

**Report on Efforts to Coordinate Programs and Activities  
Related to Child Abuse and Neglect**

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
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The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 2010 (P.L. 111-320, as amended) requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit to Congress a report on efforts to coordinate the objectives and activities of agencies and organizations which are responsible for programs related to child abuse and neglect. The Children's Bureau (CB), within the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), carries out the mandates of this law. In 2003, with the enactment of the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-36), which reauthorized the CAPTA, the requirement to report on coordination efforts sunset. However, in the 2010 reauthorization of CAPTA, the coordination report requirement was reinstated. The most recent report was submitted in June 2013 and covered the period of June 1999 to September 2012.

The Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN) has been consistently engaged in significant efforts to meet its coordination responsibility. Through work with federal, state and local agencies, as well as a broad network of partners including non-federal organizations and groups, OCAN has managed efforts to broadly share and disseminate information, promote awareness, and create, foster and implement opportunities for collaborative efforts to address child abuse and neglect. Addressing the complex issues of child maltreatment cuts across many disciplines and therefore collaborative efforts are essential to preventing child maltreatment, promoting well-being, and improving the lives of children and families across the United States.

The following are highlights of major activities and accomplishments OCAN has undertaken during the period covering October 2012 to September 2013.

### ***INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIONS AND INITIATIVES***

#### **CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)**

- In May 2013, data collection and analyses were completed on the ACF and CDC project, *Retrospective Collection of Child Protective Service Reports Among Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project Participants*. This collaboration began in January 2011 and involved CDC matching data from the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project with Child Protective Services Reports in seven of the 17 sites from the original Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project (a randomized controlled trial). The data collection and analyses completed this year showed that children in Early Head Start had significantly fewer child welfare encounters between the ages of five and nine years than did children in the control group, and that Early Head Start slowed the rate of subsequent encounters. Additionally, compared to children in the control group,

children in Early Head Start were less likely to have a substantiated report of physical or sexual abuse, but more likely to have a substantiated report of neglect. These findings suggest that Early Head Start may be effective in reducing child maltreatment among low-income children, in particular, physical and sexual abuse.

- CDC's Injury Center funded five state health departments in 2013 to implement its *Essentials for Childhood: Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships & Environments to Prevent Child Maltreatment* technical package. Health departments in California, Colorado, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington, will receive funding for the next five years to:
  - Raise awareness and build commitment to promote safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments and prevent child maltreatment;
  - Use data to inform their actions;
  - Create the context for healthy children and families through changing community norms and implementing evidence-based programs; and
  - Create the context for healthy children and families through policies.

CDC requires that funded state health departments in this initiative partner with Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Programs (CBCAP) lead agencies funded under CAPTA and monitored by OCAN, to promote safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for children and prevent child maltreatment.

CDC's Injury Center will offer technical assistance to grantees and webinar trainings to all interested non-funded state health departments.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/childmaltreatment/essentials/index.html>.

- Beginning in FY12, CB and CDC entered into an IAA to support the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Since this agreement began, one webinar and one webcast have been presented collaboratively to the grantees and constituency of each agency to inform child maltreatment prevention efforts. Also, a co-branded, interactive ACE Infographic was produced and is now available for public use online. The collection of prospective data from the original Kaiser ACE Study has continued, as have analyses of ACE state-level data through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

For more information and to view the ACE Infographic, please visit:

[http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/childmaltreatment/phl/resource\\_center\\_infographic.html](http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/childmaltreatment/phl/resource_center_infographic.html).

**FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM (FAP), DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD):** In early 2013, members of the staff at CB were nominated and are now actively participating in a working group created by the DoD to assist in setting the course for FAP prevention strategies over the next five years. Membership of this working group has been selected based upon knowledge, skills and commitment to prevention of child abuse and neglect and/or domestic violence. The working group is comprised of three representatives of each service, as well as Office of the Secretary Defense (OSD) FAP staff and subject matter experts from federal partners including CDC and ACF. The working group is being convened to develop the Implementation Plan, including steering committee format and metrics for the FAP Strategic Plan for Prevention and supports the identification and implementation of the most effective and efficient services. Staff participated in working meetings in February and July of 2013.

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ):** Throughout 2013, ACF has continued to work collaboratively with DOJ on several initiatives and has been involved at multiple levels on various workgroups. Activities have included: ongoing active participation on DOJ's Federal Interagency Task Force on Drug Endangered Children (DEC); discussions between ACYF officials and DOJ on the report recommendations from their Defending Childhood Initiative; and DOJ staff presentations at the Federal Interagency Workgroup on Child Abuse and Neglect (FEDIAWG) and the Domestic Violence Federal Network led by the Family Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) at ACYF. Specifically, members of DOJ's Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) have presented to and sought feedback from members of FEDIAWG on their *Through Our Eyes: Children, Violence and Trauma* video series. This series addresses the needs of children exposed to crime, abuse, and violence and is accompanied by an online resource guide. OVC continues to seek input from FEDIAWG members as they develop additional videos for the series. For more information on this series, please visit: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/library/videoclips.html#youthvict>.

### **MAJOR MEETINGS**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT:** Beginning in 1976, there has been a national conference every two to three years, designed to serve as the field's leading training and technical assistance event. The conference creates a unique collaborative opportunity for policy makers, practitioners, advocates, researchers and academics from a variety of disciplines to convene and learn more about state-of-the-art research, policy and practice regarding child maltreatment.

The 19<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, *Making Meaningful Connections* will be held April 30 - May 2, 2014 in New Orleans. At the Conference, we will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CAPTA. A call for abstracts was released in June 2013 and closed in August

2013. More than 450 abstracts were submitted and were reviewed by federal and non-federal experts. Approximately 160 sessions were selected, with topics such as protective factors, trauma, resiliency, partnerships, family engagement, workforce development, collective impact and systems change. The Conference will also include several policy forums on timely topics such as CAPTA history, differential response, preventing sexual abuse, addressing the needs of families impacted by substance abuse and domestic violence, family group decision making, and implications of the Affordable Care Act on child maltreatment efforts. Other sessions will be comprised of research panels, workshops, and poster presentations on the latest evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies for prevention, early intervention and treatment.

In addition, OCAN sponsored a series of three free Virtual Participation webcasts in 2013 to provide active learning opportunities between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> National Conferences on Child Abuse and Neglect. The first webcast, in February, *A Family's Experience: A Multidisciplinary Dialogue to Improve Outcomes in Intimate Partner Violence and Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, was planned collaboratively with FYSB at ACYF. The April webcast, *System of Protective Factor Frameworks: Together Toward Our Vision of Child and Family Well-being*, was planned collaboratively with the CDC. The final webcast held in September, *The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study: Implications for Policy, Practice and Prevention*, was planned collaboratively with the CDC, ACF's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, and FEDIAWG members. Each webcast was attended by 100-900 participants and are archived at: <http://www.pal-tech.com/web/NCCAN/index.cfm?p=4>

For general information about the 19<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, visit: <http://www.pal-tech.com/web/NCCAN19/>

## **REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS**

**NEW DIRECTIONS IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESEARCH:** In 2011, ACYF established a contract with the National Academies to update the 1993 National Research Council (NRC) report *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*, which identified child maltreatment as a devastating social problem in American society. The updated report, *New Directions in Child Abuse and Neglect Research*, was released on September 12, 2013. The report is available at: [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=18331](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18331).

The ACYF contract with the National Academies requested that the updated report provide recommendations for the allocation of existing research funds and also suggested funding mechanisms and topic areas to which new resources could be allocated or enhanced resources could be redirected.

During Phase 1 of their work to update the report, the Board on Children, Youth, and Families at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the NRC held a workshop to review the accomplishments

of the past two decades of research related to child maltreatment and the identify the remaining gaps. This workshop was held in Washington, D.C. on January 30-31, 2012 and produced the workshop summary, *Child Maltreatment Research, Policy, and Practice for the Next Decade*, released in April 2012. For more information, visit: <http://iom.edu/Reports/2012/Child-Maltreatment-Research-Policy-and-Practice-for-the-Next-Decade.aspx>.

Building on Phase 1 of the work, the IOM of the National Academies appointed a multidisciplinary committee to conduct the study. Members were selected from the following relevant fields: child development and pediatrics, psychology and psychiatry, social work and implementation science, sociology, and policy and legal studies. The ad hoc committee established under the contract was directed to:

- Build on the review of literature and findings from the evaluation of reach on child abuse and neglect;
- Identify research that provides knowledge relevant to the programmatic, research and policy fields; and
- Recommend research priorities for the next decade, including new areas of research that should be funded by public and private agencies and suggestions regarding fields that are no longer priority for funding.

To complete this work, the committee commissioned a number of background papers to review research in key areas, held four face-to-face meetings, including two public sessions as well as many committee conference calls. The contents of the report include chapters on describing the problem, causality, consequences of child abuse and neglect, the child welfare system, interventions and service delivery systems, research challenges and infrastructure, child abuse and neglect policy and recommendations. The recommendations included:

- The development of a national strategic plan to initiate the process of federal coordination and resource allocation that is necessary to support the field of child abuse and neglect research with a focus on the research priorities set forward in the report. The recommended plan should contain a coordinated, comprehensive research agenda that is interdisciplinary in nature, and requires collaboration across a variety of federal agencies, as well as partnerships with state agencies, tribes, private entities, foundations and universities. The report charges the Federal Interagency Work Group on Child Abuse and Neglect (FEDIAWG) to develop a strategic plan that details an implementation strategy and departmental accountability for the advancement of the research agenda.

- The outline of the critical steps necessary for the creation of a sustainable infrastructure for child abuse and neglect research for both the implementation of a national strategic plan, and also requires specific considerations for the agencies and institutions targeted as key actors. The infrastructure recommendations include a partnership between FEDIAWG and the CDC to develop and sustain a national surveillance system for child abuse and neglect that links data across multiple systems and sources, investment in the development of researchers who can examine these issues across disciplines, funding for new multidisciplinary education and research centers on child abuse and neglect nationwide, and the creation of a new child maltreatment, trauma and violence study section at National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- The evaluations of federal and state policies related to child abuse and neglect to better understand the impact of new child abuse and neglect laws and policies and require a review of the findings in reauthorization discussions.

**PREVENTION COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE:** A community resource guide has been published annually since 2003 in conjunction with National Child Abuse Prevention Month (April). The resource guide is developed in partnership with the National Child Abuse Prevention Partners and coordinated by OCAN/CB. The National Child Abuse Prevention Partners is a workgroup made up of federal and non-federal partners that has now grown to more than 30 organizations, all interested in the prevention of child maltreatment. The group was established by OCAN/CB to help develop and disseminate the resource guide on an annual basis and help inform other prevention initiatives.

*Prevention Child Maltreatment and Promoting Well-Being: A Network for Action 2013 Resource Guide*, was released in 2013. The guide builds upon the 2012 edition, with the following key updates:

- “Laying the Groundwork” contains information on the Protective Factors framework.
- A revised “Levers for Change” includes new examples from Network for Action strategic projects.
- New resources are available for supporting parents and children with a history of trauma.
- More tools are included to help build community awareness and support the development of community partnerships with specific groups.
- Additional tip sheets in English and Spanish can be shared with providers with parents and caregivers.

- Three activity calendars for April offer parents, programs and community partners with “30 Ways to Promote Child Well-Being During National Child Abuse Prevention Month.”

Between March 1, 2013 and August 31, 2013, approximately 60,312 hard copies of the Resource Guide have been distributed by and 27,804 have been downloaded from the Child Welfare Information Gateway.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/guide2013/index.cfm>.

## **STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES**

### **CAPTA FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS TO STATES**

**Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Grant Program:** The Children’s Justice Act (CJA), under section 107 (a) through (f), of CAPTA, as amended, authorizes grants to the states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the territories for the purpose of improving the investigation, prosecution and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim. This authorization also includes the handling of child fatality cases in which child abuse or neglect is suspected. The program and supports provided at the federal level assist and guide grantees in coordination and collaboration at the local level to achieve these goals, often accomplished through innovative efforts and systems improvement and reform.

In FY 2013, \$17 million was disbursed to the eligible CJA grant applicants including a total of 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and four territories. The amount awarded is based on a formula of a minimum of \$50,000 plus an additional amount based on the population of children under 18 years of age in the applicant’s jurisdiction. In 2013 awards ranged from \$53,360 allocated to the Northern Mariana Islands, to \$1,806,816 allocated for California.

**Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Grant Program:** The Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant program as authorized in Title II of CAPTA supports and promotes states to develop community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand, enhance, and coordinate initiatives, programs, and activities to prevent child abuse and neglect. In addition, these grants also support the coordination of resources and activities to better strengthen and support families to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

In FY 2013, \$38,859,851 was disbursed to the eligible CBCAP grant applicants including a total of 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and four territories. The amount awarded is based on a formula of a minimum of \$175,000 plus an additional amount based on the population of children under 18 years of age in the applicant's jurisdiction, and the amount of non-federal funds leveraged and directed through the currently designated stated lead agency in the preceding fiscal year. In FY 2013 awards ranged from \$200,000 to \$3,312,634.

## **CONCLUSION**

Collaboration and coordination, whether it is at the federal, state or local levels are essential to understand the complex issue of child maltreatment, developing effective prevention and treatment strategies, and improve the outcomes and well-being of children and families. OCAN and CB have carefully examined the recommendations of the recent publication *New Directions in Child Abuse and Neglect Research* and will engage our federal and non-federal partners in the exploration of opportunities raised by the recommendations found within the report. It is through interagency coordinated efforts to develop stronger networks and partnerships across ACF, throughout HHS and with other federal partners that we can best work to prevent child maltreatment and promote the well-being of children and families.