



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

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DECAL Expanding Support for School Age Children
and Young Adults with Disabilities**

Funding Provides Working Parents Secure Option for Their Children

ATLANTA, Ga., (December 16, 2020) – Beginning December 18, 2020, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is expanding a newly implemented financial program to include children and young adults with disabilities whose school systems offer a primarily virtual learning model and who need care while their parents work. The program, referred to as the SOLVE (Supporting Onsite Learning for Virtual Education) program, originally offered scholarships for students ages 5-12 only.

Under the expanded SOLVE program, children and young adults up to age 22 who have a disability will be eligible for a SOLVE scholarship regardless of the family's income. Also, the SOLVE payment rate for caring for children and young adults with disabilities will increase based on the provider's location, facility type, and Quality Rated star level.

SOLVE is administered by DECAL's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) unit that oversees Georgia's subsidized child care for low income families. To date, more than 4,000 SOLVE scholarships have been awarded to Georgia children and their families. SOLVE is funded by the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund, part of the federal CARES Act.

“Throughout the pandemic, we have remained laser-focused on ensuring that parents can return to work safely with the knowledge that their children are well taken care of,” said Governor Brian Kemp. “This expansion of the SOLVE program to cover children and young adults with disabilities enables us to expand that opportunity to more families in our state, and I thank Commissioner Jacobs and her team for working tirelessly to administer these grants and support children and parents throughout Georgia.”

“We are glad we can expand the SOLVE program to provide scholarships to children and young adults with disabilities,” said Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “This support will allow parents who need to return to work to have a secure option for their child and will give them peace of mind knowing their children are being cared for in a safe environment.”

Families must apply for support from SOLVE beginning December 18, 2020, using the CAPS/GA Gateway system found at www.gateway.ga.gov. For more information on the SOLVE Program or on applying for these special resources, visit www.dec.al.ga.gov; call 1-833-442-2277; or e-mail solve@dec.al.ga.gov.

About DECAL

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program; licenses child care centers and home-based child care; administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program and federal nutrition programs; and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community-powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.dec.al.ga.gov.