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## The Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

### Background:

- Child abuse and neglect is heartbreaking, immoral, and inexcusable, yet it continues to affect millions of children across the country. **The rate of child maltreatment has ticked up in recent years, devastating families and communities across the country.**
  - According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, heightened stress, school closures, loss of income, and social isolation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the risk for child abuse and neglect.
- Due to the increased demand on their services, state child protective services agencies are struggling to respond to the growing number of reports they receive each year.

### Stronger CAPTA:

- Helps states address the recent rise in child abuse and neglect by **improving the quality of child protective services and building networks of prevention services designed to strengthen families.**
- Improves collaboration between states regarding data and accountability for cases of child abuse and neglect.
- Supports the **development of strategies and best practices for reducing rates of child abuse and neglect linked to parent substance use disorder.**
- Strengthens and expands intrastate coordination among agencies serving vulnerable families at risk of child abuse and neglect to **ensure such families have access to physical and mental health services, domestic violence prevention programs, disability supports, and substance use treatment when necessary.**
- Ensures that no child is removed from their family solely because of their economic situation or without a judicial order, except in cases of imminent harm.
- **Ensures community and parent involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of prevention services.**
- **Streamlines duplicative and burdensome requirements on states** so they can focus on protecting children instead of excessive paperwork.