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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 2025

Early Care and Education BULLETIN!

Dear Child Care Professionals of Georgia:

Spring is definitely in the air in the Atlanta area, and I hope you are enjoying warmer temperatures and blooming colors wherever you are.

I'm writing to let you know about some cool resources that DECAL's Workforce Supports and Learning team is putting together to help you meet the training requirements of **HB 538, the Georgia Early Literacy Act**.

This act, which passed in 2023, requires DECAL provide developmentally appropriate, evidence-based training in literacy instruction for early education professionals. Beginning **July 1**, all teaching professionals in licensed CCLCs and FCCLHs will be required to complete **two clock hours** of training on **early literacy instruction** every year. This doesn't add to the total required annual training hours; it just means that two of the 10 hours should focus on early literacy.

The Workforce Supports and Learning team has been working behind the scenes with our approved trainers and approved sponsor organizations to develop a catalog of approved language and literacy training. Starting in July, you will be able to log in to your **GaPDS** account and search on "Early Language and Literacy Lab" to see a list of approved training courses and register online. Some of the focus areas are Language Development, Building Vocabulary, Reading Aloud and Storytelling, Supporting Early Writing Skills, Social-Emotional Development and Language, Literacy Rich Environments, and Assessment of Language and Literacy Skills.

We've also created some **online resources** for teachers about the science of reading. These will be up on the DECAL website soon. Follow us on social media for updates on the new webpages.

I am excited that we'll be able to offer focused, age-specific training about language and literacy, and I hope you are looking forward to learning some new strategies for helping our youngest learners prepare to become readers.

Thank you for all you already do to support our youngest each day.
In appreciation,

Susan B. Adams
Deputy Commissioner for Pre-K and Instructional Supports



**Resources related to
language & literacy
can also be found in the
Resources section of the
Leap website!**

**You will find dozens of topics
to choose from, including
downloadable documents on
[Language & Literacy](#).**

Keep an Eye Out: Important Survey Coming Soon

Soon, all licensed child care programs in the Central East region will be receiving a post card and email that will have a QR code for a very important survey. As we begin to plan our work for 2026, we need to hear from **parents of children enrolled in child care** and **anyone working in a child care program**! The feedback received will help us know where to best focus our efforts in 2026 so that we can best support all programs and families in our region.

We will also make an announcement on our [website](#) and on [Facebook](#), so be sure to follow us! We will also be giving away **TEN gift cards ranging from \$25 - \$100!** The best part - if you win, you will get to choose from more than 150 vendors.

To ensure we focus our efforts where needed, there will be three surveys available:

- **Parent survey:** To be completed by parents/guardians with children 0-12 years old enrolled in child care
- **Provider survey:** To be completed by anyone working in a child care program. It doesn't matter what type of program or what role you are in - we want to hear from everyone!
- **Combined provider and program survey:** ONE person from each program is requested to complete this longer survey. It will include everything on the provider survey, but also include a second portion focused on the over all program rather than any individuals.

TWO \$100 gift cards

will be distributed by a random selection from the **first 25 parents** and **50 providers** to complete a survey.

EIGHT more cards will be given away when the surveys close on **May 31st!**

BE SURE TO TELL YOUR PARENTS SO THEY CAN ALSO COMPLETE A SURVEY!

\$25 GIFT CARD

WINNERS WILL INCLUDE:

- 1 FCC PROVIDER
- 1 CCLC OWNER/DIRECTOR
- 1 HEAD START PROVIDER
- 1 CLASSROOM TEACHER
- 1 PROGRAM SUPPORT STAFF

\$50 GIFT CARD

WINNERS WILL INCLUDE:

- 1 PROVIDER
- 1 PARENT

\$50 GIFT CARD

WINNERS WILL INCLUDE:

- 1 FCC PROVIDER
- &
- 1 CCLC/GAHS PROVIDER COMPLETING FULL PROGRAM SURVEY

If you would like to learn more about the gift cards and how to enter, visit bhnrewards.com/rewards-gifts/.

Scroll down and select "United States" to see the list of the 150+ vendors you will be able to choose from!

**USE THE QR CODE BETWEEN
MAY 1ST - MAY 31ST
TO COMPLETE A SURVEY AND/OR
ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A GIFT CARD!**

SCAN



Creative & Nutritious Snack Ideas for Child Care: Beyond Crackers & Cheese

Looking for snack inspiration that meets CACFP guidelines? This handout offers a variety of quick and easy snack ideas, as well as more hearty and nutritious options to keep your little ones satisfied and energized throughout the day. Keep your snacks safe, healthy, and enjoyable with these creative and delicious ideas!



Quick and Easy Ideas

- Cheddar cheese scone with milk (*Grain, Fluid Milk*)
- Graham crackers with berry yogurt (*Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate*)
- Whole grain pancakes with fresh fruits (*Grain, Fruit*)
- Greek yogurt with granola and sliced strawberries (*Meat/Meat Alternate, Grain, Fruit*)
- Whole grain pita with hummus and cucumber slices (*Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate, Vegetable*)
- Oatmeal with diced peaches and a sprinkle of cinnamon (*Grain, Fruit*)
- Whole wheat tortilla with black beans and shredded cheese (*Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate*)
- Whole grain mini bagels with cream cheese and apple slices (*Grain, Fruit*)
- Turkey and cheese roll-ups with thinly sliced cucumber sticks (*Meat/Meat Alternate, Vegetable*)
- Tuna fish on French bread or served with whole grain crackers (*Meat/Meat Alternate, Grain*)

Hearty & Nutritious

- **DIY Pizza Bagels:** Provide whole grain bagels, tomato sauce, cheese, and various veggie toppings for kids to create their own mini pizzas. (*Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate, Vegetable*)
- **Fruit and Veggie Faces:** Use whole grain crackers (or rice cakes) as the base and let kids create funny faces using a variety of fruits and vegetables. (*Grain, Fruit, Vegetable*)
- **Smoothies:** Blend up a smoothie with fruits, vegetables, and yogurt, then serve as a cool and refreshing treat. (*Fruit, Vegetable, Meat/Meat Alternate*)
- **Fruit & Yogurt Parfait Bar:** Set up a station with plain or low-sugar yogurt, fresh fruits (like strawberries and kiwi), and granola for a build-your-own parfait experience. Kids can help assemble their own parfaits! (*Meat/Meat Alternate, Fruit, Grain*)
- **Rainbow Veggie Cups:** Fill small cups with layers of different colorful vegetables like red bell peppers, yellow corn, green cucumbers, and purple cabbage. Serve with hummus for dipping. (*Vegetable, Meat/Meat Alternate*)
- **Banana Sushi:** Spread a whole grain tortilla with yogurt, place a banana in the center, roll it up, and slice into thin, bite-sized "sushi" pieces. (*Grain, Fruit*)

Children under the age of 4 are at a high risk of choking while eating.

Always supervise children during meals and snacks. Remember to cut food to the appropriate sizes, especially fruits and vegetables, to avoid possible choking.



Congratulations to Central East Georgia's Newest Quality Rated Providers

Amazing Kingdom Christian Academy II	★★	Kidz Fortress Childcare Learning Center	★
Big Blue Marble - Madeline Drive	★★	Laughter & Lullabies Childcare Academy	★★
Big Blue Marble - Steven's Creek Road	★	Lemon Tree Academy	★★★★
BJ's Learning Center	★★	Little Folks Campus	★★
Deloris H Brown	★★	Kidz Biz Child Care Center	★
Busy Bees Learning Academy	★★★★	Vanessa Porter	★★★★
Henrietta M Cates	★★	Kids Gallery Academic & Learning Center	★★
Child World Day Care and Learning, A	★★★★	Tabernacle Child Development Center	★★★★
Cornerstone Academy of Lithonia	★★	The Goddard School	★
Cornerstone Academy of Stonecrest	★★	The Greenbriar Preschool	★★
Discovery Point #59	★★★★	The Sunshine House #8	★★
Early Beginners Learning Center	★★★★	Stephanie M Turman	★★
Enrichment Station	★★★★	Universal Child Care and Learning Center	★★
Precious Moments Child Development Center	★★★★	Little Caterpillars Development Center, Inc.	★★★★
Annamaria Gibbs	★★★★	Universal Learning Center #2	★★★★
FACES Early Learning Academy	★★	Walton Creative Learning Center	★★★★
Mary B Hunt	★★★★	Cynthia M Watkins	★★
International Preparatory Academy	★★	Amoi Whyte	★★★★
International Preparatory Academy II	★★★★	YMCA Child Development Academy	★★
International Preparatory Academy III	★★		

Ratings from 01/01/25 - 03/31/25

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

Need child care?

Are you looking for child care that is still open during the COVID-19 crisis?

Visit QualityRated.org, or call

(1-877-255-4254)