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Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Child Care
Resource &
Referral of
Central East
Georgia



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

FALL 2022

Early Care and Education BULLETIN!

Dear Child Care Professionals of Georgia:

First, I just want to say how much I appreciate all that you do for Georgia's children and families. I know that the last few years have not been easy, and it seems that, as an industry, we are thrown curveball after curveball. It is my hope that many of the programs and initiatives that we are undertaking in both the Quality Innovations and Partnerships Division, as well as DECAL, are providing you with much needed support. Second, as we move into the final quarter of the year, I know that all our calendars are filling up with activities. It is certainly a busy time at DECAL. I'd like to use this opportunity to update you on two high-priority projects.

The first project is the Quality Rated Restoration Grant (QRG) Program, which is funded through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. As the child care industry works to rebound from the effects of the pandemic, we are committed to developing resources and supports to assist programs in raising quality and becoming or remaining Quality Rated. The QRGs are specifically designed to support programs with on-site Quality Rated assessments occurring between July 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023 and include awards of \$5,000 per eligible classroom (up to \$50,000 per program). The classroom funds can be used to purchase materials, equipment, and online Environment Rating Scale (ERS) training to support providers in raising and maintaining quality. I know that there are many questions about these grants. Rest assured that we are working as fast as we can to get the grants up and running. This is a massive undertaking, and it just takes some time to get contracts and systems in place. We expect to begin distributing funds in early November. I promise that more information is forthcoming. In addition to the classroom funds, the QRGs also include a \$500 bonus for eligible staff. These will be distributed after a program's rating is awarded. Again, more information will be coming about the bonuses.

The second project is really a group of activities, and I hope you have heard about some of them, commemorating the 10th Anniversary of Quality Rated. While it's fun to plan a celebration, we think the Anniversary will help us achieve the important goals of publicizing Quality Rated's many achievements since its inception, spotlighting providers that have attained star-rated status over the years, and engaging with the program's longstanding stakeholders and partners. We kicked off the celebration during Labor Day weekend with Quality Rated Day at the Atlanta Braves-Miami Marlins game where we hosted a tent outside the Truist Park 3rd Base Gate and visitors met DECAL mascot CALi, collected prizes, and learned about the benefits of high-quality child care and ways to find star-rated providers. Inside, fans watched Quality Rated promotional videos and saw Commissioner Jacobs throw out the ceremonial first pitch during a pregame ceremony. Over the next three months, DECAL will host three Anniversary events to recognize providers that were among the first to become Quality Rated. We will also send books to Quality Rated providers and provide them with new Quality Rated sidewalk signs. These events are designed to take place over the current school year. Be on the lookout for more information.

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Again, I know that the last few years have been hard and I just want to let you know how much we appreciate all you do. If you have questions about anything here, feel free to contact the Help Desk at QualityRated@dec.al.ga.gov or call 1-855-800-7747 for information and guidance. Also feel free to contact me directly. Hope you all are doing well.

Sincerely,



Bentley Ponder
Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships



“Encourage and support your kids because children are apt to live up to what you believe of them.”

~ Lady Bird Johnson ~

Teacher Resources on Dealing with Challenging Times

Children are the most vulnerable to being traumatized by accidents, pandemics, death, and violent crimes. Fortunately, with the right adult support they are also able to recover faster. Whether experienced first-hand or through the media, children will often exhibit a wide range of emotions and physical or behavioral reactions to a difficult situation or disturbing event.

It is important to remember that a child's reaction to a traumatic event can be greatly influenced by the adults around them. Children, including young infants, pick up on the anxiety and stress of those around them. The resources highlighted below can help you provide the reassurance and support young children need to work through difficult situations. Many of these resources are appropriate to share with families as well. Please click on the links below for more information.

- [A Guide for Adults Helping Children Through the Toughest Times](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Traumatic Experiences](#)
- [Helping Young Children with Traumatic Grief - Tips for Caregivers](#)
- [Helping Children Heal After Trauma](#)
- [Helping Kids When They Worry](#)
- [Supporting Recovery After Trauma](#)
- [Stress, Resilience and Trauma](#)
- [Promoting Staff Well-Being](#)



SAVE THE DATE!



Building a Community Response to Early Childhood Trauma

3RD ANNUAL SUMMIT ON TRAUMA AND RESILIENCE

November 19th or December 3rd • 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

The summit brings Georgia's early care and learning community together to increase understanding and strengthen capacity related to trauma-responsive care for young children and their families.

SUMMIT KICKOFF • NOVEMBER 15th, 10am - 12pm*

Top TIPS to Support Children in Times of Uncertainty and Stress

Learn concrete strategies to support young children who face BIG and SMALL life events. Learn ten trauma-informed practices that can help children feel safe and regulate their emotions and behavior.

Julie Kurtz is the Founder and CEO of the Center for Optimal Brain Integration. She is an author, national speaker, and expert who consults and trains on trauma and resilience.

*BFTS credit, CEUs, and stipends are not available for the kickoff event.



**THIS KICKOFF AND THE SUMMIT ARE FREE VIRTUAL EVENTS.
REGISTRATION INFORMATION COMING SOON.**

BFTS credit hours and CEUs (social work, LPC, and MFT) are available for the summit. Stipends for the summit are available for Directors, Assistant Directors, Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and Family Child Care Providers who meet attendance requirements. Note: Stipends may be limited to a maximum number of participants.

Free Training Courses from Cox Campus

Free online video courses using the latest science-backed childhood development techniques are available to all early childhood educators. Just visit CoxCampus.org to see all that is available!

Inclusion in Early Learning Programs

What is “inclusive practice” in early years?

Inclusion and inclusive practice in the early years is about practices that ensure that everyone “belongs.” Early years settings have an opportunity to prevent prejudices from occurring by ensuring that all children and their families feel welcome and valued.

Why is it important to use an inclusive approach in early childhood education?

Inclusive programs provide a higher quality education for all and are key in changing discriminatory attitudes. ECE programs and school also provide the context for a child's first relationship with the world outside their families, enabling the development of social relationships and interactions.

How do I teach inclusion in my classroom?

- ◆ Treat all children and their families equally and with respect.
- ◆ Model inclusive behavior. Children learn best from observing the role models around them.
- ◆ Build self-esteem and empathy.
- ◆ Be prepared to answer questions.
- ◆ Provide resources that reflect the background of each child.
- ◆ Expose children to diverse experiences and people.
- ◆ Emphasize similarities while celebrating differences.

What are the defining features of inclusion?

- ◆ Access: Create accessible learning environments.
- ◆ Participation: Encourage play, learning, and membership.
- ◆ Support: Helping parents and providers find information and assistance.

October Farm to School Month

It's that time of year! Welcome to the ninth annual October Farm to School Month from Georgia Organics -Sign-up is now live!

Register today to enjoy **SPINACH TO WIN IT!** lesson plans, activities, recipes, and much more leading up to a month of fun in October. Join the free fun at [BIT.LY/SPINACHTOWINIT](https://bit.ly/spinachtowinit)

[Click here to explore previous Farm to School Month resources.](#)



For the latest updates on Training and Events, please visit our website at <https://leapccrr.org/events/>.



Congratulations to Central Georgia's Newest Quality Rated Providers

Amazing Kingdom Christian Academy II
Ashford Academy
Childtime Childcare #1101
Cornerstone Academy of Lithonia
Cornerstone Academy of Stonecrest
Cornerstone Learning Center
Creekstone Academy
Discovery Zone Kids
Education Elevation Children's Academy
Enrichment Station
FACES Early Learning Academy
Michelle A. Fennell
First Academy Early Learning Center
First Steps Child Development Center II
Goshen's Daycare & Learning Center
Greater Horizons Enrichment Center
Head of the Class Early Learning Center
Heavenly Creations & Child Development, Inc.
Kiddie Kingdom Early Learning Academy Inc.

★★	Kidz Fortress Childcare Learning Center	★★
★★	Learning Ladder Christian Childcare	★
★★	Lillie's Lil' Lamb Daycare and Learning Center	★★
★★	Merline D. Lindsay	★★
★★	Little Castle Child Care	★★
★★	Little Folks Campus	★★
★★	M & K Academy, Inc.	★★
★★	Adele Majors	★
★★	Frederica C. Morton	★
★★	Linda F. Mosley	★★
★★	Hortense G. Pledger	★★
★★	Precious Moments Child Development Center	★★
★★	Robin's Nest Playschool	★★
★	Saint Paul Ame Christ School	★★
★★	SLCM Child Development Center	★
★	Solid Love Daycare Learning Green, LLC	★★
★★	The Marks Academy	★★
★★	Cynthia M. Watkins	★★
★	Dorothy Wilson	★★

Ratings from 07/01/2022 - 09/30/2022



Like us on **Facebook & Instagram**, check your **Email** regularly for the latest updates, news, and more!



2,852!

**2,852 child care
providers in Georgia
are Quality Rated!**
(As of 8/1/22)



**Celebrating 30
YEARS
of Georgia's Pre-K Program!**

October 3-7

www.gaprekweek.org

