



Nathan Deal
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

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

Industry Creates More than 67,000 Jobs in Georgia While Serving 337,000 Children Annually

ATLANTA, Ga., (September 29, 2015) – 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 economic activity annually while creating more than 67,000 jobs statewide, according to a study released today by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). 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.

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“While generating \$4.7 billion in economic activity 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 (GPPE) will join UGA, GSU, and DECAL to present results from the study on September 29 at Valdosta State University, 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 bftsresearch@decalfga.gov.

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 to its website at <http://www.decalfga.gov/BftS/Research.aspx>.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: 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, 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.state.ga.us.