

# A Stronger CAPTA for Stronger Families and Communities

**Child abuse and neglect are preventable**, and with expert prevention, intervention, and treatment, their effects can be limited. Most federal child welfare funding supports foster placements for kids after they've been harmed, not the services that could keep them safe from harm. A more robust CAPTA is vital for state efforts that keep children safe, empower families and communities, and reduce the need for foster care.



**1,770\*** children died  
from child abuse and  
neglect in 2018

*\* Experts note data is incomplete and  
estimate the number is closer to 3,000*

**678,000**  
substantiated cases of  
child abuse and neglect  
in 2018

**\$90 million/year**  
CAPTA TITLE I STATE GRANTS  
for prevention, intervention,  
and treatment

**\$55 million/year**  
CAPTA TITLE II STATE GRANTS  
for primary prevention



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## The trauma of child abuse and neglect can last a lifetime

Children who are abused and neglected have higher rates of depression, suicide, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and school failure. They are more likely to have poorer health as adults, including higher rates of heart disease, and more likely to be incarcerated and struggle financially.

## Child abuse and neglect are a costly public health crisis

The CDC estimates each of the **678,000** substantiated cases child maltreatment in 2018 will cost **\$830,928** over the life of the child.

## Child abuse and neglect are preventable

For example, in Allegheny County, PA, a network of 28 family support centers serve thousands of people each year with evidence-based family strengthening services. These hubs are locally-designed to be responsive to the needs and interests of the communities they serve. A recent study found that neighborhoods with centers had significantly lower rates of child abuse and neglect investigations than similar neighborhoods without them.

## Evidence-based treatment and intervention makes a difference

For example, Children's Advocacy Centers help law enforcement and child protection provide specialized forensic interviews to children who have experienced or witnessed violence and offer or set in motion multidisciplinary treatment and services to reduce the impact of that trauma.

# CAPTA Is Part of the Solution

CAPTA helps fund state child protection systems and community programs and services focused on the **prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect**. But states receive less than \$150 million from CAPTA for these essential services. CAPTA has been a vital part of the response to the opioid crisis – helping states provide key services when babies are born with substance abuse withdrawal symptoms.

**CAPTA Title I Grants** fund state child welfare protection services and set vital minimum guidelines that improve state practices and protect children from abuse and neglect. Title I grants also fund critical technical assistance efforts, innovative demonstration grants, and research that drives best practices and better outcomes for children and families.

**CAPTA Title II Grants** (Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention or CB-CAP grants) go to a governor-designated entity and are carried out by robust public-private partnerships that leverage state, local, and private funds

for services that strengthen families, reduce family crises, and prevent child abuse and neglect.

**Congress is finalizing key reforms to CAPTA right now.**

The House and Senate are working to finalize important bipartisan reforms to CAPTA *this year* such as:

- Multiple reforms to reduce child abuse fatalities as recommended by the Congressionally-mandated Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities
- Rapid response systems for investigations of abuse of children under age three
- Builds the capacity of child protection systems overloaded due to the opioid crisis
- Improved training for state-determined mandated reporters
- Better tools to states and communities for evidence-based and prevention-focused services that promote child and family wellbeing

## Congressional Reforms Require More Robust Funding

**Congress' CAPTA reforms and improvements will not be realized without more robust funding.** For too long, Congress has sought key improvements to this law but has failed to appropriate the funds that would allow states to successfully implement them. A recent investigation from the *Boston Globe Spotlight* team highlighted this critical problem. The national substance abuse crisis, which continues to place pressure on our public systems and push more children into foster care, only increases the sense of urgency for these resources. Robust funding for CAPTA will strengthen state and local systems aimed at empowering families and communities so they can provide healthy, safe homes for their children – ensuring that foster care is a system of last resort.

**Please meet the authorization levels passed by the recent bipartisan House-passed CAPTA reauthorization (HR 2480) and provide an additional \$180 million for CAPTA Title I and an additional \$215 million for CAPTA Title II for FY21.**

