National Children’s Alliance

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**Victims of Child Abuse Act FY22 Funding Request – CACs**

* We urge the FY22 CJS bill to include $48 million for *Victims of Child Abuse Act*/CACs.
* The President’s FY22 budget requests $50 million for *Victims of Child Abuse Act/CACs*
* **COVID Impact on CACs:**
* Initially, CAC caseloads dropped by more than 50% in most states, mainly because child abuse reporting was down. (Without teachers having eyes on kids, the reports weren’t happening.)
* CACs were open and saw emergency cases, but many cases were either not seen because they didn’t pose imminent threat, or because there were no initial reports.
  + However, what we did see were even more severe forms of abuse. For example, in Texas, the number of cases of child abuse fatalities doubled during the March/April/May 2020 time frame, over what they were during those 3 months in 2019.
* Thus, our centers reported a drop in caseload of 33K kids from 2019.
* We do not believe that there was suddenly a drop in child abuse during this pandemic, *on the contrary, we think the numbers are much higher, and we know that our centers will be hit with a surge of cases when schools do fully reopen and teachers again have eyes on kids*.
* And, at that same time, we will be trying to work through huge backlogs of cases that continue to grow because of the challenges of the pandemic.
* **Current CAC Staffing needs - $66.1M:**
* 252 CACs need at least 1 additional Forensic Interviewer (average salary of $50K) - at least $12.6M is needed
* 198 CACs need at least 1 additional staff to perform medical exams (average salary of $70K) - $13.6M is needed
* 378 CACs need at least 1 additional mental health therapist (average salary of $70K) - $26.6M is needed
* 333 CACs need at least 1 additional victim advocate (average salary of $40K) - $13.3M is needed
* **VOCA/CVF** has made a big difference for CACs! CACs have gone from $21M in FY14 to $200-$250M in FY20. But the CVF that funds VOCA grants is expected to be at $0 by 2022. With VOCA in such a dire situation, states are already making significant cuts, with even more coming to CACs and other service providers. So increased dollars for VOCAA are critical.
* **Unmet Needs:**
* In the US Counties covered by a CAC, approximately **583,184 were likely abused in 2019.**
* CACs saw more than 338,000 kids last year, which is a drop in caseload of about 33,000 kids.
* Increased resources will help expand capacity to serve the ***additional 250,000 kids that were likely abused but did not access a CAC***, continue to address the backlog of cases and additional pressures from COVID, and ***assist the additional 600,000+ reported cases of cases of abuse needing a forensic interview that did not get one.***
* Approximately, ***75,000 kids in these unserved counties may have been abused last year and went without access to services.***