**Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) Reauthorization and CACs**

The Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) provides federal funding and guidance to States in support of prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities and also provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations, including Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, for demonstration programs and projects. Additionally, CAPTA identifies the Federal role in supporting research, evaluation, technical assistance, and data collection activities; establishes the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect; and establishes a national clearinghouse of information relating to child abuse and neglect. CAPTA also sets forth a Federal definition of child abuse and neglect.

This year, Congress is again working to reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA).

The House’s version – the ***Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act*** – passed on March 17, 2021. This bill***:***

* Shifts focus toward prevention by helping states to build networks of cost-effective and locally-driven services that prevent child abuse and strengthen families;
* Builds the capacity of child protective services agencies that are overburdened with increased caseloads due to the opioid epidemic;
* Improves the sharing and quality of data to better understand the scope of child abuse and neglect and ensure victims do not fall through the cracks; and
* Supports evidence-based strategies to treat and prevent child abuse and neglect.

We currently await the Senate’s final draft CAPTA reauthorization proposal; however, senate staffers have indicated an increase in highlighting CACs and MDT responses in the bill.

NCA has been working closely with the National Child Abuse Coalition, as well as House and Senate offices, to highlight CACs in the reauthorization of CAPTA, specifically by:

* Increasing the proposed CAPTA funding. (The House proposal increases CAPTA funding to $540M in FY20. Currently, funding for both titles is about $160 million.) ***NCA and Coalition leaders held up CACs as an example of a service provider that falls squarely in the eligibility of CAPTA, yet receive little to no funding from the States***;
* Including CACs as an “eligible use” of these funds and highlighting that CACs are the models that states should be using when using MDTs;
* Including provisions to provide for immunity from civil and criminal liability for individuals making good faith reports of suspected abuse
* Including NCA/National Coalition to End Child Abuse Deaths pushed recommendations:
	+ Annual reports on fatalities from review panels with a uniform set of definitions;
	+ Requiring multidisciplinary team collaboration;
	+ Disclosure of confidential information to state agents to ensure child safety;
	+ Beefing up caseworker support and training;
	+ Interstate Data Exchange System for CPS;
	+ Strengthening disclosure and closing up exceptions allowed;
	+ Requiring states to disclose gaps between assurances and performance.
* NCA has also worked closely with Sen. Cornyn on language that he would like to see added to the Senate version of CAPTA that would fund Jenna’s Law/Erin’s Law/child sexual abuse prevention education in the schools.