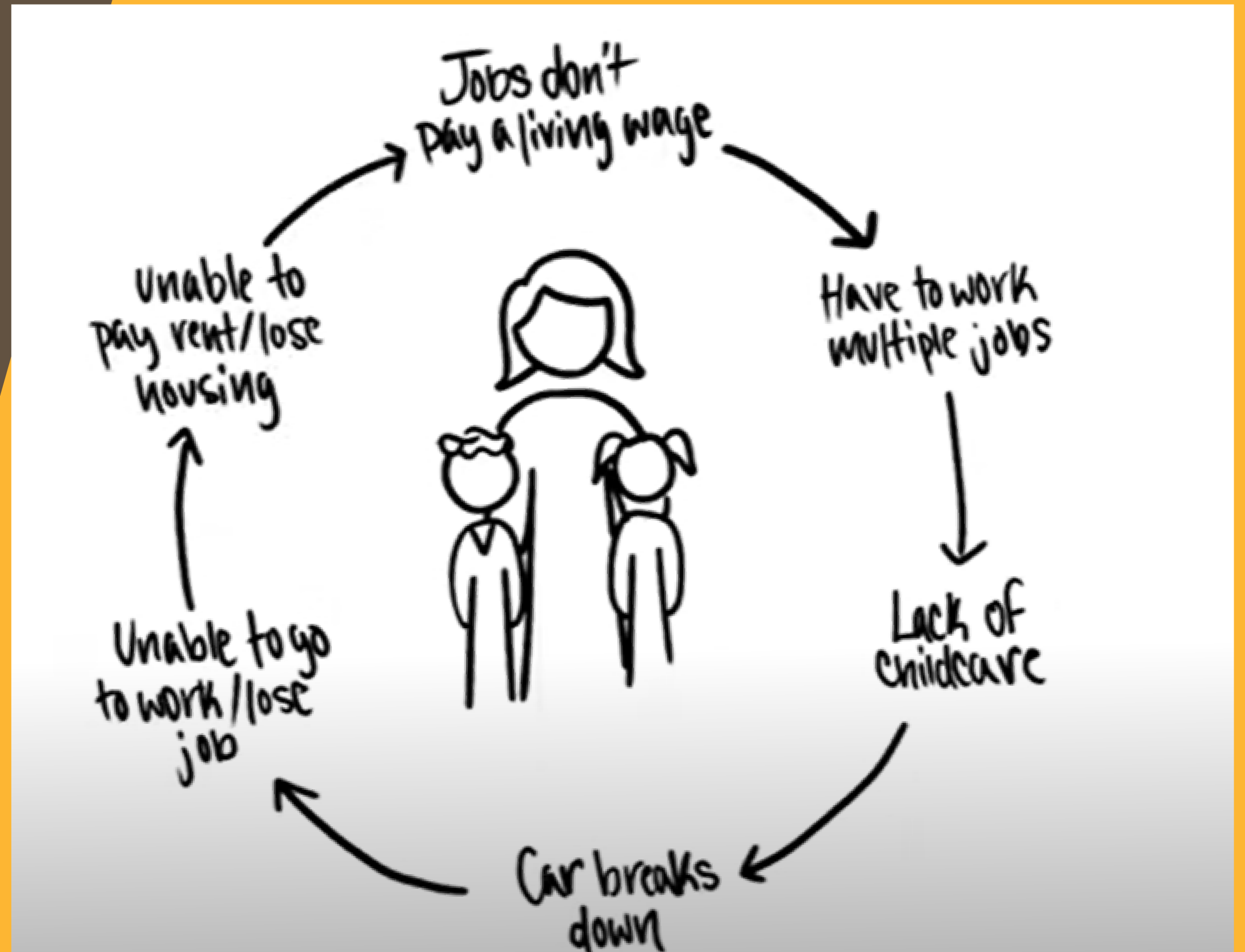
Neglect is a state in which a family can afford to provide for a child's needs such as shelter, food, clothing, and hygiene, **but chooses not to.**

vs.

Poverty is a state or condition in which one **lacks the financial resources and essentials for a foundational standard of living.**

Hard-working families in New Mexico unable to make ends meet should not be criminalized.

Children should not be separated from loving families because of conditions related to poverty.



What can Legislators do to better support young people and families as well as increase the effectiveness of NM's child welfare system?

Clarify and simplify the definition of neglect in the Children's Code.

Increase access to resources for families, and challenge the social norms of who deserves support.

Center young people and families in all policy decisions. Family separation is traumatic and should be the last resort.

The logo for NMCCAN (New Mexico Children's and Adolescent Network) features a stylized white starburst shape on the left, with the letters "NMCCAN" in a bold, white, sans-serif font to its right.

NMCCAN



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