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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

SPRING 2023

Early Care and Education BULLETIN!

Dear Child Care Professionals of Georgia:

I am writing to give you a preview of a change that will make DECAL's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program more convenient for child care providers. As you may know, CAPS administers the federal Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) for the state. We issue scholarships to eligible low-income families for use with Quality Rated child care providers and reimburse the providers serving these children.



Until now our relationships with CAPS providers have been handled by a vendor. Beginning in the fourth quarter of this year, a dedicated team of DECAL employees will support CAPS providers directly. We at DECAL have longstanding relationships with Georgia child care providers, and we are making this change so that we can build on our existing relationships and improve services for providers. We organized our new provider relations team in consultation with some of our current CAPS providers.

The CAPS provider relations team will perform all the functions the vendor currently does, including enrollment of new providers, annual renewals, customer support, and provider training. We will also expand our outreach and training activities. We'll take a proactive approach to helping providers bill correctly; we'll offer more training and technical assistance; and we'll reach out to newly licensed providers to let them know about the advantages of participating in CAPS.

CAPS supports eligible families in reaching self-sufficiency, and CAPS providers play a crucial role in making high-quality care and education available to low-income families. CAPS providers can bill weekly for their services and receive payment by ACH transfer, usually within 10 days. CAPS providers also receive tiered reimbursement based on Quality Rated star levels. [Click here](#) if you would like to learn about becoming a CAPS provider. I know that providing child care is a labor of love, and I am grateful for all you do to support Georgia's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elisabetta Kasfir".

Elisabetta Kasfir
Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs

Happy Helpings

**Deadline to participate in Happy Helpings is Approaching:
April 14th is the Deadline to Submit a Viability Screening to Become a Sponsoring Organization**

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is looking for nonprofit organizations to serve free healthy meals and snacks to children this summer through Happy Helpings, Georgia’s Summer Food Service Program. Organizations that are approved as sponsors will be reimbursed for every eligible meal that meets USDA’s guidelines. The deadline to submit a viability screening document to participate this summer is April 14.



Expanding access to nutritious meals and snacks in every Georgia county is an ongoing goal for Nutrition Services. Unfortunately, during fiscal year 2022, 73 counties did not have a Happy Helpings meal site. In an effort to increase meal access and feed more children this summer, DECAL is offering start-up grants, up to \$10,000, to experienced and new Happy Helpings Sponsors that provide meals in unserved areas.

Organizations eligible to participate in Happy Helpings include units of government, private or public nonprofit organizations; camps; universities or colleges and schools.

Organizations may also participate in the program by operating a meal site-- the location where children eat their meals in a supervised setting. Meal sites are located in low-income areas where children naturally congregate during the summer such as a church, apartment complex, park, community center or school.



Areas of Need: 73 Counties

- Bacon
- Baldwin
- Banks
- Ben Hill
- Berrien
- Bleckley
- Brantley
- Camden
- Charlton
- Chattahoochee
- Clinch
- Cook
- Crawford
- Dade
- Dawson
- Dodge
- Dooley
- Emanuel
- Evans
- Forsyth
- Gilmer
- Gordon
- Greene
- Habersham
- Hall
- Hancock
- Haralson
- Harris
- Heard
- Irwin
- Jeff Davis
- Jenkins
- Johnson
- Jones
- Laurens
- Long
- Lumpkin
- Marion
- Meriwether
- Miller
- Montgomery
- Murray
- Oconee
- Oglethorpe
- Peach
- Pickens
- Pierce
- Pike
- Pulaski
- Putman
- Quitman
- Schley
- Screven
- Stewart
- Talbot
- Taliaferro
- Taylor
- Towns
- Treutlen
- Troup
- Turner
- Twiggs
- Ware
- Warren
- Wayne
- Webster
- Wheeler
- White
- Wilcox
- Wilkes
- Wilkinson
- Worth

For more information about Happy Helpings or the Start-up grants, please contact Cindy Kicklighter at cindy.kicklighter@dec.al.ga.gov or by phone at (678) 841.3170. For more information about Happy Helpings, visit <https://happyhelpingsga.com>.

United Way of Greater Atlanta Provides Free Tax Preparation Services

Through a partnership with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** and **MyFreeTaxes** programs provide free tax prep to Greater Atlanta’s working individuals and families with low-to-moderate income (\$60,000 and under).

For more information, Visit the [website here](#).



Introducing



Child Care SERVICES

Compliance-at-a-Glance Feature



on www.QualityRated.org



The new Compliance-at-a-Glance Feature uses the four symbols above to communicate a program’s licensing compliance status. It’s an additional tool to help families evaluate a child care program’s quality and to expand their knowledge of the licensing process.

Visit DECAL’s Website and Select “Find Child Care” on the Blue Menu to Learn More

www.dec.al.ga.gov



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning
BRIGHT FROM THE START



Please be informed that our office will be closed on May 29th and June 19th in observance of Memorial Day and Juneteenth.

Business will resume on the following business day. For urgent matters, please email us at leapccrr@augusta.edu and someone will get in touch with you immediately upon our return.

Medicaid Redetermination Is Coming Soon

On April 1, 2023, the state of Georgia must begin verifying eligibility for all Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids® members.

Update your contact information on gateway.ga.gov now before the Medicaid redetermination deadline. Stay informed about your family’s Medicaid status!



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



Congratulations to Central Georgia's Newest Quality Rated Providers

A Child's Dream Childcare and Learning Center	★★★	Angaleque Crawford	★★★
A Kid's World	★★★★	Early Learning Scholars II	★★★
Antioch A.M.E. Childcare and Development Center	★★★	Emerging Leaders	★★★
Bessie's Child Care	★★★	Stacey Gooden	★★★
Big Blue Marble—Evans Towne Center	★★★	Vanessa Goodman	★★★
Bizzy Bee's Learning Center LLC	★★★	Head of the Class Learning #1	★★★
Blue River STEAM Academy	★★★	Tabitha Herchig	★★★
Bumblebee Kids Learning Center	★★★	Jam's Athletics	★★★★★
Celebrity Kids	★★★	Kids Paradise Learning & Childcare Center, LLC	★★★
Children Academy 4 Learning	★★★	Angela Lee	★★★
Little Tots Academy, Inc.	★★★★	Livingston Academy	★★★
Louisville Head Start Center	★★★	McDuffie County Head Start Center	★★★
Gilda Moore	★★★	Oasis Daycare	★★★
Prime Time Discovery - Deer Chase	★★★	Prime Time Discovery - Diamond Lakes	★★★★★
Prime Time Discovery - Garrett	★★★★	Prime Time Discovery - Richmond Hill	★★★
Sheltering Arms - International Village Center	★★★	Denise Sims	★★★
Tara Academy	★★★	The Blocker Daycare and Learning Center, Inc. II	★★★
The Sunshine House #67	★★★	Universal Child Care and Learning Center #2	★★★
Universal Learning Academy #3	★★★★	Wadley Head Start	★★★
Charlotte White	★		

Ratings from 01/01/2023 - 03/31/2023



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



Don't forget to regularly check out our [website](#) to find the latest resources on a variety of topics.

You can find information on professional development, child development, COVID-19, and many other important topics.



Need child care?
Are you looking for child care that is still open during the COVID-19 crisis?
Visit QualityRated.org, or call

877-ALL-GA-KIDS

(1-877-255-4254)