

## THE CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) is foundational to the prevention, intervention and treatment of child abuse and neglect in America. While the majority of federal dollars for child abuse and neglect support foster care services, which intervene well after a problem has occurred and a child must be removed from their family, CAPTA supports front-end services that *prevent* system involvement and keep families together whenever safely possible.

**Expanding CAPTA would be transformational for communities and families and greatly grow our capacity as a nation to prevent child abuse and neglect by supporting families.**

### Titles 1 and II within CAPTA

Title I, also known as the State Grants program, funds a range of front-end child welfare activities, with a particular focus on the response, prevention, intervention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

Title II, also known as Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grants, provides grants in all 50 states to meet the individual needs of communities through public-private partnerships that support community-based family strengthening services that support families before they reach a point of crisis that leads to child welfare system involvement.

Examples of family strengthening services funded by CBCAP include:

- Voluntary evidence-based home visiting (e.g., Healthy Families America)
- Community-based parent support programs
- Early childhood and child care programs
- Family resource centers
- Coordination and connection with mental health, substance use, and domestic violence services



82¢  
per child  
per year.

CBCAP represents the main federal investment in primary prevention for the entire country; however, it has been chronically under-funded. In 2020, CBCAP funded prevention at **only 82 cents per child per year**, resulting in a great deal of unmet need.

Expanding the CBCAP program would be transformational for communities and families and could increase leverage to bring other community programs and partners to the table to prevent child abuse and neglect.

## The Importance of Funding for CAPTA

CAPTA has long been seriously under resourced. The law's goals and core mandates, and a strong coordinated public health approach to child maltreatment prevention as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health and Human Services, cannot be achieved with the current funding provided to CAPTA. More funding is critical to ensure that states can carry out the mandates currently required in CAPTA while increasing the law's emphasis on family strengthening and prevention approaches that prevent child maltreatment and later system involvement.

PCA America supports the recommendations of the National Child Abuse Coalition to authorize and appropriate \$500 million for Title I and \$750 million for Title II in the first year of reauthorization, ramping up to \$1 billion for Title I and \$1.5 billion for Title II over 5 years.



## Status of Reauthorization

CAPTA is due to be reauthorized by Congress. PCA America supports a strong and comprehensive reauthorization bill that includes significantly higher funding levels, increases transparency and accountability in the program, increases the focus on primary prevention and family support services, and promotes race equity.

In March 2021, the House of Representatives passed the [\*Stronger Child Abuse Prevention Act \(H.R. 485\)\*](#). In June 2021, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) approved the [\*CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2021 \(S. 1927\)\*](#), which built on the reforms made by the House bill. Both bills increase funding levels to \$270 million for Title I and \$270 million for Title II, and make important reforms to strengthen the law's emphasis on prevention and family strengthening services. The Senate bill would add two additional titles to CAPTA: one focused on preventing fatalities due to child abuse and neglect, and a second focused on addressing the needs of infants with prenatal substance exposure and their families.

Use this Action Alert to Thank Your Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee for supporting the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2021.

**TAKE ACTION**

PCA America was pleased to endorse both bills and will continue to advocate for higher funding levels.

The next steps in the reauthorization process are for the House and Senate to resolve the differences between their two bills, after which the agreed-upon bill text could be brought to the floors of each chamber for a final vote.

### Appropriations

Thanks to the strong advocacy of the Prevent Child Abuse network and our partners, appropriations (federal funding) for CAPTA has been rising in recent years – a reflection of the desire among lawmakers to keep more children and families together by shifting federal dollars to support services that prevent families from becoming involved in the child welfare system, which is both costly and punitive.

Currently, Title I state grants are funded at \$90 million per year, and CBCAP grants are funded at \$60.6 million per year.

In addition, the American Rescue Plan Act, passed in March 2021, included an additional \$350 million for CAPTA for pandemic relief – \$100 for Title I and \$250 million for Title II. States have until December 30, 2025 to spend these supplemental dollars. PCA America, the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance, Center for the Study of Social Policy, EndCAN, and the National Family Support Network collaborated to produce [joint guidance to states](#) on how to spend this pandemic relief funding most effectively for children and families.

### Conclusion

Child abuse and neglect are preventable, and CAPTA is part of the solution. A stronger CAPTA will ensure that state and local systems and communities can empower families to provide health, safe homes for their children, reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect, and reduce the need for foster care.

### Resources

- [Joint Guidance from National Partners on CBCAP Funding | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [The American Rescue Plan Act: Frequently Asked Questions on CAPTA and MIECHV Provisions | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [Contacts by State | Friends NRC](#)
- [Annual Summary of State Exemplary Practices | Friends NRC](#)