



## Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning



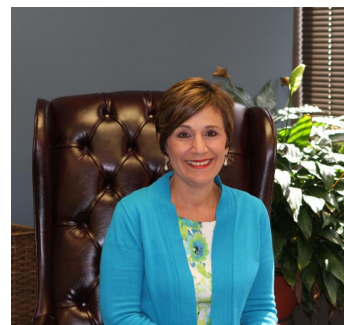
[Contact Us](#)

## Child Care Services April 2017 Newsletter

Dear Child Care Providers,

We are all familiar with the saying, “April showers bring May flowers.” Well, those showers can come in the form of severe weather. April is one of the months when Georgia experiences increased thunderstorm and tornado activity.

Georgia's licensing rules and regulations require that tornado drills be conducted every six months. If you haven't recently conducted a drill, now is a great time to do so. Children who have practiced what to do during a drill will be less panicked in the event of a real emergency. If you don't have a weather radio, consider investing in one or at minimum ensure you receive automated weather warnings via your local emergency system or phone app.



Here are some key tips to remember in the event of tornadoes and severe thunderstorms:

- Know the safest shelter locations inside the building.
- Alert staff without alarming children.
- If children are outside, immediately move them inside.
- Keep away from windows. In a large building, go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor, or to

the designated shelter area. Stay out of auditoriums, gymnasiums, and other structures with wide, free spanroofs.

- Post procedures in each room, office, etc., so staff know what to do and where to go. This is especially relevant for substitute or new staff.
- At least two evacuation routes should be established for each room.
- Teach children and staff how to crouch and protect their heads and neck.
- Make provisions to check outdoors, restrooms, closets, storage rooms, etc., to ensure that every child is in a safe place. Remember - frightened children hide.

[Save the Children](#) has additional information on keeping children safe during tornadoes. As always, we thank you for all you do to keep the children in your care safe and healthy!

Best regards,

Kristie Lewis

Kristie Lewis  
Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services



## Remember to LOOK AGAIN!

As outside temperatures rise, the dangers for children being seriously injured or dying from being left alone inside a hot vehicle also rise. A child's body temperature rises 3-5 times faster than an adult's. Even with the windows partially down, the temperature inside a parked car can reach 125 degrees in just minutes causing heatstroke and death.

Several factors contribute to children being forgotten in cars by caregivers. The most common factors include a change in one's normal routine, lack of sleep, stress, fatigue, distractions, and hormone changes. When these factors combine, the ability for the brain to multi-task is diminished. The majority of parents or caregivers believe that they could never "forget" a child in a vehicle. **The most dangerous mistake a parent or caregiver can make is to think it cannot happen to them or their family.**



Join the campaign now by following and sharing the prevention tips below:

- Never leave children alone in or around cars, even for a minute.
- Put something you'll need like your cellphone, handbag, employee ID or brief case, etc., on the floorboard in the back seat.
- Get in the habit of opening the back door of your vehicle every time you reach your destination to ensure no child has been left behind...the basic premise of the **LOOK AGAIN**

campaign.

- Keep a large stuffed animal in the child's car seat when it's not occupied. When the child is placed in the seat, put the stuffed animal in the front passenger seat. It's a visual reminder that anytime the stuffed animal is up front you know the child is in the back seat in a child safety seat.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times, even in the garage or driveway, and always set the parking brake.
- Keys and/or remote openers should never be left within reach of children.
- Make sure all child passengers have left the vehicle after it is parked.
- Teach children not to play in or around cars.
- When a child is missing, check vehicles and car trunks immediately.
- Never assume it can't happen to you or your child. Sometimes a change in routine or busy schedule can cause a caregiver to forget that a child is still in the car.
- Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel are trained to respond to these situations. Your call could save a life.

**REMINDER: DECAL offers free online training on the rules and regulations related to transportation.**

**FREE Transportation Training**

**FREE Transportation Training in  
Spanish**

---

## Electronic Files/Signatures for Child Care Facilities

As our world continues to evolve with technology and data, so must our policies and daily activity. Child Care Services has long supported programs using software systems for attendance, sign-in/sign-out, etc. Our Legal Unit has advised that an electronic signature (typewritten or handwritten via a tablet) does meet the intent of the rules requiring signatures. Also, the current Arrival and Departure Records rule does allow for parents to document dropoff/pick up in either a written or electronic format. (Child Care Learning Center Rule #591-1-1-.08(p) for reference.) Software used for sign in and sign out must meet all of the other components of the Arrival and Departure Records rule such as:

- includes the date, child's name and drop-off/pick-up times, parent's signature or initials, etc.;
- stores the information for a minimum of 12 months; and
- can print a written record of the information for a specific time period upon request.

Child care programs can also allow parents to complete and submit their children's enrollment documents and required forms via an electronic file system. The conditions for doing so, to meet the intent of the rules, are:

1. The person in charge at each facility must have a way to readily access the information at all times. This would be critical in the event an emergency arises and parent contact or medical information has to be obtained quickly.
2. The information is stored in a format that is well-organized and easy to review. Keep in mind that DECAL representatives need to be able to efficiently review the information as part of regulatory visits or investigations.
3. The only means of storage cannot be web-based. If a web-based system is used, the electronic files must be backed-up (i.e., on a hard drive or disc) so that the only storage location does not require internet connectivity to retrieve them. This will allow access to the files in the event internet services are interrupted and the web-based system is inaccessible.

Lastly, with the child care licensing staff now using tablets, you may be asked to sign your licensing visits electronically rather than on paper. This is acceptable and may become standard practice.

If you have any questions regarding this information, contact your licensing consultant or call the "Consultant of the Day" at 404-657-5562.

---

## Learn the Signs. Act Early! (LTSAE)

By now, many of Georgia's licensed programs and providers serving children birth to five years have received a **Developmental Monitoring Intro Pack** from DECAL. The Intro Pack includes a letter from the Commissioner directing you to our [website](#) and inviting you to take a series of online training modules about developmental milestones and monitoring.

Once you have completed the final training module, you can complete a short survey to request a **FREE Developmental Monitoring Starter Kit** FULL of amazing resources. These resources help early learning professionals take what was learned in the training modules and supply it in the classroom. There is even a special edition kit designed especially for Family Child Care Providers!

There are a limited number of kits which will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. The resources in the Starter Kit include:

- A classroom/provider set of Milestone Moments booklets for families
- A large poster outlining critical developmental milestones B-3
- A small poster with important brain development facts for families
- Pads of developmental checklists for early learning professionals to use and share developmental info w/families
- A cling with important developmental milestones from B-5

We encourage you to watch for the Intro Pack and to visit our [website](#) for information about how to complete the training and request a Starter Kit. These items are also available in our [e-store](#) for just the cost of postage.

---



---

### Tip of the Month

Tips explain and clarify health and safety rules.

Read [April's Tip of the Month](#) about requirements for toys for children under three years old.

IT'S EASY TO CREATE A GaPDS ACCOUNT

Georgia Professional Development System for Early Childhood Educators

- Step #1 Go to [gapds.dec.al.ga.gov](http://gapds.dec.al.ga.gov).
- Step #2 Select login/register.
- Step #3 Complete and submit the form.
- Step #4 Check your email for a message with a link for creating a password.
- Step #5 Log in with your password.
- Step #6 Complete your profile and submit to be assigned a Career Level.

✓ **DONE!**

Have questions? Contact GaPDS Support for answers.  
404-267-2750 ★ [gapds@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:gapds@dec.al.ga.gov)

Follow us:



# Mark Your Calendars



## FREE Core Rules Training Near You Three (3) Hours of BeginnerLevel Approved BFTS Training


This FREE training provides an overview of the Core Rules, the licensing rules and regulations that directly affect children's health and safety and determine a program's compliance. All registrants must have a GaPDS account to register for training.

DATE	CITY	TIME
Tuesday, April 18, 2017	Albany	6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Saturday, April 22, 2017	Lithonia	10:30 am – 1:30 pm
**Saturday, April 29, 2017	**Columbus (FCCLH Providers ONLY)	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Tuesday, May 23, 2017	Albany	6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

[Register Now](#)

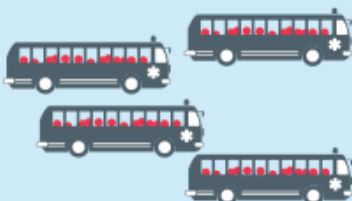
### KIDS and MEDICINE SAFETY

Convenience vs. Caution




#### THE PROBLEM

Each year, nearly 60,000 young children — or about four busloads per day — are seen at emergency departments (EDs) because they got into medicine.




Almost **every minute of every day** there is a call to a poison control center because a young child got into medicine.




#### THE DISCONNECT

##### 9 IN 10 PARENTS AGREE




it is important to store all medicines out of sight and up high after every use.

**HOWEVER,**




nearly **7 in 10 parents** report storing medicine within a child's sight (on a shelf or surface at or above counter height).

##### 9 IN 10 PARENTS AGREE



medicine should be kept in the original container.

**HOWEVER,**



more than **1 in 3 parents** say they or someone in their household always or often uses a daily pill organizer or baggie that children can easily get into if it's not stored out of sight and reach.

#### CONVENIENCE OVERRULES CAUTION

**4 in 10 parents** agree that it is okay to keep medicine they or a child takes every day on the kitchen counter or another visible location so it is handy.



And nearly **5 in 10 parents** agree that when a child is sick, it is ok to keep the medicine on the kitchen counter or another visible location between doses so it is handy.



But, in **3 of 5 accidental medicine poisonings** involving young children, the medicine wasn't in its usual or "normal" storage location and was therefore accessible.



#### UNDERESTIMATING THE RISKS

Nearly **3 in 5 parents** think if medicine is out of reach, it's in a safe place.



But, research indicates in **about half of OTC poisoning cases**, the child climbed on a chair, toy or other device to reach medicine.



**1 in 3 parents** think if their child is being watched, it doesn't matter as much where medicines are stored.



But, **parents frequently said** in ED visits that they'd only turned their back for a minute.



**Half of parents** think child-resistant packaging means a child won't be able to get into medicine at all.



But, research suggests **45-55% of accidental poisonings** involved child-resistant packaging.



**Convenience + Risk = 440,000 Poison Control Center calls in 2015 because a child got into medicine.**

#### HOW TO HELP PROTECT YOUR KIDS

- ☐ Store all prescription and OTC medicines, vitamins and supplements up and away and out of sight and reach every time.
- ☐ Keep medicine in its original child-resistant packaging.
- ☐ Practice safe storage of medicine as soon as your first child is born.
- ☐ Put the Poison Help number – 1-800-222-1222 – into your phone and post it visibly at home.
- ☐ Instead of keeping medicine handy, use safe reminder tools to help you remember when to take and give doses.
  - ☐ Set alarms on your watch or cell phone.
  - ☐ Write a note to yourself and leave it somewhere you look often.
  - ☐ Combine taking daily medicines with a daily task, like brushing your teeth.
  - ☐ Use a medication schedule to make sure the right amount of medicine is given at the right time.

For more medicine safety tips, visit [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

**SAFE  
KIDS**  
WORLDWIDE™



[Agency](#) | [Programs](#) | [Families](#) | [Teachers](#) | [Providers](#) | [Contact](#)

---