

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Child abuse and neglect occurs at an alarming rate in the U.S.** According to the Department of Health and Human Services, three million children were involved in cases reported to child protective service agencies for possible maltreatment in 2001. Approximately one million of those reports were substantiated; however, the actual incidence of abuse and neglect is estimated to be three times greater than the number of cases reported to authorities.
- **The rate of children who are victims of abuse and neglect has decreased over the past decade.** Programs supported by CAPTA have shown promise in their effectiveness through the decline of identified victims of abuse or neglect from a rate of 15.3 per 1,000 in 1993 to 11.8 per 1,000 in 1999. However, effective child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services must be continued and enhanced if this trend is to continue.
- **CAPTA is the key federal legislation addressing child abuse and neglect.** Originally enacted in 1974 (P.L. 93-247), the Act was most recently amended and reauthorized on June 25, 2003 by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-36).
- **CAPTA is funded under the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill.** Its funding is comprised of three main parts: Title I, Basic State Grants; Title II, Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grants; and Discretionary Research/Demonstration Grants. CAPTA authorizes the Office of Child Abuse and Neglect and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information in the Administration for Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services.

### PURPOSE

- **CAPTA helps prevent child abuse and neglect and provides treatment to victims.** Title I grants support child abuse prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities and also provide grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects. Title II grants help establish and maintain much needed prevention-focused programs and activities in the community.
- **CAPTA helps identify key risk factors for occurrence of child abuse and neglect and supports the development of more effective treatment.** Discretionary research grants support research that informs prevention and treatment programs, as well as provides technical assistance for these services.

### REQUEST

- **The American Psychological Association strongly recommends an appropriation of \$42 million in FY 2006 for Title I (Basic state grants), \$65 million for Title II (Community-based prevention grants), and \$35 million for Discretionary research grants.** While the positive effects of CAPTA are encouraging, it is unacceptable that so many children continue to suffer. This funding request would enable states and communities to maintain and expand efforts to help improve the lives of the nearly one million children who are victims of child abuse and neglect every year, and to protect others from such preventable suffering and trauma.

*For more information, please contact Annie Toro, J.D., in APA's Public Policy Office at (202) 336-6068 or [atoro@apa.org](mailto:atoro@apa.org).*

## CAPTA FUNDING HISTORY

<u>CAPTA FUNDING 2002 – 2006 Appropriations (in millions)</u>					
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006 Pres.</u>
					<u>Budget</u>
Basic State Grants	\$22	\$22	\$22	\$27.5	\$27
Prevention Grants	\$33.4	\$33.4	\$33.4	\$43.2	\$43
Discretionary/Research	\$26	\$34	\$35	\$31.9	\$32
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TOTAL	\$81.4	\$89.4	\$90.4	\$102.6	\$102

## ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

**School mental health and counseling services play a crucial role in ensuring a safe school environment, increasing academic achievement, promoting student well-being and development, and improving teacher effectiveness. Given the urgent need to expand these proven effective services, APA is very concerned that the President's FY 2006 Budget proposes to eliminate this vital program**

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### **School mental health services need to be expanded since:**

- It is estimated that about 20 percent of U.S. children ages 9 to 17 has a diagnosable mental or addictive disorder, but only one in five of these children receives mental health services.
- The serious shortage of qualified psychologists, counselors, and social workers in America's schools undermines efforts to make schools safe and improve academic achievement.
- Over 20 years of research demonstrates that school counseling and mental health services can significantly improve student achievement and school attendance, and reduce disruptive behavior.

### **Mental health and counseling personnel contribute to schools by:**

- Helping teachers improve classroom management and provide quality instruction to assist students in achieving high academic standards.
- Assisting students and their families to overcome personal problems or disabilities that affect students' academic achievement and relationships with peers, family members, and others.
- Responding to mental health needs of students, staff, and families related to incidents of school violence, crime, accidents, terrorist activities, or other traumatic events in the school and community.
- Working with teachers and other staff to develop and implement targeted or school-wide programs to improve school functioning, school safety, and student mental health.
- Offering information and guidance on post-secondary education and training options, and assisting students and their families in meeting the financial requirements for post-secondary education.

### **The Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program currently provides:**

- Grant funding in the amount of \$35 million in FY 2005 to local educational agencies to establish or expand counseling programs in elementary schools. Priority is given to applicants that demonstrate the greatest need for school counseling services, propose the most innovative and promising approaches, demonstrate effectiveness, employ developmental and preventative approaches, including early identification and intervention, provide for teacher training and parent involvement, and collaborate with existing community services.
- Schools will be able to expand counseling services to secondary schools when funding reaches \$40 million.

### **The American Psychological Association strongly recommends:**

- **An appropriation of \$75 million in FY 2006 to maintain and expand this vital program.**

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