



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

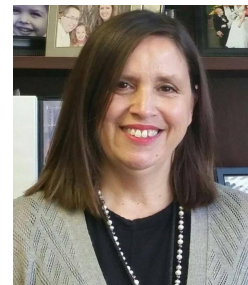


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Child Care Services Fall 2020 Newsletter

Dear Child Care Providers,

I hope you, your staff, and the families you care for are well. I want to thank you all for your cooperation and your flexibility over the past several months. You, as a child care community, rose to the occasion to meet the many challenges of 2020. You learned how to prevent the spread of the virus, you learned how to do virtual visits, and you transformed school age programs into virtual classrooms. When you saw a need, you filled it. Thanks for all you do every day, but thanks especially for all you're doing these days.



As you know, new rules went into effect on October 1, 2020. We have several resources that will help you implement the rules and you can find them under the

Rule Guidance tab at

<http://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx>. As always, if you have questions, please contact your child care consultant.

All the best,

Pam Stevens

Pam Stevens
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services

Important Reminder: New Rule Changes Effective October 1, 2020

On October 1, 2020, several rule changes became effective for both Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLH) and Child Care Learning Centers (CCLC). Look below for more information.



Rules and Regulations Family Child Care Learning Homes

Chapter 290-2-3
October 1, 2020

FCCLH - The chapters effected by the recent rule changes are:

- Requirements for Applications and Licenses 290-2-3-.04
- Staffing and Supervision 290-2-3-.07
- Nutrition and Food



Rules and Regulations Child Care Learning Centers

Chapter 591-1-1
October 1, 2020

CCLC - The chapters effected by the recent rule changes are:

- Food Service and Nutrition 591-1-1-.15
- Governing Body and Licenses 591-1-1-.16
- Hygiene 591-1-1-.17
- Required Reporting 591-

Services 290-2-3-.10

- Health, Safety, and Discipline 290-2-3-.11
- Reporting 290-2-3-.14

FCCLH Rules and Regulations

FCCLH Indicator Manual

1-1-.29

- Staff:Child Ratios and Supervision 591-1-1-.32

CCLC Rules and Regulations

CCLC Indicator Manual

Additional information and resources have been created and are available on the Department's website at <http://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx> on the Rule Guidance tab to assist with the understanding and implementation of these rule changes. Resources include frequently asked questions and information about food choking hazards and intentional feeding practices, connecting mealtime activities to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS).



Children's Healthcare of Atlanta created Strong4Life to help our communities build healthy, safe and resilient children. Strong4Life launched a new online hub for early care and education professionals at www.Strong4Life.com/earlycare. The hub includes Strong4Life program information and free

resources to support child, family and staff wellness.

Developmental Milestones Website



The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is excited to announce the launch of our new Developmental Milestones website, a resource to help families and caregivers monitor children's development. Developmental Milestones are skills such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving "bye-bye." Tracking these important milestones can help families see if their child's development is on track,

or if they need extra support and intervention. Tracking milestones can be done by watching, interacting, and playing with children and recording their skills on a milestones checklist.

DECAL's new website features milestones from ten different age groups, broken down into four different domains: Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Cognitive Development, and Movement/Physical Development. The website is easy to navigate and has a unique feature that allows families or teachers to compare milestones for up to three different ages. Using this tool, families can look across age ranges for a complete picture of their child's development. This new website helps families, teachers and child care providers know what to expect at each age of child development, and how to use this information to track the children's developmental milestones. It also offers downloadable developmental checklists in both English and Spanish that make it simple for families and caregivers to keep track of milestones.

If a child is missing a milestone, it is important to act early to be sure that concerns are addressed and that children can receive any needed supports, such as early intervention. The new DECAL Developmental Milestones website contains links to local Georgia resources that families can use to find help and support if there is a concern. There are also links to free resources and helpful articles, links to DECAL programs, and information about the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Encourage families and caregivers to take a look at the new website, and be sure to take a look yourself at: development.decal.ga.gov.

State Fire Marshall's Guidelines for Fire Safety Training and Emergency Drills During COVID-19 Pandemic

Due to the current guidelines given by Governor Kemp to prioritize the health and safety of children and staff in all child care programs during the COVID-19 crisis, the following directives should be followed:

- All employees hired since March 1, 2020 will have until January 1, 2021 to complete the Caregiver Fire and Life Safety Course. The following topics should be reviewed with each employee when hired:
 1. Review Fire Evacuation Plan
 2. Location of Fire Extinguishers
 3. Location of Emergency Exits
 4. Review of Fire Protection System

- All current fire safety training expiration dates will be extended until October 1, 2020. Depending on the future of this crisis, additional directives may follow.
- When and only when practicing emergency drills, child care programs should consider social distancing. In the event of an actual emergency, programs should follow existing fire evacuation routes, severe weather procedures, and shelter-in-place protocols.
- Programs may choose to stagger the participation of the practice of emergency drills throughout the day/week. For example:
 - **Rotation Schedule:** The rotation schedule will limit the number of children and staff in hallways and exiting the program at the same time. The rotation schedule will include two groups (*Larger programs may use more than two groups if necessary.*)
 - **Example: Group A** will include all odd numbered classrooms and **Group B** will include all even numbered classrooms. Group A and B will conduct the drill on separate days or times. All drills will need to maintain social distancing guidance; this includes maintaining separation while exiting the program, assembling outside the program, and re-entering the program.
- No change will be issued regarding the number of emergency drills required to be conducted per calendar year.

Please see following link for further recommendations and best practices from the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html>

If you have any questions or concerns please contact our Fire Safety and Life Safety Educator Amanda Ghorley at aghorley@oci.ga.gov or (470) 725-5722.

How Can the Child Care Services Technical Assistance Unit Help YOU?



COVID-19 Response
New Rule Changes Effective October 1, 2020
Staff Morale

Send your request for assistance to: ccs.ta@dec.al.ga.gov

**All assistance will be conducted via virtual meeting format*

Resources Available Through Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

It takes parents, caregivers and supportive resources to help children thrive. As family serving professionals, you know parents are often in complex situations and need professional and community support. [Prevent Child Abuse Georgia](#) provides the 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline who's bilingual staff are trained to listen to parents and help connect them with programs and services in their neighborhood.

Here's how you can help:

1. Encourage families you serve to call the 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Helpline to talk to trained professionals to connect them with supportive programs in their area.
2. Go online to use the [1-800-CHILDREN Resource Map](#), which contains over 3,000 local and statewide programs designed to assist and support families. See what services are available in the areas where you serve families.
3. Additional information about 1-800-CHILDREN is located at PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org.

The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline can connect caregivers with:

- Parenting support
- After school and other child programs
- Counseling and support groups
- Referrals for legal needs
- Grandparent raising grandchildren
- Concerns about well-being of a child or family member
- Family violence concerns
- Community resources for emergency assistance

The Helpline is toll free, bilingual, available Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and a good place to discuss options.

Reading With Young Children Makes a Big Difference

Shared reading between caregivers and very young children, including infants, is associated



with stronger vocabulary skills for nearly all children by age 3, say physicians at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. According to research published in *The Journal of Pediatrics*, this is true also for children who genetically may be vulnerable to barriers in learning, and behavior development.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Want to Help Children Love Math? Try These Math Activities for All Ages!

Are you looking for easy ways to help children love math right from the start? Check out this list of simple math activities for children of all ages.



INFANTS & TODDLERS

COUNT - A lot. Are you dressing your baby? “One arm, two arms!” Are you walking up the stairs with your toddler? “Let’s count the steps! One... two... three....” Count how many crayons she has, how many fingers are on her hand, or how many keys are on the ring. When you point to each object as you count, you teach children one-to-one correspondence. One day she’ll learn to assign numbers to objects as she counts, too.



PRESCHOOL

BUILD - When you give children a lot of open-ended play time with toys that require no screen and no battery, lots of learning happens. Here are building toys that really open up children's minds to spatial reasoning.

- Wooden blocks
- Magna Tiles
- Tinker toys
- Legos or Duplos
- Marble run



SCHOOL AGE

INVESTIGATE - Do fun math investigations with your kids! When you approach math as games and not lessons, you might be surprised at how much fun math can be.

- Estimate. About how many people do you think are ahead of you in line? About how many apples are in this bowl?
- Take stats at home or in the neighborhood. Make a graph to show children's favorite foods, ice cream flavors, etc.
- Play with a calculator.
- Experiment with the kitchen scale. Which do you think weighs more: this apple, or this bag of marshmallows?



OLDER SCHOOL AGE

TAKE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT - Math is related to nearly every interest. Here are just a few!

- Have some baseball fans? Record statistics. Calculate batting averages.
- Children interested in fashion? Visit a fabric store and calculate the cost of materials to create a dream design.
- Is building their thing? Design and build a complex structure.

Click the Buttons Below for Additional Activities:

AGES 0-2

AGES 3-4

AGES 5-7

AGES 8-12

Interested?

Interested in reading past issues of the CCS Newsletter? Click [here!](#)



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