Decidedly DECAL

Highlighting the Events That Shape Who We Are





October 2015 - In This Issue By the Numbers Head Start Awareness Month **Open Enrollment Dates Announced** Important Links October Birthdays A Day in the Life... GAYC Recognizes DECAL Employee Virtual Suggestion Box Board of Early Care and Learning Commissioner's Corner Study Reveals Low Level of Car Seat Registration Statewide Celebration of Early Learning Starts October 5th Members Named to Quality Rated Advisory Committee "We Care, Child Care" Phase Two Offering Scholarships September Quality Rated Programs Economic Impact Study Results Announced



\$4.7 Billion - Economic activity generated by Georgia's Early Care and Education Industry67,000 - Jobs created in Georgia by the Early Care and Education Industry

3,828 - Georgia's Pre-K classes funded for 2015-2016

822 - Georgia child care programs now Quality Rated

Commissioner's Corner

by Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs

Dear Fellow DECALers,

Every year, October is one of my favorite months. But this year, I am particularly excited about the upcoming month - for the following reasons:

1. I'm going to have an opportunity to meet with you, to share my vision for the department, and to hear your thoughts, ideas, perspectives, concerns, etc. I know in the past DECAL has held ALL STAFF meetings where everyone meets in Atlanta for a day or so. I decided to have two meetings, instead of bringing all 300+ of us together, to cut down on travel for many of you and to have smaller groups in which to meet with you.



The staff meeting is not going to be just "talking heads." We will have lunch together. You will hear a short report on the findings from the recent economic impact study. I'm going to share my vision for DECAL for the coming years. We'll hear some program updates. But you will also have an opportunity to ask me questions and to interact with your peers.

Remember: In the last issue of Decidedly DECAL, I asked you to think about what YOU think it means when we ask, "Do you think DECAL functions as one department?" I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

2. We will release the findings of the study we commissioned to determine the impact of the early care and education industry on the economy of Georgia. The findings of this timely study are

2,363 - Georgia child care programs now participating in Quality Rated

58,345 - Total registrants in DECAL's Professional Development Registry

3 - States with agencies dedicated to children ages birth to five years old

Children THRIVE from Birth to Five.

October is Head Start Awareness Month



Janice M. Haker, Georgia Head Start Coordination Director, DECAL

On October 22, 1982, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed October as Head Start Awareness Month. Georgia's Governor Nathan Deal also proclaimed the month of October as Head Start Awareness Month.

overcome the handicap of economically disadvantaged preschool children. In 1965, Head Start was transferred to the Office of Child Development in the U.S. Department of Health, Education incredibly important as they reveal that the industry we support and monitor is a significant contributor to the state's economic health. Every one of us at DECAL plays a part in helping to ensure, not just the health and safety of children in out-of-home child care, but also the health, effectiveness, and success of an entire industry. I think you'll find the results rewarding and informative.

3. We begin the month by celebrating Georgia's Pre-K Week October 5-9. During this special week we encourage state, business, and community leaders to visit Pre-K classes and learn about the value of early childhood education. Governor and Mrs. Deal and I will officially kick off the week on Monday, October 5. We appreciate Voices for Georgia's Children and the other organizations and corporations who partner with us to help make this week possible.

4. The weather: I don't know about you, but I welcome a reprieve from the excessive heat and oppressive humidity of our Georgia summers. I love the cool mornings and mild days.

It won't be long before we're together in Macon and Atlanta. Until then, just know that I continue to appreciate your commitment to your work, our department, Georgia's children and families, and the industry that cares for them every day.

Sincerely,

DECAL Priority:

Ensure Health & Safety

New Study Shows 80 Percent of Parents Think Car Seat Registration Cars Are Important, But Only 42 Percent Return the Card

During National Child Passenger Safety Week September 13-19, Safe Kids Georgia urged parents and caregivers to make sure their cars seats and booster seats are properly installed, which reduces the risk of death by as much as 71 percent.

In 2014, more than six million car seats were recalled for a safety defect -- the largest car seat recall in U.S. history. Yet, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), fewer than half of those car seats received the necessary repair. The study was created to understand why so few recalled car seats get repaired and to educate parents about the importance of recalls.

The research reveals that only 42 percent of parents said they filled out and returned the

and Welfare and is now a program within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services, and administered by the Office of Head Start (OHS). Today, Head Start programs are operated by over 1,500 community-based organizations in all 50 states and U.S. territories, including Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Head Start and Early Head Start in Georgia serves approximately 25,000 children age 0-5. There are 32 grantees, including DECAL and the Migrant/Seasonal Head Start Program

Open Enrollment

Reminder: Open Enrollment dates for both health care and flex benefits are October 19 - November 6. Benefit fairs began in September and continue through late October. Specific dates and locations will be communicated as soon as all details are finalized and published.

Quick Links

DECAL on Facebook DECAL on Twitter DECAL on Instagram DECAL on Pinterest DECAL Website_	€
October	99000

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Birthdays

Best wishes go out to the following DECAL employees who celebrate birthdays this month:

- 1 La Tonya Bonner
- 4 Clayton Adams
- 4 Craig Detweiler
- 7 Julia Strickland
- 8 Andrea Marable
- 12 Melissa Herndon
- 16 Danna Foster
- 16 Aneshia Harris
- 17 Paula Jones
- 18 Rebecca McDonald
- 22 Audrey Lampkin

registration card that comes with a new car seat. That means that, on average, six out of 10 parents risk not hearing about a car seat recall in the most timely and dependable manner -- directly from the manufacturer. The study surveyed 562 parents of children who use a car seat and collected responses from 44 parents who participated in an online bulletin board discussion.

"The single best way for parents to learn about a recall is to register their car seat with the manufacturer. Unfortunately, this important first step doesn't happen nearly enough," said Beverly Losman, director of Safe Kids Georgia. "During Child Passenger Safety Week, we want to remind all parents to register their car seats and take action when a recall occurs. This is a cost-free remedy the manufacturer provides -- and must provide -- to protect your child."

Safe Kids Georgia strongly urges all parents and caregivers to follow these steps to ensure their child is protected in a vehicle.

Register Your Car Seat

Options 1: Register online with your car seat manufacturer or at <u>www.safecar.gov/parents.</u> You'll need the model number and date of manufacture found on the label of your car seat.

Option 2: Fill out and mail in the registration card that came with your car seat. It already includes your car seat's information. No postage is required.

Find Out If Your Car Seat Is Recalled.

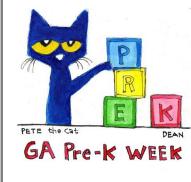
Visit the NHTSA's website at <u>http://bit.ly/recalledseats</u> and enter your seat's brand name and model.

Throughout Nation Child Passenger Safety Week, certified child passenger safety technicians across the metro area and state showed parents and caregivers how to correctly use, install, and regier their car seats. More information can be found at <u>www.safekidsgeorgia.org/cpsweek2015</u>.

DECAL Priority:

Increase Quality & Access

Statewide Celebration of Early Learning Draws Influential Group of Leaders, Sponsors



Leaders from around the state will show their support for early childhood education by visiting early learning classrooms as part of this year's Georgia Pre-K Week Oct. 5-9, 2015.

Launched five years ago, Pre-K Week's support from government, business, and community leaders grows every year. This year, the Georgia School Boards Association joins as a Pre-K Week partner, and Georgia Power, Synovus, and Scholastic return as corporate sponsors. Additional key supporters include Gov. Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal.

http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?ca=d5a20efd-8dff-46df-8bdb-558d4b2a34e8&c=80d3a5b0-6240-11e3-ab78-d4ae529cddd3&ch=818f7ba0-6240-11e3-abfa-d4ae529cddd3[10/1/2015 9:00:50 AM]

A Day in the Life of Esther Dykes



From entering the child care industry in 1998 where she held "almost every position imaginable" to joining Babies Can't Wait in 2007, all of Esther Dykes' work experiences were the perfect training ground for her current position as an inclusion specialist with DECAL.

Esther Dykes

She started working with DECAL in February 2015, "which was very exciting for me because I was chosen to be in a position that combines all of my work history into one amazing job," said Dykes. "In both areas, I gained a lot of knowledge to better carry out my current job responsibilities."

Her responsibilities include supporting child care teachers and providers in their work to meaningfully include children with disabilities and challenging behaviors in their classrooms and programs.

"In those efforts, I observe classrooms, share strategies, and develop strength-based action plans where teachers and administrators can meet goals through coaching and individualized professional development," said Dykes. "Teachers really begin to understand what inclusion really is and how to implement inclusion successfully where everyone benefits."

Additionally, Dykes provides resources and support to families seeking information regarding referrals and evaluation as well as high quality child care for their children with disabilities. Dykes also attends meetings in her region with other agencies and stakeholders, including public health departments, local interagency coordinating councils, Family Connection, E3Z, Head Start, among others, to advocate for high quality inclusion.

On a typical day, Dykes may visit two or three classrooms in various child care centers, Georgia's Pre-K classrooms, or group and/or family child care programs to observe the classroom, meet with teachers and administrators, develop and assess the progress of action plans, and spend time coaching teachers as they work to meet the goals they've set for themselves. On some days, she also provides training to large and small groups of teachers on inclusion, social and emotional development, and the Pyramid Model. "Sandra and I believe that engaging Georgia's children and encouraging our educators is essential to preparing students for future success," said Gov. Deal. "Ensuring that Georgia's youngest scholars continue to benefit from the Pre-K program is a top priority of my administration. By making strategic investments in Georgia's Pre-K Program, we hope to provide each student with a strong learning foundation."

"The support of such influential public and private organizations is a powerful statement about the value of children's education and learning in the early years," said Emily Pelton, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia's Children, the child advocacy organization that organizes Pre-K Week each year, along with its partners. "Investment in early childhood education creates the foundation necessary for a child to succeed in nearly every phase of life, from learning to read successfully by third grade to graduating high school and entering the workforce."

During the state's official Pre-K Week Oct. 5-9, hundreds of state, business, and community leaders will visit Pre-K centers across the state to witness early learning in action and engage children and educators. Many will read a favorite children's book to young learners. The statewide celebration, which includes all 159 counties, draws attention to early learning, including Pre-K, a hallmark program that was pioneered in Georgia 22 years ago.

According to DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs, "DECAL readily acknowledges that Georgia Pre-K Week, like the Pre-K program itself, would not be possible without the unwavering commitment of our public and private partners. We appreciate how more and more individuals and organizations clearly understand how important quality early education is to the future of our children and our state."

Georgia Pre-K Week is developed with the support of Scholastic and DECAL. Joining Voices for Georgia's Children as partners on Georgia Pre-K Week are Black Child Development Institute Atlanta, Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy, Georgia Child Care Association, Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students, Georgia Family Connection Partnership, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, Georgia Public Library Service, Georgia Vision Project, Multiple Junior League Chapters, Quality Care for Children, United Way of Greater Atlanta, and YMCA of Metro Atlanta.

"I am also a Master Cadre coach for our statewide PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program. In this role, I serve as an external coach to a Pre-K center in my region," said Dykes.

What she values most about her job is "feeling that I have a little part in helping children and teachers find a love for learning," and what she looks forward to every day is "seeing the teachers and children excited about being at school. I enjoy seeing smiling faces and true relationship-building at its best."

Dykes has a busy and fulfilling personal life as well, with a 10year-old daughter, a 5-year-old son (who started Georgia's Pre-K Program this year) and a 4-year old son. She and her husband are preparing to move next month into the first home they are purchasing together just in time to celebrate their one-year wedding anniversary in November.

"We have a busy, but fun and loving home," said Dykes.

Asked to share her favorite quote, Dykes picked one from Abraham Joshua Heschel who said, "Knowledge -- like the sky -is never private property... Teaching is the art of sharing."



Governor Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal Joined DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs for the kickoff of last year's Georgia Pre-K Week.

Members of Inaugural Quality Rated Advisory Committee Are Named

The members of DECAL's inaugural Quality Rated Advisory Committee were recently announced. The committee will guide and foster growth for Quality Rated, Georgia's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for eligible child care programs in the state. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated assigns a rating (one star, two star, or three star) to child care programs that meet quality standards over and above the state licensing requirements for health and safety.

"I look forward to working with the first Quality Rated Advisory Committee," said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. "This important committee is composed of representatives from the Georgia General Assembly, large child care chains, individually owned child care businesses, family day care homes, for profit and non-profit child care, and child care professional organizations. Their diverse experiences and perspectives will help Georgia achieve its goal of 100% of eligible child care providers participating in Quality Rated by the end of 2017."

Quality Rated Advisory Committee members will provide direct feedback to DECAL about the Quality Rated process and will be charged to think innovatively about increasing Quality Rated



DECAL Inclusion Specialist Esther Dykes is pictured at right observing interactions in one of the many classrooms she visits regularly to support child care providers and teachers in their efforts to meaningfully include children with disabilities and challenging behaviors in their classrooms and programs.

GAYC Names Technical Assistance Specialist of the Year

The Georgia Association on Young Children (GAYC) recently recognized DECAL Infant Toddler Specialist Andrea McFarland as Technical Assistance Specialist of the Year at its annual conference. McFarland is pictured in top photo with DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs and bottom photo with GAYC President Lisa Belliston.

Also at the conference Commissioner Jacobs awarded certificates to new Quality Rated child care programs. Almost 400 child care programs in Georgia have become Quality Rated since the GAYC conference last year. awareness and participation. Members of the Quality Rated Advisory Committee serve for a one-year term.

Members of the 2015-2016 Quality Rated Advisory Committee

- Michelle Smith Lank, Director at A Kid's World Learning Center in Statesboro
- Thonja Smith-Lee, Executive Director at the Goddard School in Atlanta
- Rhonda Canerday, Manager of Quality Assurance at Discovery Point Franchising Inc
- Lisa Morris, Child Care Provider at Just For Kids Family Child Care in McDonough
- Marla Reisman, Center Director at North Fulton Child Development Association in Roswell
- Michelle Culter-Ervin, Director at Central Georgia Technical College Child Development Center in Macon
- Jed Tuiolosega, Child Care Director of YMCA of Metropolitan Columbus in Columbus
- Sherrie Johnson, Owner at Discovery Point #42 in Covington
- Dianne Coggins, Family Child Care Provider in College Park
- Carolyn Salvador, Executive Director of the Georgia Child Care Association
- Barbara Miller, Manager of Government Relations at Kids R Kids Corporate
- Jori Rose, Family Child Care Provider in Kingsland
- Linda Owens, Director of the Rollins Child Development Center in Cartersville
- Jaime Rechkemmer, Director of Education at Childcare Network
- Trina Pattullo, Director at Josiah Christian School in Valdosta
- Michelle Carter, Director of Druid Hills Child Development Center in Atlanta
- Heather Bardi, Program Specialist at Ninth District Opportunity, Inc.
- Lisa Downs Henry, Project Director at Downs Preschool in Watkinsville
- Valencia Stovall, State Representative for House District 74
- Yvette Drake, Owner at Creekstone Academy in Lithonia

"We Care, Child Care" Phase Two Offers Scholarships for Future Students

Early childhood education is vital to the success of our children, just as financial planning is essential to help ensure they are able to continue their education. Path2College 529 and DECAL



We Care, Child Care Sweepstakes

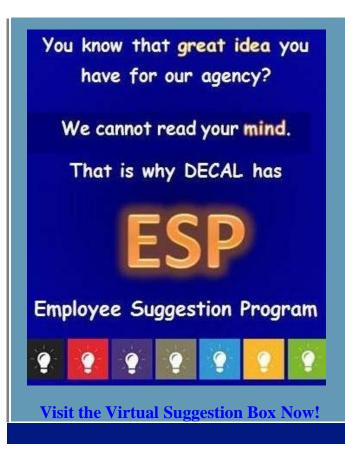


are excited to announce a new partnership called "We Care, Child Care." Through this campaign and partnership the goal is that together we can reach even more Georgia families to educate them about the importance of higher education and college savings with the state's college savings plan, Path2College.

The entire month of July, child care centers throughout the state had a chance in Phase I of the "We Care, Child Care" Sweepstakes to win one of 60 VISA gift cards valued from \$100 to \$1,000 to be used for their centers.

On August 1, the second phase of the We Care, Child Care Sweepstakes kicked-off, targeted to parents and grandparents of child care-age children across the state. Parents, grandparents and legal guardians (who are 21 years of age or older) have until October 31, 2015 to enter children born in 2002 or after for a chance to win a \$1,529 Path2College 529 Plan contribution. Six winners across the state will be randomly selected to win.

To enter, parents, grandparents and legal guardians should visit <u>www.WeCare529.com</u> and click on the We Care, Child Care Sweepstakes button. No is purchase necessary. The sweepstakes is void where prohibited.



Congratulations to the newest QQUALITYRATED child care programs!		
A Child's Campus, Decatur ★ 🖈	★ Kids 'R' Kids #36, Lawrenceville	
Pam Aikens, Morrow ★ 🖈	★ Kids World Day Care, Thomasville	
Alma's Baby World Developmental	★ Kidz Konnection, Zebulon	
Day Care Center, Albany ★	★★★ Edelina P. Lane, Ellenwood	
Am Pm Academy, Lawrenceville ★ ★	★ Legacy Academy for Children, Suwanee	
Sandy K. Bagley, Dalton ★	★★★ Elyse L. Leigh, Riverdale	
Luisia M. Betts, Austell ★ 🖈	★★ Natasha B. Lipscomb, Gainesville	
Ishica M. Bogle, Riverdale ★ ★	★ Little Angels Educare, Covington	
Bold Springs Academy, Monroe ★	★★ Little Friends Child Care, Waycross	
Cassandra C. Brewton, Riverdale ★ 🖈	★ Livingston Academy, Covington	
Bright Minds Afterschool Program	★ Lollipop Childrens Center, Douglas	
LLC Childcare and Learning Academy, Riverdale ★	★★★ Judith L. Lucas, Riverdale	
Brinkley's Day Care Center, Barnesville ★	★ M & K Academy, Inc., Covington	
Broad Acres Day Care Center, Athens ★	★ Tinah Nikkel, Kennesaw	
Latronna Bush, Albany ★ ★	🛧 Olubusayo O. Olujuyigbe, Lawrenceville	
Barbara A. Butler, Forst Park ★ ★	★ Jerry T. Owens, Clayton	
Childcare Network #10, Columbus ★ 🖈	★ 🖈 Phoenix School, Decatur	
Childcare Network #235, Locust Grove ★ ★ ★	** Betty J. Riddick, Power Springs	
Childcare Network #239, West Point ★ ★	★★ Rocksprings Day Care Center, Athens	
Children's Academy of Hickory Flat, Canton ★ ★	★★★ Sandy's Sandbox, Macon	
Linda Clark, Macon ★ 🖈	★★ Savannah's Preschool Prep, Griffin	
Cornerstone Academy, Lithonia ★ 🖈	★★★ Sylvia Scott, Riverdale	
Lottie M. Davis, Brunswick 🖈	★★ Sheltering Arms - Buford Drive	
Destiny Academy, Atlanta ★		
Deloris A. Dingle, Midway ★ 🖈		
Early Learning Scholars, Clarkston 📩	Center, Atlanta	
East Cobb Prep, Marietta 🖈	** Sheltering Arms Educare Atlanta, Atlanta	
Easter Seals West Georgia, Inc., Columbus 🜟	** Song of the South, Jonesboro	
Olivia Ferreira, Sandy Springs ★ 🛧	** Stepping Stones Learning Center, Eatonton	
The Goddard School On Providence Road, Marietta 📩	** Sunbrook Academy at Stockbridge, Stockbridge	
Tiniki L. Harris, Savannah ★ 🖈	** The Preschool Academy, Athens	
Ihesha K. Harvey, Acworth 🜟	Towne Lake Academy, South Campus, Woodstock	
Martina U. Hirata, Lawrenceville 🛪	★★ Linday Y. Webb, Morrow	
Valanta C. Holmes-Harris, Jonesboro 🛪 🛪		
Mary B. Hunt, Thomson ★ ★ 🛧		
	Infinite Learning Academy, Mableton 🜟 🔶 Young Mindz Preschool Academy, Decatur	
Josiah Christian School, Valdosta ★		

DECAL Priority:

Foster Organizational Excellence

Board of Early Care and Learning

Supporting and guiding the <u>mission and vision</u> of Bright from the Start:

Board of Early Care and Learning

Kay Ford, Midway First Congressional District (Secretary)

Susan Harper, Albany Second Congressional District (Vice Chair)

Kathy Howell, Carrollton Third Congressional District

Phil Davis, Stone Mountain Fourth Congressional District

Carlene Talton, Decatur Fifth Congressional District

Dawnn Henderson, Marietta Sixth Congressional District

Sherron Murphy, Lawrenceville Seventh Congressional District

Luann Purcell, Ed.D., Warner Robins Eighth Congressional District

> Vacant Ninth Congressional District

Janice Gallimore, Greensboro Tenth Congressional District

Victor Morgan, Cartersville Eleventh Congressional District (Chair)

Jerri Kropp, Statesboro Twelfth Congressional District

Judy Neal, Stockbridge Thirteenth Congressional District

Tangela Johnson, Cohutta Fourteenth Congressional District

New Study Shows Economic Impact of Georgia's Early Care and Education Industry

The children they serve may be small, but the economic impact of the early care and education industry in Georgia is big ---generating \$4.7 billion in revenues annually while creating more than 67,000 jobs statewide, according to a study released by DECAL on September 29. In 2014, DECAL commissioned the University of Georgia (UGA) and Georgia State University (GSU) to study the impact of the child care industry on the economy of Georgia. Results of the study will be discussed at four public policy forums across the state.



"Ensuring that our youngest students are positioned for future

success has been a top priority of my administration," said Governor Nathan Deal. "The early care and education industry plays a vital role in assuring that our children are safe and that they are equipped to succeed, and I thank these industry professionals for their dedication and hard work."

"As Governor Deal continues to emphasize job creation in our state, it is important to understand the significant economic impact of the child care industry in Georgia and to recognize that it is a viable economic engine all across the state," said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs.

"While generating \$4.7 billion in revenues each year, early childhood education enables parents and caregivers to work and earn more than \$24 billion annually, while preparing their children to succeed in K-12, college, and careers," said Commissioner Jacobs.



Dr. Bentley Ponder, DECAL's Director of Research and Senior Policy Advisor, explained that all of Georgia's approximately 6,000 licensed and regulated child care providers were asked to complete a comprehensive survey in the fall of 2014. UGA developed and distributed the survey and compiled the data. GSU then analyzed the data which formed the basis for the final report.

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE) joined UGA, GSU, and DECAL to present results from the study on September 29 at Valdosta State University. The results also will be presented October 14 at Middle Georgia State

University in Macon, October 21 at the Georgia Railroad Freight Depot in Atlanta, and October 23 at the University of Georgia in Athens. Each event, which will include a study briefing and a public policy impact forum, will last from 8:15 AM to 11:30 AM. Registration will open at 7:45 AM. For more information, e-mail <u>bftsresearch@decal.ga.gov</u>.

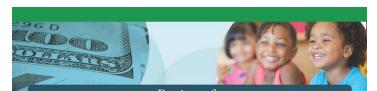
The study found that the early care and education industry serves more than 337,000 children each year, including 143,000 children ages birth through three years, over 118,000 four year olds, and almost 75,000 school age children (5 to 13 years). The average weekly parent fees for infants in family child care homes range from \$91 in rural areas to \$127 in urban areas. Among child care centers, the average weekly fees range from \$99 (rural) to \$161 (urban).

As an industry, Georgia's early care and education providers generate \$2.45 billion in annual gross industry receipts. By comparison, Health and Personal Care Retail Stores generate \$2.40 billion, Printing - \$2.43 billion, and Pharmaceutical Preparation and Manufacturing - \$2.55 billion.

DECAL has posted an executive summary of the report to its website at

The Faces of DECAL

DECAL faces featured in the banner of this issue are (L-R) Beverly Browning, Courtney Moody, Jennifer Johnson, Amanda Reynolds, Rebecca McDonald, Hasnein Gulamali, and Charnele Dobbins.



Register for The Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia A Briefing and Public Policy Forum

Learn the results of the 2015 Early Care and Education Economic Impact Study and discuss public policy implications in a town hall meeting format.

Dates:

September 29: Valdosta - Valdosta State University October 14: Macon - Middle Georgia State University October 21: Atlanta - Georgia Railroad Freight Depot October 23: Athens - The University of Georgia

> Preliminary Agenda: 7:45-8:15am: Registration 8:15-10:00am: Study Briefing 10:15-11:30am: Public Policy Forum

Visit www.decal.ga.gov/EconomicImpactRegistration.html to register and for detailed location information.

For more information email bftsresearch@decal.ga.gov.

