

Board Meeting Welcome

Dr. Kristy Beam



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
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Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Approve 08/27/26 agenda
- Approve 05/21/26 minutes



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Inspiration

Maria Franklin



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Board Member Updates

Commissioner's Updates

Amy M. Jacobs, Commissioner



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CCDF Federal Updates

**Office of
Child Care
Priorities**

**Proposed
CCDF Rule**

**CCDF State
Plan
2028-2030**



Needs Assessment

DECAL is partnering with Child Trends to conduct a statewide ECE Needs Assessment. Components include:



Survey of licensed child
care providers



Focus groups with
providers, teachers, and
caregivers

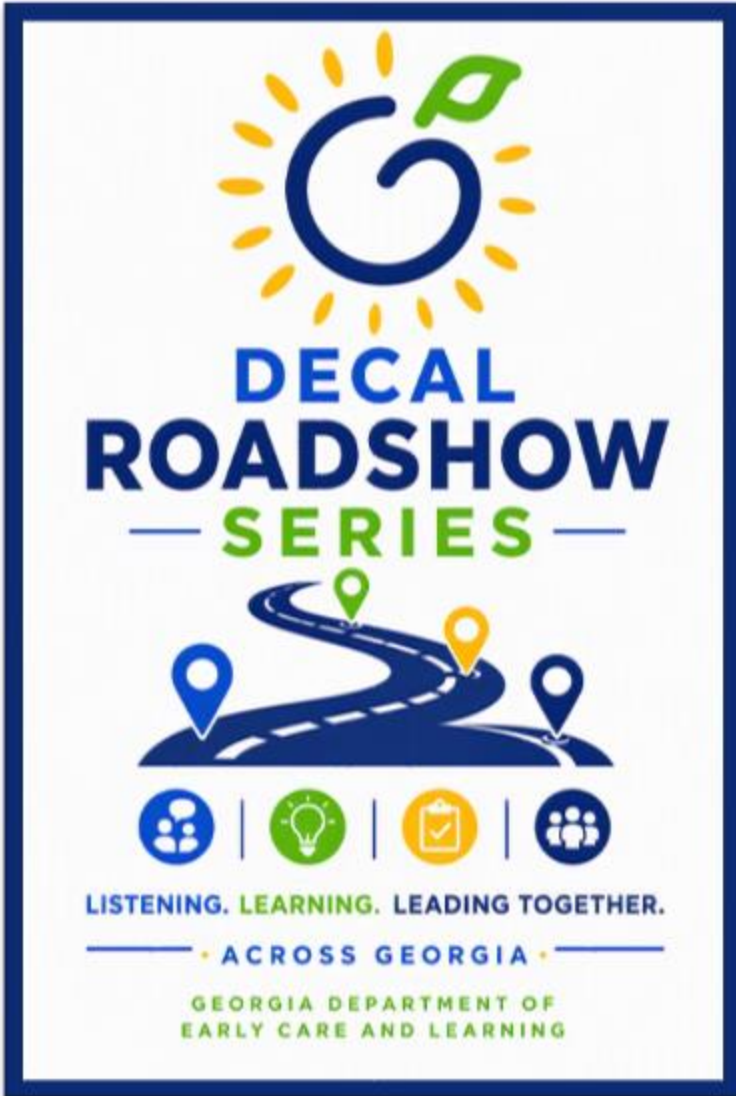


In-person opportunities to
gather input

- Data collection will begin in September and run through the fall
- Results will inform DECAL's FFY 2028-2030 CCDF Plan



DECAL Roadshows



- DECAL will host four roadshows across the state in October
- The roadshows will include opportunities to:
 - Share feedback to inform the Needs Assessment
 - Learn about DECAL programs and services
 - Provide input on upcoming policy changes
 - Ask questions of DECAL representatives
- Dates and locations will be announced soon!



Finance, Legislative, & Administrative Updates

Woody Dover, Enterprise Project Management Director



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FY 2026 Budget Comparison – Quarter 4

As of June 30 th	Budget	Expenditures*	Remaining Balance	Remaining %
By Program				
Child Care Services	\$420,684,185	\$420,669,780	\$14,405	0%
Nutrition	\$175,064,480	\$175,039,995	\$24,485	0%
Pre-K + (HS)	\$580,541,799	\$567,944,334	\$12,597,465	2%
Quality Initiatives	\$76,305,244	\$76,305,244	\$0	0%
Totals	\$1,252,595,708	\$1,239,959,353	\$12,636,355	1%
By Funding Source				
State General	\$78,758,056	\$78,719,167	\$38,889	0%
State Lottery	\$580,411,020	\$567,813,555	\$12,597,465	2%
Federal	\$593,394,138	\$593,394,138	\$0	0%
Other	\$32,494	\$32,494	\$0	0%
Totals	\$1,252,595,708	\$1,239,959,353	\$12,636,355	1%

Includes encumbrances.



Upcoming Budget Requests

	Current FY 2027 Budget	Proposed AFY 2027 Budget	Proposed FY2028 Budget
By Programs			
Child Care Services	\$457,800,119	\$457,800,119	\$457,800,119
Nutrition	\$170,000,000	\$170,000,000	\$170,000,000
Pre-K + (HS)	\$594,164,145	\$594,164,145	\$610,180,577
Quality Initiatives	\$57,243,738	\$57,243,738	\$57,243,738
Totals	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,295,224,434
By Funding Sources			
State General	\$77,508,972	\$77,508,972	\$77,508,972
State Lottery	\$593,989,145	\$593,989,145	\$610,005,577
Federal	\$607,659,885	\$607,659,885	\$607,659,885
Other	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Totals	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,295,224,434



FY 2028 Budget Request - Pre-K Program

State Lottery Funds Change			
FY 2027	FY 2028	Increase	% Change
\$594,164,145	\$610,180,577	\$16,016,432	2.70%

Increase

- Annual formula updates and Increase funds for final year of a four-year phase in to reduce classroom size from 22 to 20 students to improve instructional quality
- Increase formula funds for 102 new Pre-K classrooms =\$12,434,595
- Increase funds for 102 New Class Start-Up Grants = \$120,000
- Increase formula funds for estimated annual T&E Update and Supplement = \$3,431,237
- Increase funds for Teacher Paid Leave for 102 Additional Classes = \$30,600



Update on SFY 2026 Audit

- Audit Details
 - Conducted by Georgia Department of Audits & Accounts (DOAA)
 - Period covered by audit: 7/1/2025–6/30/2026
 - Audit scope is just Federal Compliance on our CCDF and Nutrition programs
- What Board Members Should Know
 - We will contact if they need additional information

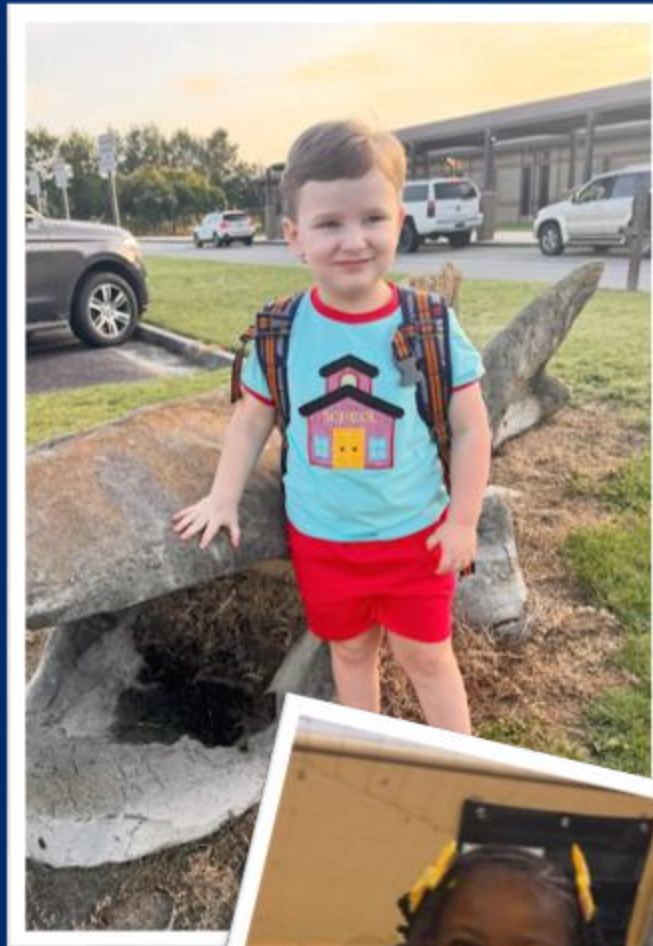


Georgia's Pre-K and Instructional Supports Updates

Susan Adams, Deputy Commissioner for Georgia's Pre-K & Instructional Supports



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Georgia Pre-K Week

Mark Your Calendar!
October 5-9, 2026



Overview of Pyramid Model Initiative

Veronica Thomas, Director, Practice & Supports Services

Doré LaForett Ph.D., Early Childhood Research Scholar, Child Trends



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Framing the Issue

- The early years shape lifelong learning, health, and well-being.
- Social-emotional skills enable relationships, self-regulation, and school success.
- Skill gaps can surface as challenging behavior, while many educators feel unprepared to respond.
- Preschool suspension and expulsion harm children and families—and predict later exclusion.
- Affected children are up to 10× more likely to drop out, struggle academically, or face incarceration.



Framing the Issue



Evidence supports a consistent model to strengthen social-emotional development and prevent challenging behavior.



DECAL selected the Pyramid Model to guide professional learning and instructional support across Georgia.



It serves child care, preschool, early intervention, Head Start, and early childhood special education.



What is the Pyramid Model?

- The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development.
- A form of early childhood positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS)
- It is a tiered public health approach that provides:
 - Effective workforce refers to the systems and policies necessary to ensure our workforce can adopt and sustain the practices.
 - Universal supports to promote healthy social emotional development for all children
 - Targeted, explicit strategies and instruction for those at risk for challenging behavior
 - Intensive interventions for children with very persistent challenging behavior



challengingbehavior.org



Benefits of the Pyramid Model

- Decreased risk of withdrawal, aggression, non-compliance, and disruption
- Treatment impact on fears, phobias, depression, anxiety, hyperactivity, conduct, and obsessive-compulsive disorders.
- Positive peer relationships including understanding of friendship, cooperation, and sharing
- Increased self-control, self-monitoring, and self-correction and improved social-emotional health
- Increased academic success
- Reduced risk for teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, and special education placement



How We Use The Pyramid Everyday

Since 2015, DECAL has embedded the Pyramid Model across workforce supports:



- **Pre-K Specialists** use **Tier 1** assistance to strengthen relationships and classroom environments.
- **Infant Toddler Specialists** use **Tier 1** and **Tier 2** coaching, training, and LITTLE grants to support temperament, responsive caregiving, and interactions.
- **SEEDS Specialists** use **Tier 1** and **Tier 2** training, coaching, and the SEEDS Helpline to promote social-emotional development and prevent challenging behavior from birth–8.
- **SEEDS Specialists** provide intensive **Tier 3** behavior intervention as demand continues to grow.



Pyramid Pathways for Educators

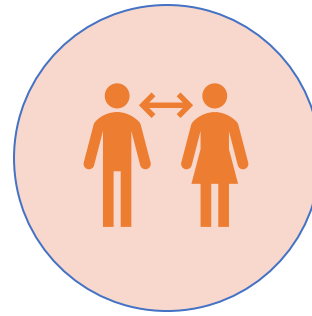
Building the ECE workforce's capacity to support social emotional learning and address challenging behavior using variety of approaches



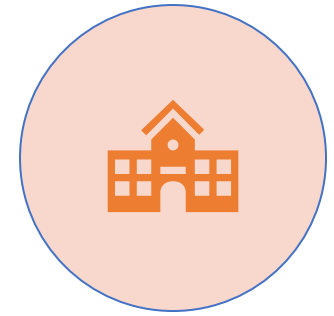
FOUNDATIONAL
TRAINING SERIES



GROUP
COACHING



PRACTICE BASED
COACHING



PROGRAM-WIDE
IMPLEMENTATION



Evaluation Goals and Methods

Evaluation Goals

1. Learn whether participation in Pyramid Model professional development was linked to improvement in educators' social-emotional development knowledge, confidence, and practices.
2. Understand how Pyramid Model professional development was delivered to educators and provide DECAL with considerations to improve future Pyramid Model offerings.

Evaluation Methods

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Classroom observations
- Administrative documentation



Foundational Training Series

GOALS

Stronger practice

FOUNDATIONS

Build social-emotional learning knowledge.

PREVENTION

Address challenging behavior proactively.

RETENTION

Strengthen the early education workforce.

TRAINING STRUCTURE

Blended learning

20 h self-paced modules

18 h Birth–Five Pyramid Model

2 h Reducing suspension and expulsion

6 × 2 h virtual PLCs

Facilitated by Infant/Toddler, Pre-K, and SEEDS specialists.

REACH SINCE 2023

1,500+

professionals trained

876 Birth–Five teachers

474 Administrators

145 Family child care providers

55 Head Start mental health leaders

49 College instructors

25 CCR&R staff



Evaluation Learnings: Foundational Training



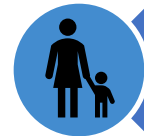
Improved knowledge of social-emotional development



Increased reported use of Pyramid Model practices



Improved confidence in interactions with children, particularly those with challenging behavior



Improved interactions with families



Decrease in children sent to the office, and contacting families about children's challenging behavior



High satisfaction with Pyramid Model professional development



What Educators Said: Foundational Training

A lot of it felt relevant in my classroom.

I've had a lot of social-emotional needs. I have the inclusion classrooms, so not just my special needs babies, even my general education kids I've used a lot of it.

I've seen a lot more social-emotional [issues] this year than I ever have in the past.

– *Teacher*



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I've seen a lot more social-emotional [issues] this year than I ever have in the past.

– Teacher

I feel like [Pyramid Model training] should be offered across the board.

With the child care industry and daycare in general, there's so much of a turnover rate because people get frustrated so easily and they're burned out.

But [the Pyramid Model] breaks things down [and] would open their eyes to be a little more understanding and empathetic to the children and hopefully push them to be in in the position longer.

- Teacher



Group Coaching

01 PURPOSE

Practice together

Coaches multiple educators in one collaborative cohort.

- Learn social-emotional practices
- Plan and apply practices
- Share video and reflect
- Give peer feedback

02 FORMAT

7 monthly sessions

Hybrid cohort

Prerequisite: foundational training.

Led by Infant/Toddler and SEEDS Specialists.

Educators set goals and action plans with peer support.

03 CURRENT PILOT

9 providers

family child care providers

EVALUATION

- Provider surveys
- Classroom observations
- Training exit surveys

Extends learning for family child care and district Pre-K programs.



Practice-Based Coaching

01 APPROACH

Grow teaching practice

A coach–teacher partnership centered on educator growth.

COACHING CYCLE

- Plan
- Observe
- Reflect and give feedback

Supports high-quality teaching practices.

02 DELIVERY

10 months

biweekly on-site coaching

PREREQUISITE

One administrator and one teacher complete foundational coaching.

4

 all-staff sessions

Relationships, social-emotional skills, and challenging behavior.

03 REACH

Since January 2025

20

 child care programs

39

 teachers coached

464

 teachers trained

Selected teachers receive coaching from SEEDS specialists.



Evaluation Learnings: Comparison Study (Foundational Training vs. Practice-Based Coaching)

	Foundational Training	Practice-Based Coaching
Improved knowledge of social-emotional development	☒	☒
Increased use of Pyramid Model practices	☐	☒
Improved confidence in interactions with children, particularly those with challenging behavior	☒	☒
Rates of exclusionary discipline remained low	☒	☒
High satisfaction with Pyramid Model professional development	☒	☒



Evaluation Learnings: Comparison Study (Foundational Training vs. Practice-Based Coaching)

	Foundational Training	Practice-Based Coaching
Improved knowledge of social-emotional development	☒	☒
Increased use of Pyramid Model practices	☐	☒
Improved confidence in interactions with children, particularly those with challenging behavior	☒	☒
Rates of exclusionary discipline remained low	☒	☒
High satisfaction with Pyramid Model professional development	☒	☒



What Educators Said: Practice-Based Coaching

One of these four classes (the on-site trainings) [the facilitator] talked about a visualized picture schedule...and it spread like wildfire.

My teachers were all like, “oh, I like this, I want to do this,” and it was probably the most encouraged I’ve been in a while.

It spread the positivity and it made people want to do more. I was really pleased with that.

- Administrator



What Educators Said: Practice-Based Coaching

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It spread the positivity and it made people want to do more. I was really pleased with that.

- Administrator

I still recommend it and I’m in my 20th year of teaching, and I still learned.

I got a lot of good ideas from my coach to think outside the box on certain things.

- Teacher



Program Wide Implementation

01 GOALS

Scale and sustain

PROGRAM-WIDE PRIORITIES

- Use Pyramid practices consistently
- Build infrastructure for scale and sustainability

PREREQUISITE

Foundational training + practice-based coaching

02 IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Bi-monthly visits

help each center:

- Form a leadership team
- Select a classroom coach
- Build skills in coaching, behavior support, and data
- Create a center-wide action plan
- Define a behavior-support process
- Plan to scale and sustain

03 CURRENT SITES

6 sites

Bemiss Academy — Valdosta

Greenbriar Preschool — Evans

Kids World — Statesboro

Lanette Suttles Child Development Center
— Atlanta

Little Scholars Academy — Atlanta

Our House Central — Atlanta



Current Evaluation Goals: Program-Wide Implementation

- What we want to learn:
 - How programs build infrastructure and supports for program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model.
 - Whether participation is linked to improvements at the program, classroom, and child levels.
- Multi-year evaluation:
 - Full implementation typically takes 3-5 years.
 - DECAL supports will decrease as programs sustain program-wide implementation on their own.
- Data collection:
 - Interviews with site leadership team
 - Staff surveys
 - Observations of teachers
 - Administrative documentation



What Educators Are Saying: Program-Wide Implementation

[In] deciding to participate or use Pyramid Model, we decided that because, number one, it promotes social emotional competence and it minimizes challenging behaviors and fosters inclusion.

I have some staff that have gone through the training, they have gone through the coaching. I see the difference. I see them using the strategies and you can basically see the progress from students when they first join the classroom or enroll up until now, [and] we're a little past the halfway mark in the school year.

With the consistency of the strategies, you can see the benefits of using or implementing Pyramid Model.

- Program-Wide Implementation Site Team Leader



Statewide Pyramid Work & Partnerships

- DECAL partners with the national Pyramid Model Consortium and state leaders to scale the model with fidelity.
- This capacity-building approach is used in 43+ states.
- As an affiliate state, Georgia joins quarterly national leader meetings.
- DECAL coordinates statewide implementation through a cross-sector State Leadership Team.
- The team meets quarterly to embed the model across early intervention, K–12, higher education, child welfare, and family programs.



Summary

The Pyramid Model strengthens educators' social-emotional knowledge, confidence, family engagement, and teaching practice—especially through coaching.

Next Steps:

- Continue to use Pyramid Model to retain educators and prevent suspension and expulsion.
- Continue to offer flexible professional development that fits staffing and schedules.
- Build sustainable program-wide implementation capacity.
- Evaluate benefits for educators, programs, children, and families.
- Develop and document Georgia's big-picture Pyramid Model strategy.



Break

Ten Minutes



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Federal Programs Updates

Elisabetta Kasfir, Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs



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CAPS Cost & Funding

CAPS is funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

- CAPS costs approximately \$395,000,000 annually for direct weekly payments at an average of \$7,549 per child each year.
- In addition, Quality Rated 2- and 3-star providers are paid approximately \$16,000,000 annually in Commitment to Quality (C2Q) payments.

CAPS helps families pay for child care, but most families are also required to pay a family fee.

- CAPS determines the family fee based on the size and income of the family.
- When the family fee is being charged, the average family fee is \$22 a week.
- Normally, if a family chooses a provider who charges more than their CAPS scholarship, the family must pay the provider the difference.



CAPS Policy Update

CAPS Child Care Provider Rights and Responsibilities Policy

- Clarifies documentation required for initial enrollment and annual renewal
- Clarifies when documents do not need to be resubmitted if information has not changed
- Clarifies criminal records check requirements for informal providers

CAPS Health and Safety Standards Policy

- Clarifies health and safety compliance standards
- Clarifies training requirements for license-exempt and informal providers





CAPS Demographics



Landscape of CAPS Providers

Most CAPS providers are licensed Child Care Learning Centers.

Provider Type	Count	Percent
Child Care Learning Center	2,218	77.1%
Family Child Care Learning Home	399	13.9%
Exempt	213	7.5%
Informal	43	1.5%
Total	2,873	100%



Where do families with CAPS seek care?

96.8% are enrolled in licensed Child Care Learning Centers

1.5% are enrolled in licensed Family Child Care Learning Homes

1.5% are enrolled in eligible Exempt Providers

.2% are enrolled in Informal Providers

**As of 8/6/26*



99%

of children are enrolled at a **Quality
Rated** provider



**As of 7/1/26*

CAPS is Designed to Serve

52,400

Children



Children in CAPS by Age



27% Infants or Toddlers

(Ages birth–2)



24% Preschool

(Ages 3–4)



49% School Age

(Ages 5+)

**As of 8/6/26*



Family Size

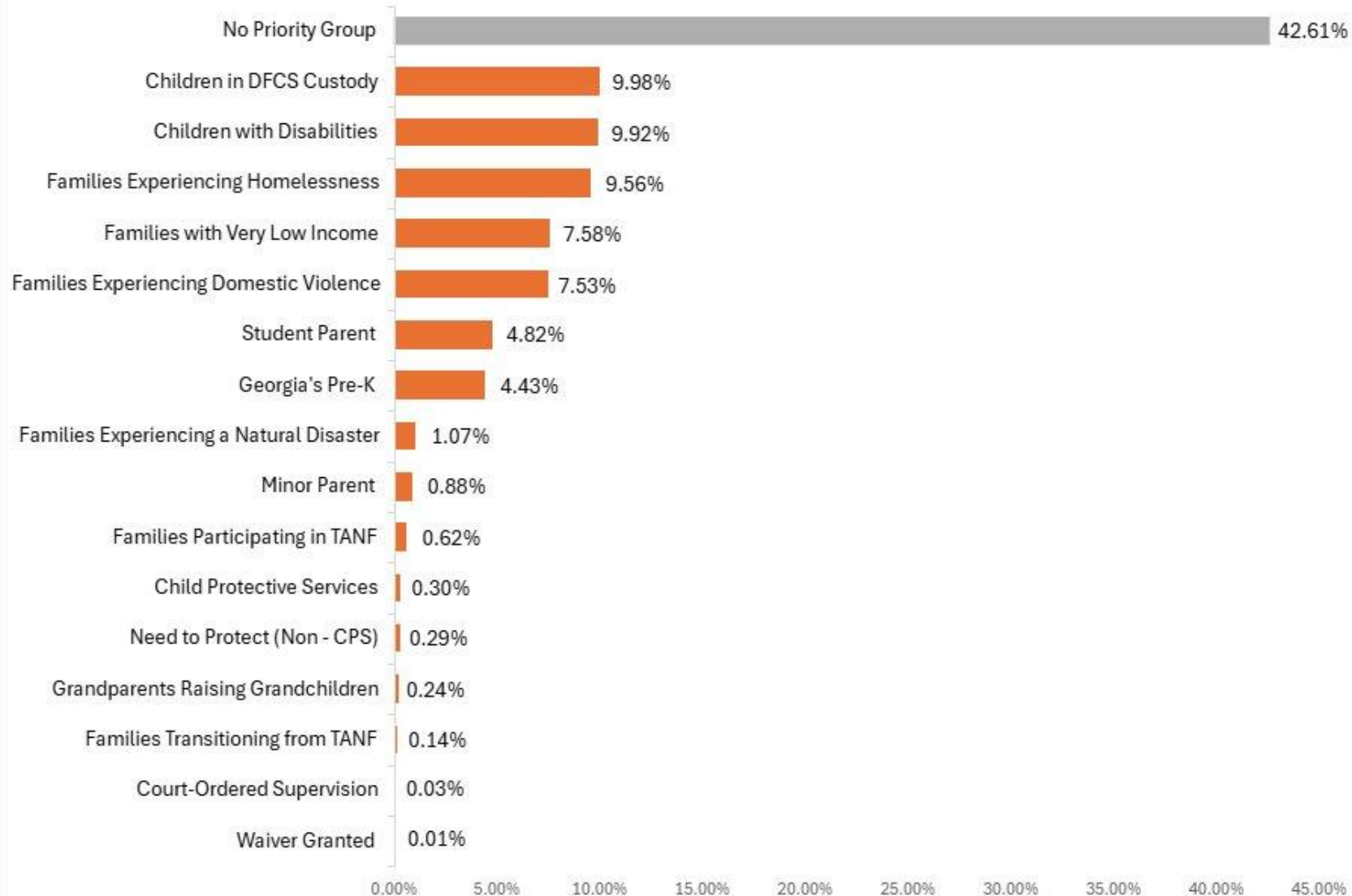
- **Average family size: 3.5**
 - Median: 3
- **2 children** in care per family on average

Family Size	Count	Percent
2	6,678	25%
3	8,774	32.8%
4	6,331	23.7%
5	3,182	11.9%
6	1,175	4.4%
7 or more	622	2.3%
Total	26,762	100%

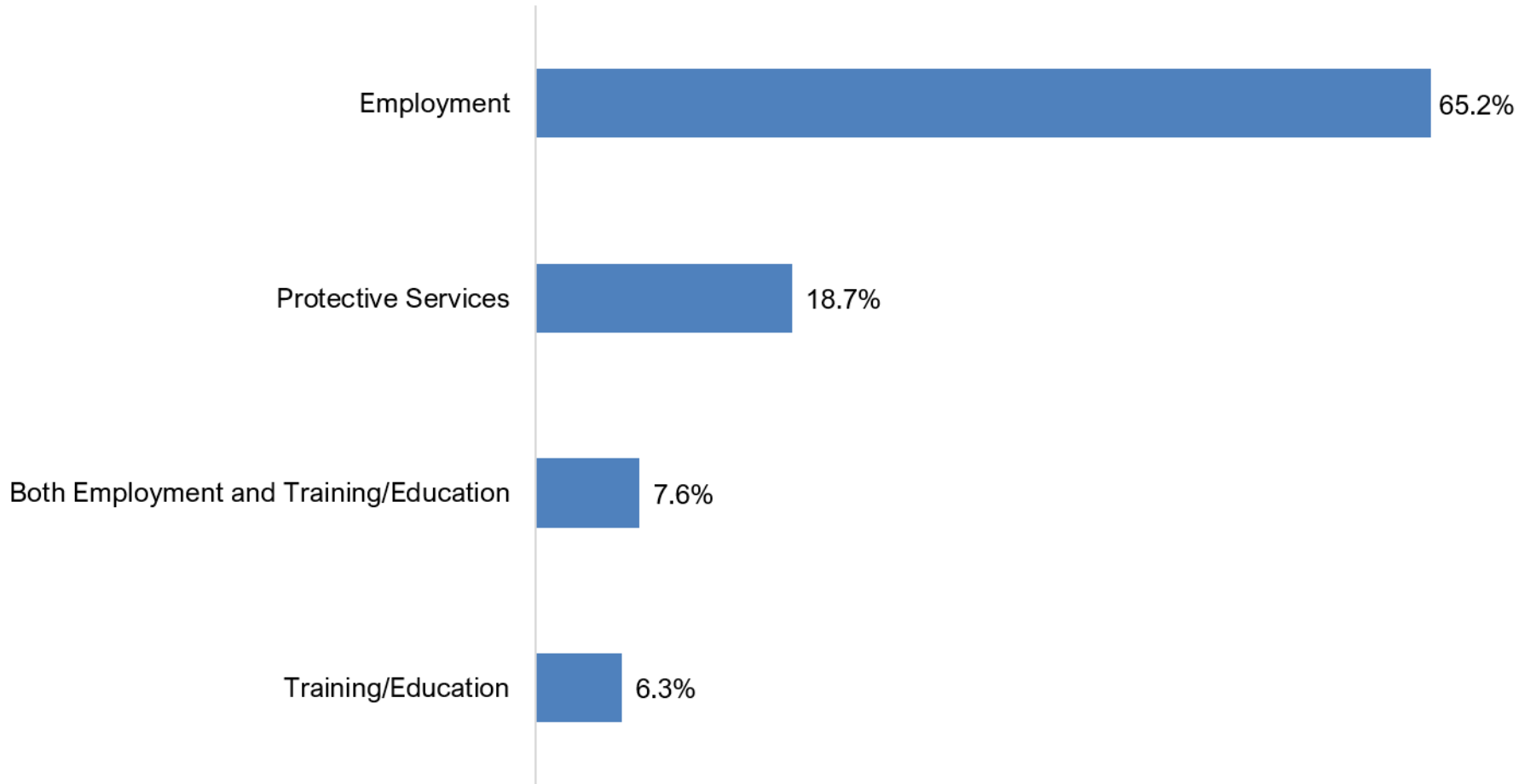
**As of 7/31/26, excludes children in foster care*



Priority Groups



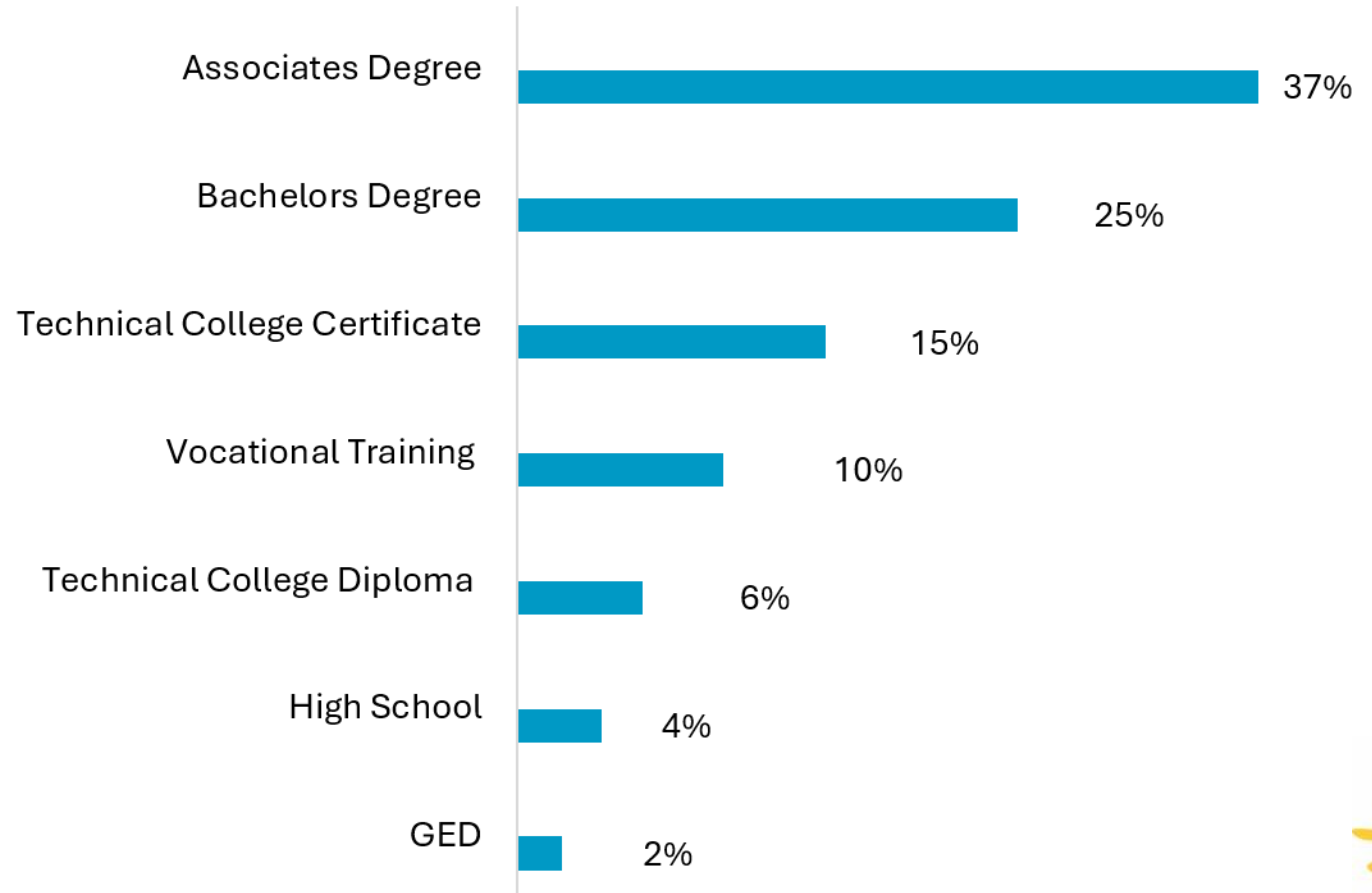
Activity Types of CAPS Families



Student Parents

- **14%** of parents report training or education as an approved activity
- **Half** of those parents are also employed (**7.7%** of our total population)

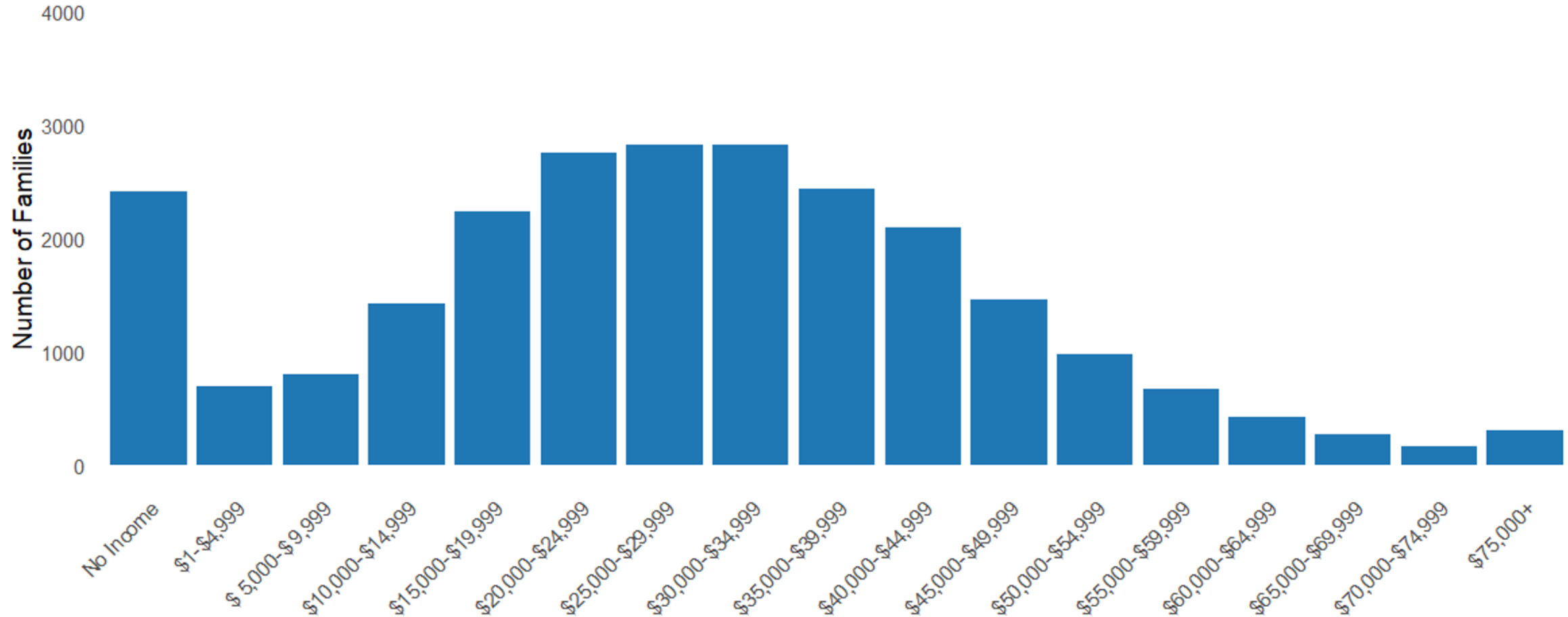
Education programs pursued by Parents



*As of 7/31/26



Income Distribution of CAPS Families



*As of 7/31/26



Income

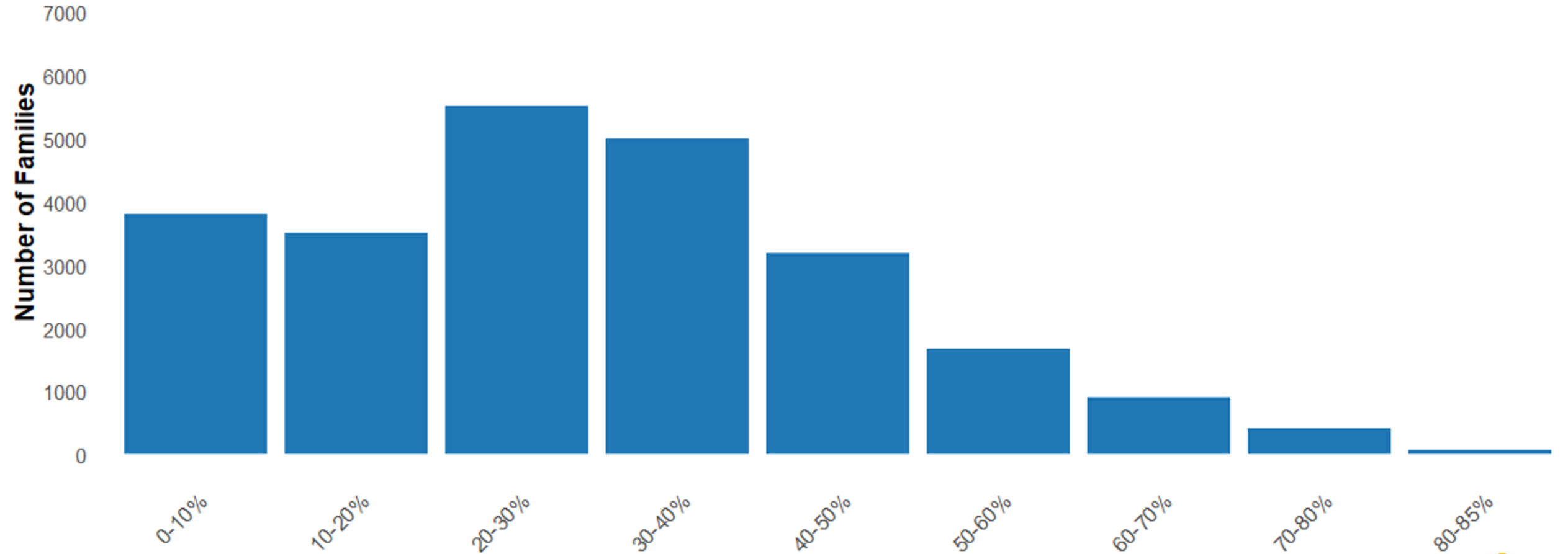
- **87%** of CAPS families are at or below **50%** of the State Median Income (SMI)
- **13%** of CAPS families are between **50% and 85%** of the State Median Income (SMI)



**As of 7/31/26, excludes children in foster care*



SMI Distribution of CAPS Families



**As of 7/31/26*

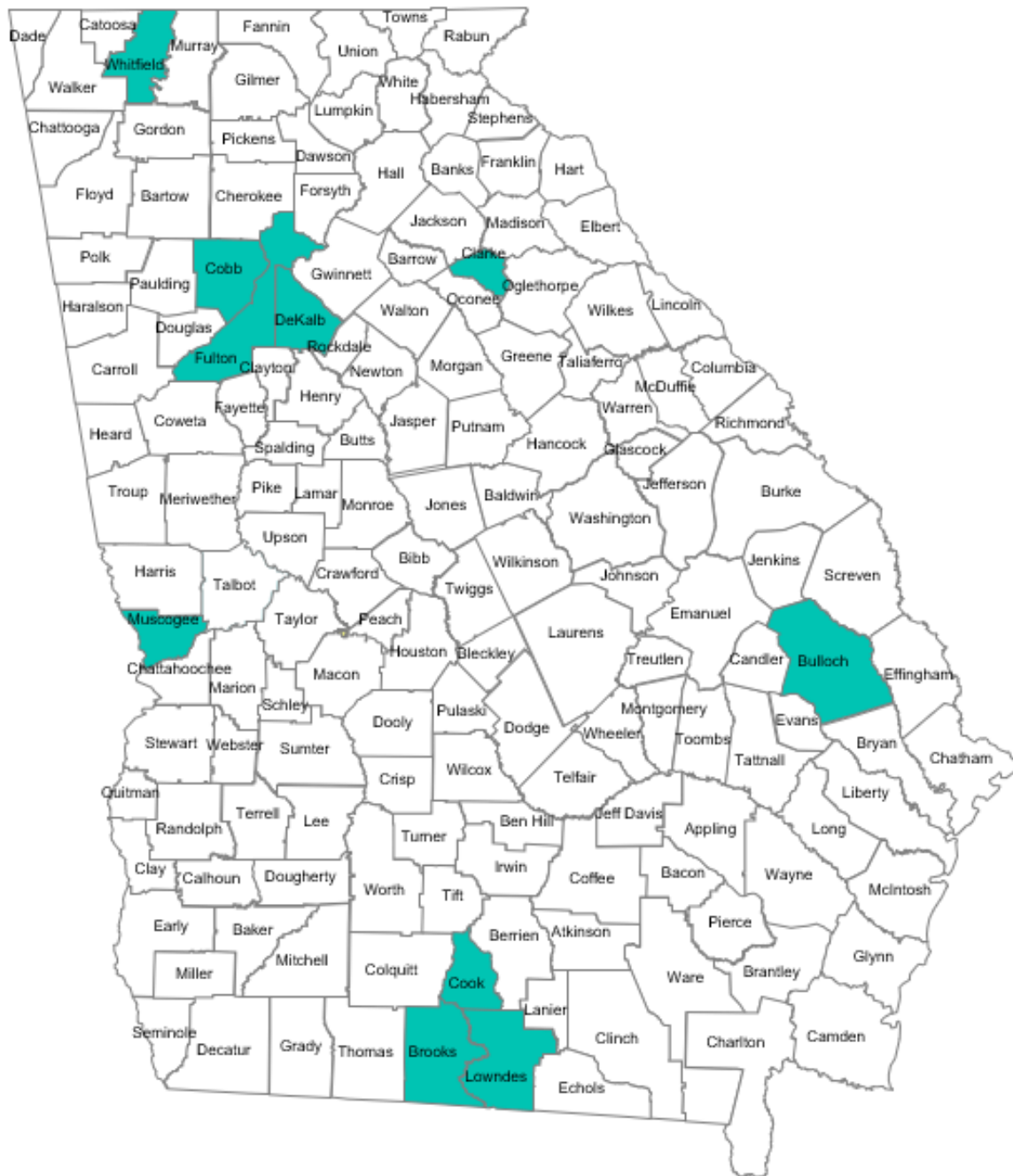


Quality Innovations and Partnerships Updates

Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships



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Community Impact Grants



DECAL Leadership Grantee Site Visits

- Visited 11 of 15 Community Impact Grantees
- Met with grantees, families, educators, and community partners
- Observed innovative local solutions that strengthen children and families through a 2Gen approach



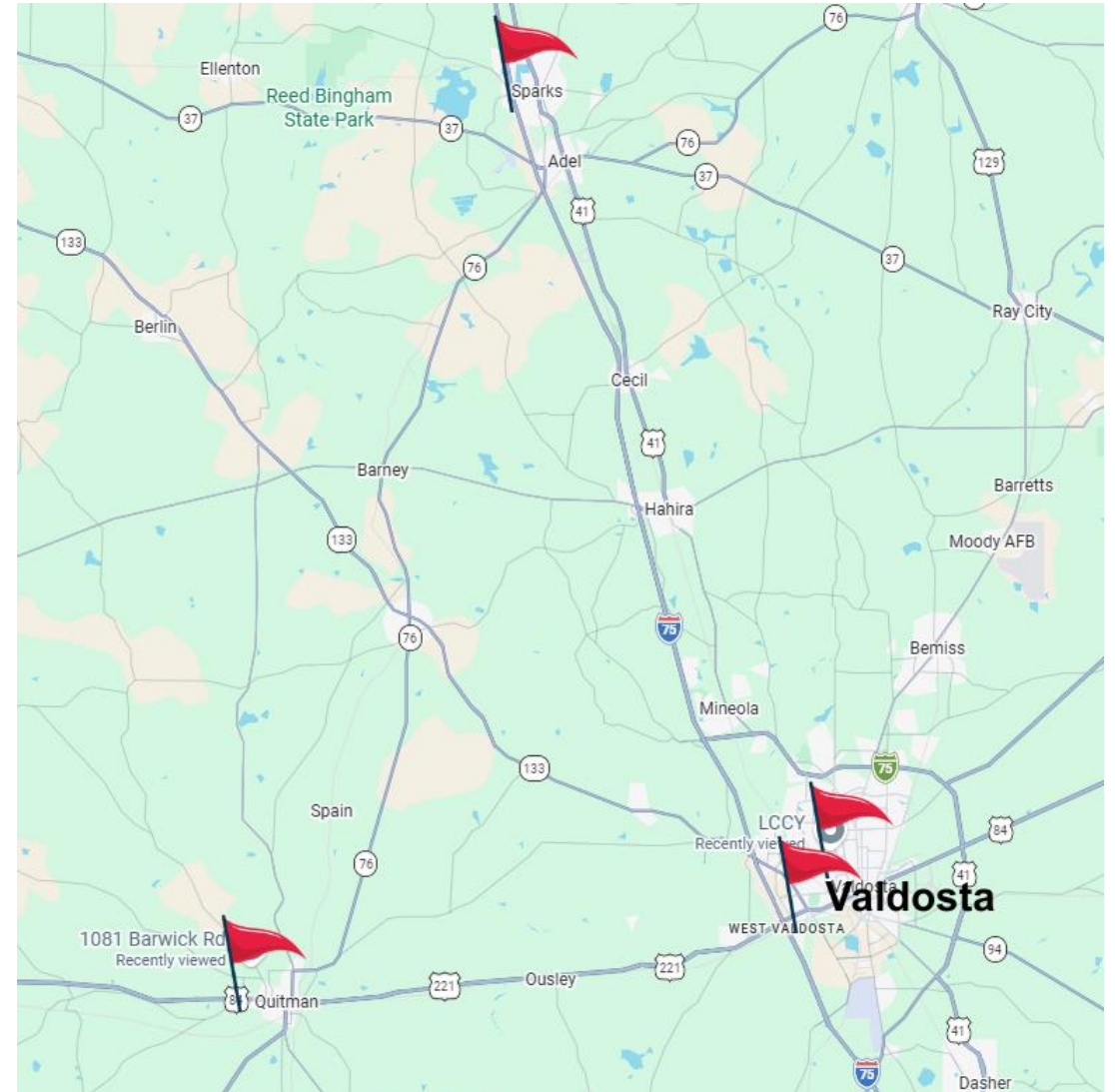


Upcoming Site Visits – Fall 2026

Grantees:

- Brooks County Family Connection
- Coastal Plain Area EOA
- Cook County Family Connection
- Lowndes/Valdosta Commission for Children and Youth

Please contact Jill Taylor,
Jill.Taylor@dec.al.ga.gov, Director of
Community Partnerships and 2Gen
Outreach, if you are interested in joining
the South Georgia grantee site visits.



EXPAND Grants Evaluation

Expanding Parents' Access to Nontraditional Delivery (EXPAND)

Ran from October 2023 through June 2025



Seven Licensed Child Care Provider Grantees

Funds supported them extending their operating hours through hiring additional staff, making necessary health and safety improvements, and more



Six Collaborative Grantees

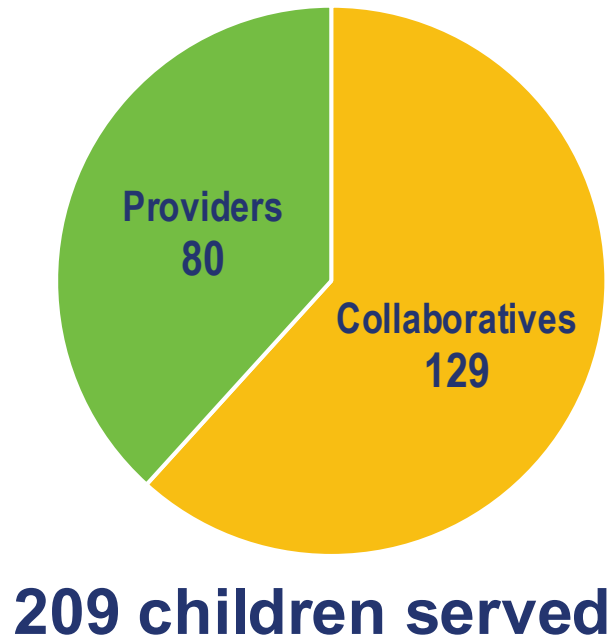
Funds supported government entities and nonprofit organizations convening community partners and providers to address the need for nontraditional hour child care in their local communities

Evaluated by UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government



EXPAND Evaluation: Who was served?

Based on 132 families who completed family intake forms:



56%

Of children served were between 1 and 4 years old

56%

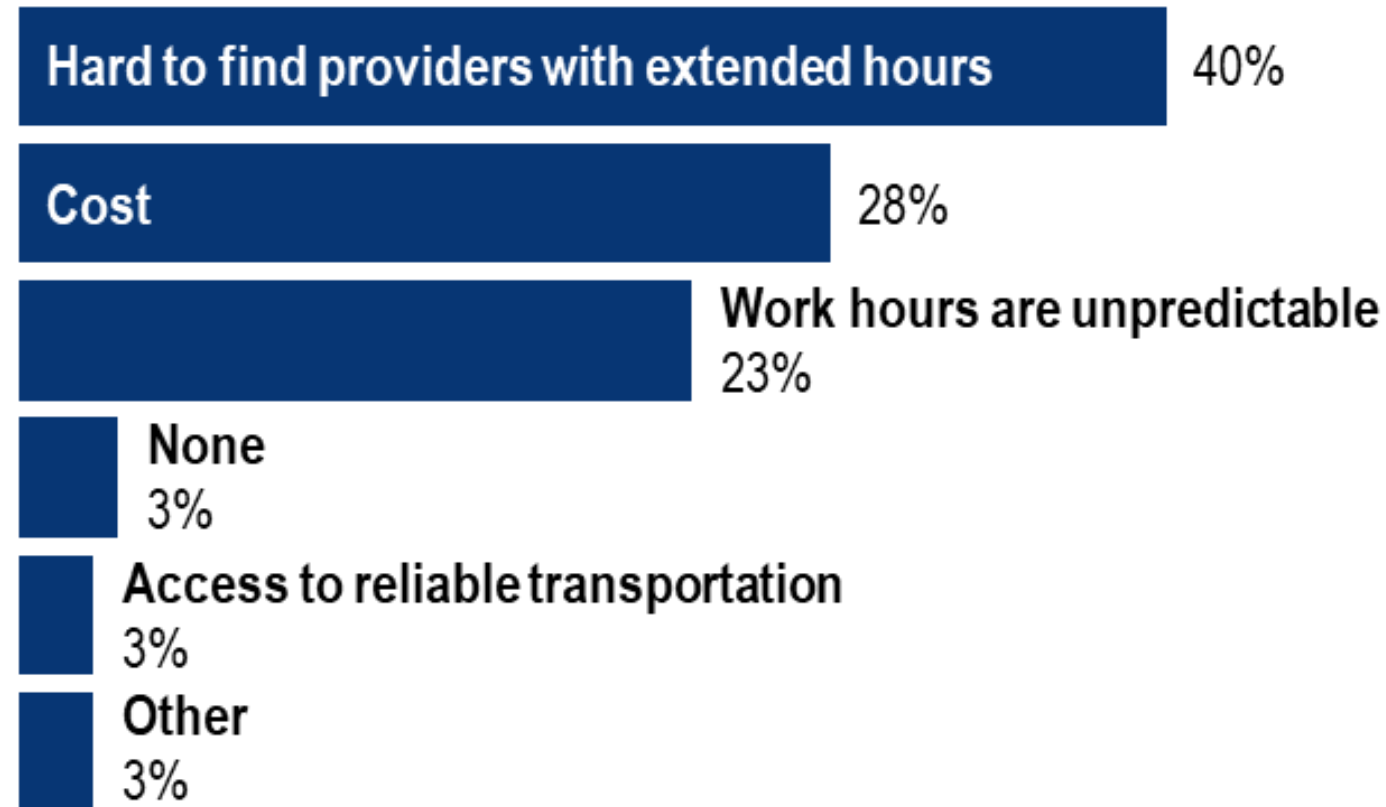
Of families had only one adult supporting the family financially

73%

Of single-earner families earned less than \$2,499 monthly



EXPAND Evaluation: Barriers to NTH Care



From 132 families who completed family intake forms.



EXPAND Evaluation: Family Impact

In a survey of 69 families who used EXPAND care:

- 83% of caregivers say non-traditional hour child care gives them **peace of mind** knowing their child is well cared for.
- 66% of caregivers said that having access to non-traditional child care **reduces the stress they feel about parenting**.
- 73% said they can be **more focused at work or school** because they are not worried about child care.

“We have one provider who told us the story of a mom who was working two jobs and had five kids. Before this service was available, all five kids were staying home with the 11- or 12-year-old sibling.”

- Collaborative Grantee

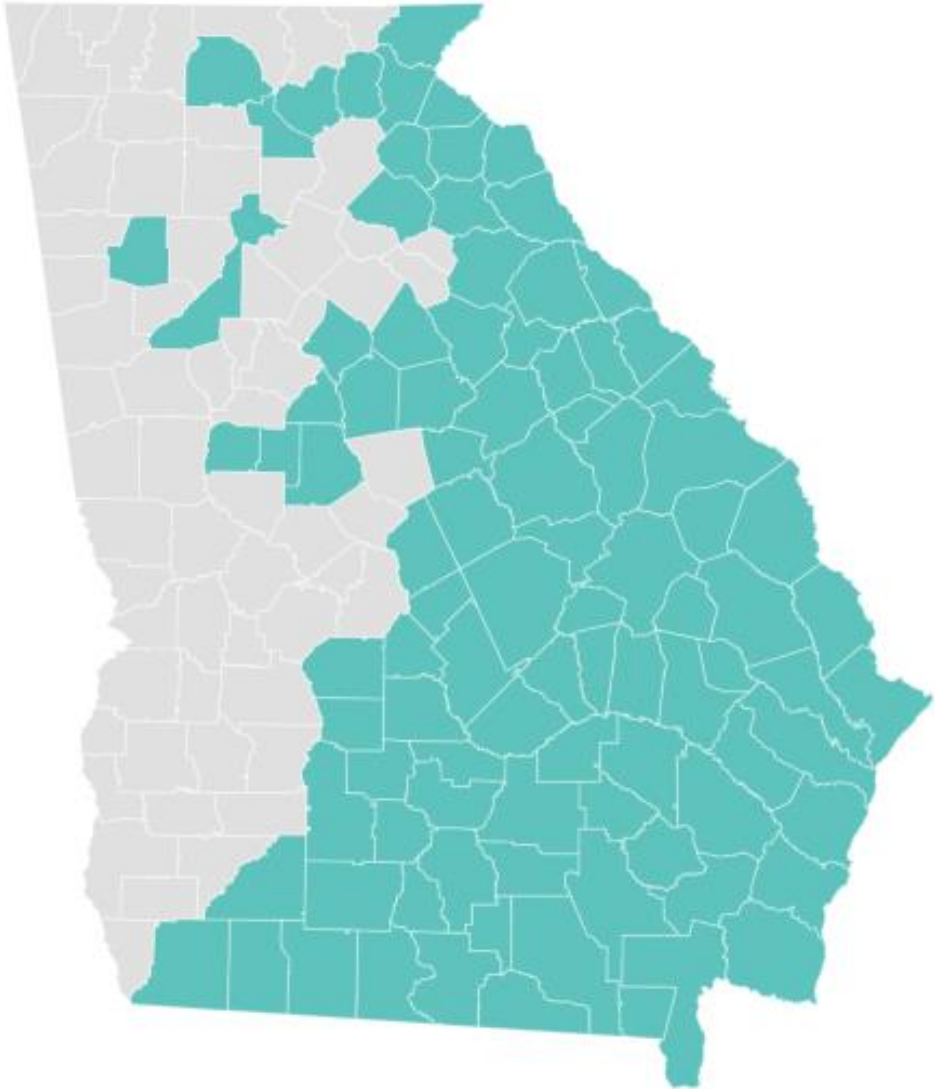


EXPAND Evaluation: Key Takeaways

- All thirteen grantees successfully offered nontraditional-hour child care, primarily during evening and early morning hours
- Increased availability of NTH care did not consistently translate into high enrollment, particularly in the short term.
- Demand for EXPAND-supported care was concentrated among lower-income families, many employed in the service sector
- Staffing challenges, regulatory complexity, and the brief grant duration constrained scalability and sustainability
- Families who accessed care reported reduced stress, improved job stability, and high levels of trust in licensed providers



Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Funds



- DECAL was awarded **\$19,866,040** in CCDF American Relief Act Supplemental Disaster Relief Funds
- Funds will be used to support **facility recovery, workforce stabilization, and supply expansion** in the **95 counties** impacted by Hurricane Helene



Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Funds

Facility Recovery

current focus, applications opening early 2027

- Funding for repairs, materials, and equipment to restore damaged child care infrastructure

Workforce Stabilization

design phase, implementation in SFY28

- May include:
 - Behavioral consultation, trauma supports, and training
 - Recruitment incentives and retention bonuses
 - Professional development and onboarding support

Supply Expansion

design phase, implementation in SFY28

- May include:
 - Relocation and startup grants for displaced providers
 - Expansion of capacity (especially infant/toddler care)
 - Support for non-traditional hours and rural/underserved areas

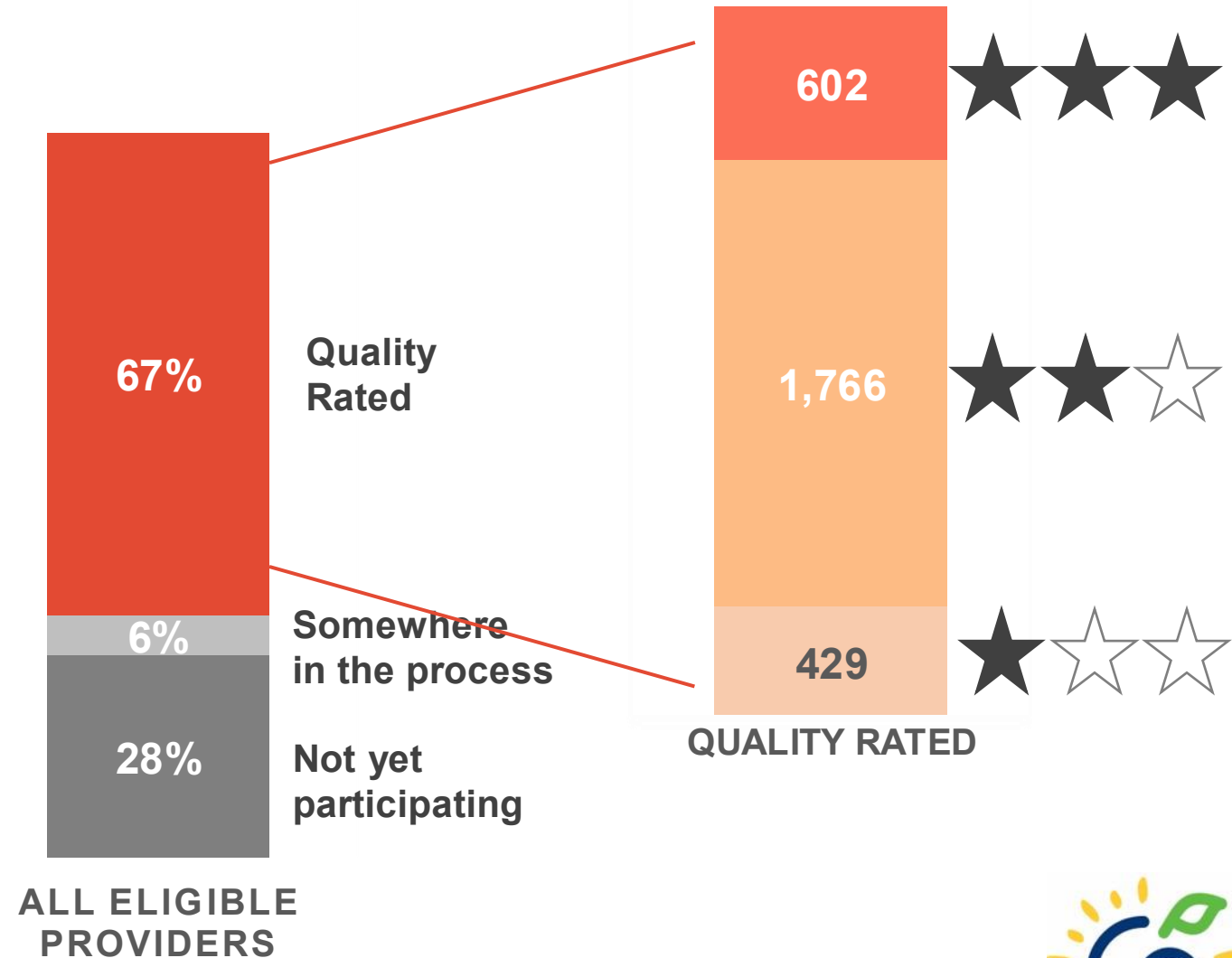


Quality Rated by the Numbers

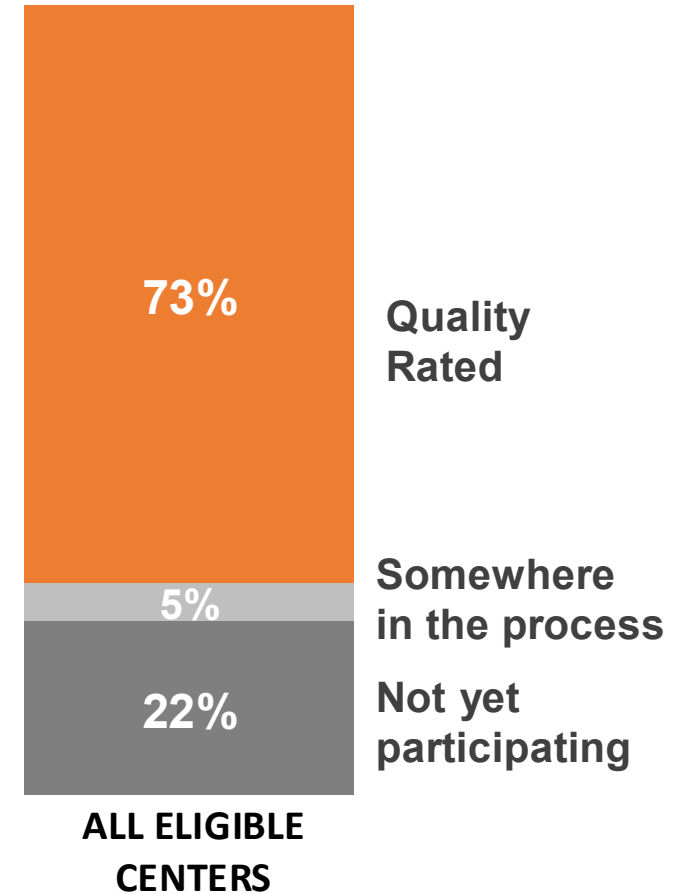
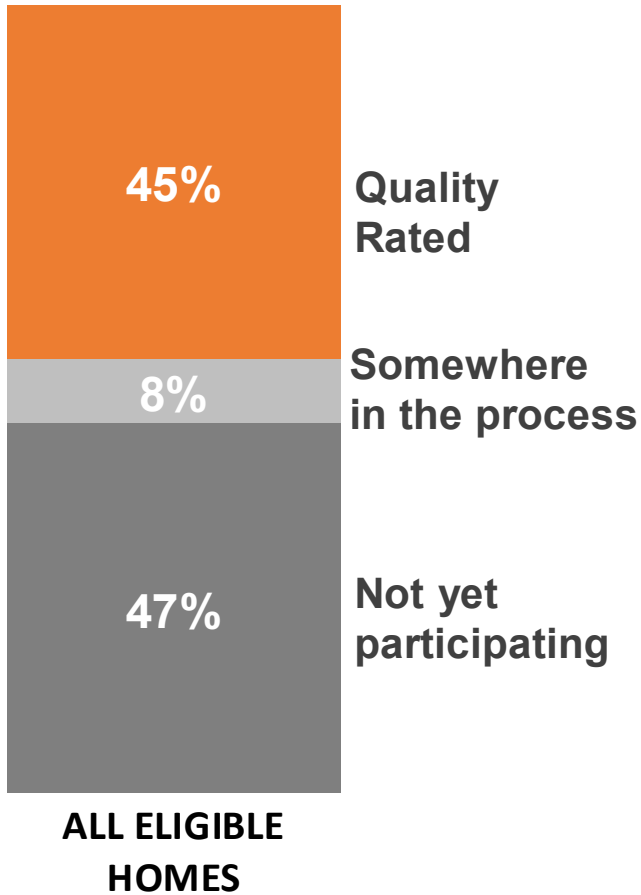


CALi Says:

All Quality Rated providers meet or exceed demanding care and education standards. Learn more at www.QualityRated.org.



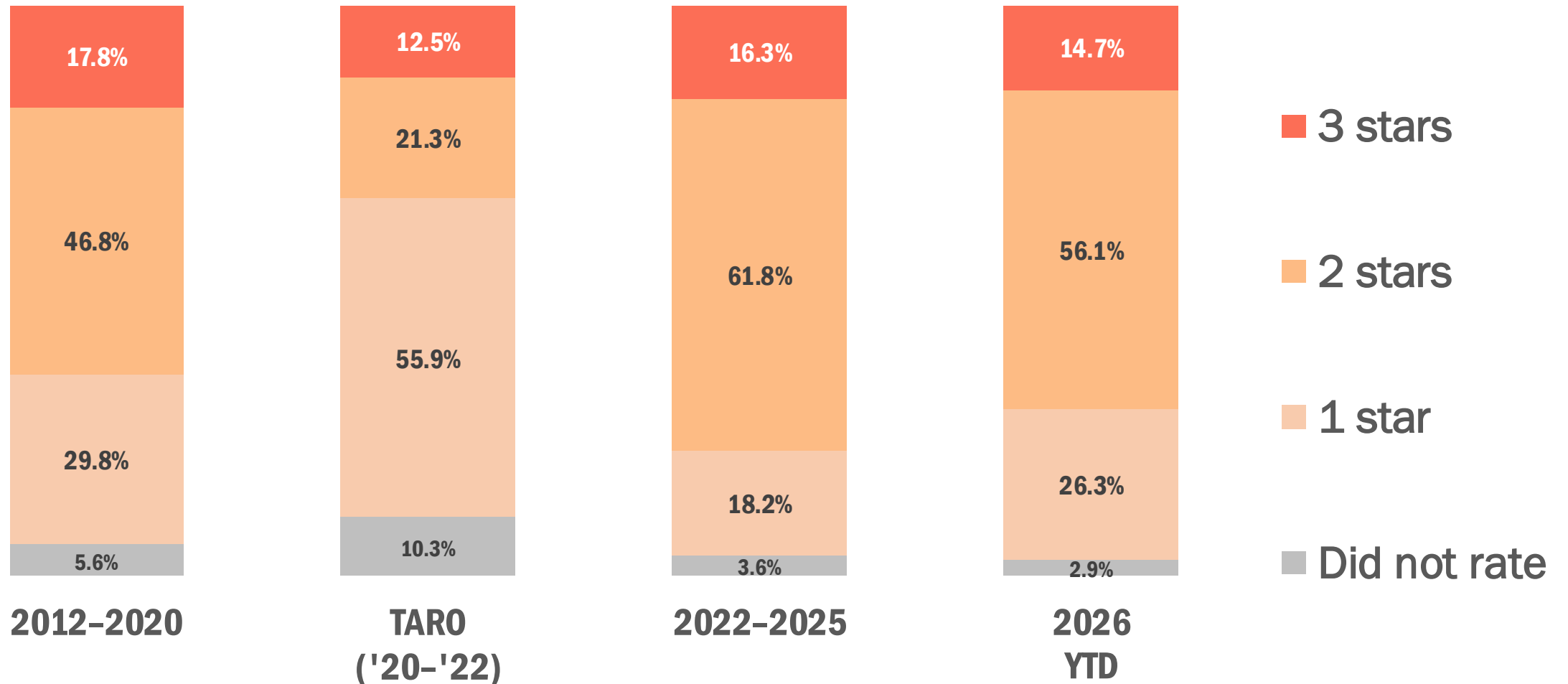
Quality Rated by Provider Type



** Centers include licensed and not licensed*

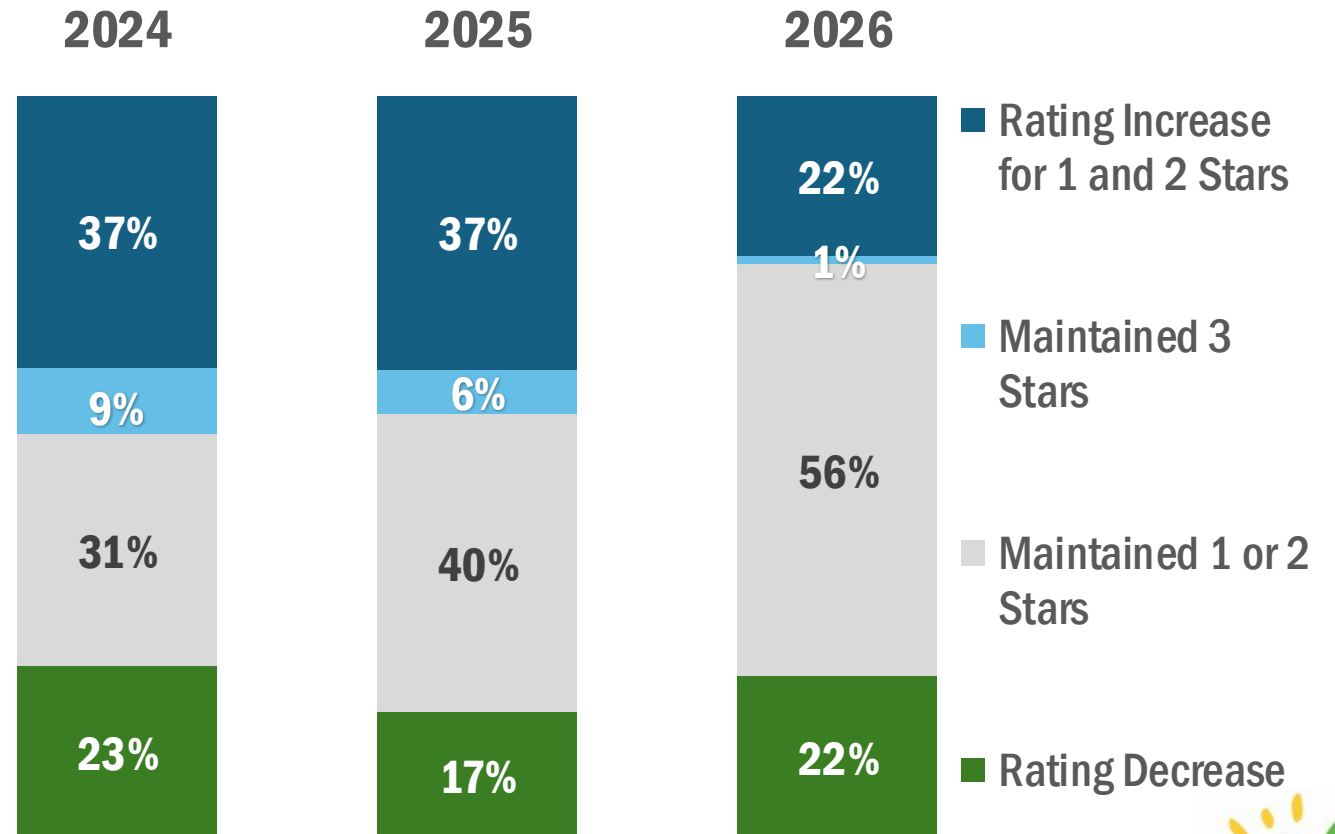


Distribution of Ratings Over Time



QR Reassessments, 2024–2026*

- The proportion of programs earning a higher rating declined from **37%** in 2024 to **22%** in 2026.
- Programs whose rating went down increased from **17%** in 2025 to **22%** in 2026.



*437 programs have received a reassessment YTD in 2026.



Commitment to Quality (C2Q)

Overview for 2026 Year-to-Date

TOTAL PAID

\$7.5M

**AVERAGE
PAYMENT**

\$1,947

**TOTAL
PROVIDERS**

2,034

Commitment to Quality (C2Q)

Overview for 2026 Year-to-Date

2-STAR
PROVIDERS

1,639

3-STAR
PROVIDERS

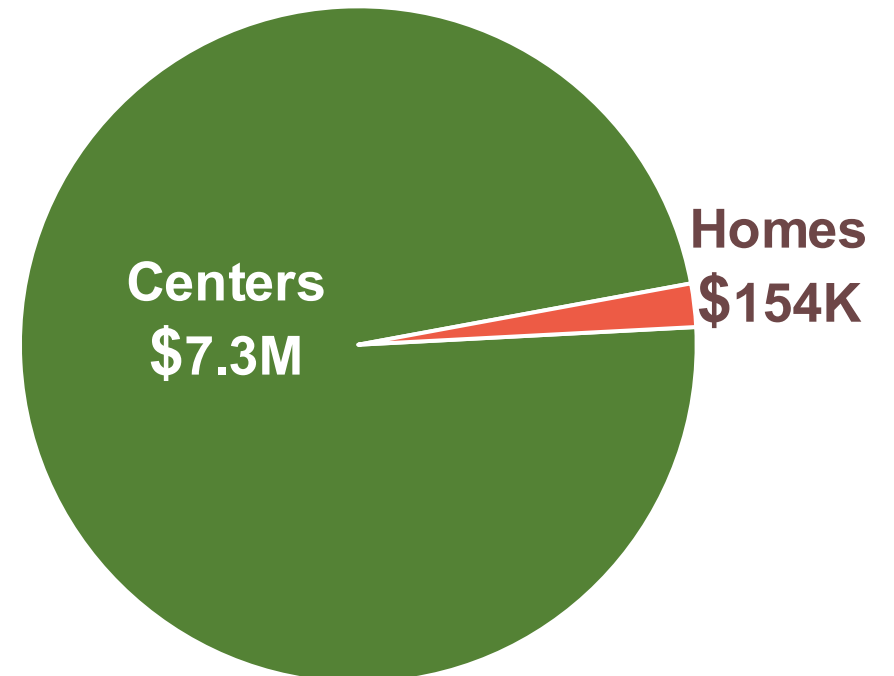
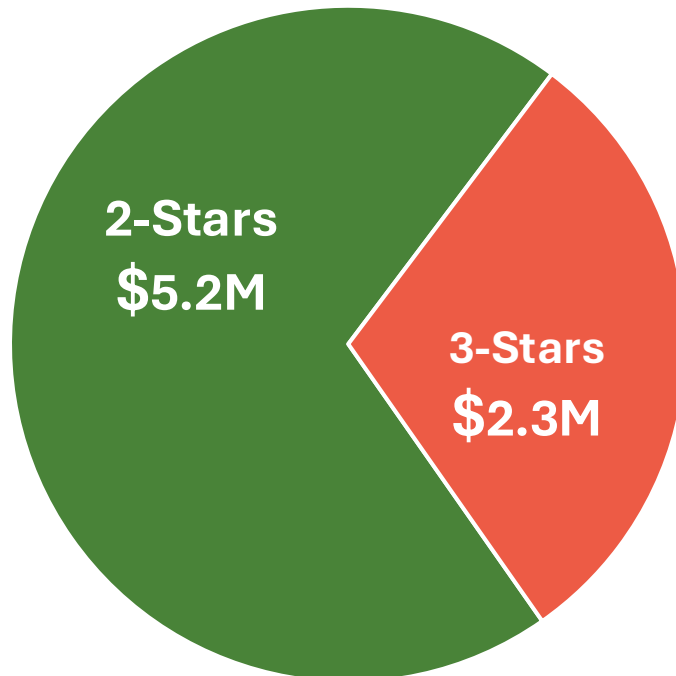
422

CENTERS

1,750

HOMES

284



Quality Rated Workforce Bonus

2026 QRWB Bonus Update (Jan – Jul 2026)*



14,470

Applications



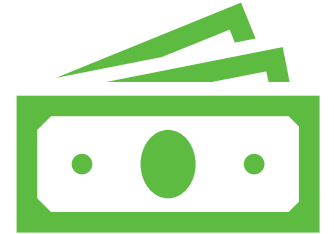
11,105

QRWB recipients



78%

of eligible providers
have had staff apply for
QRWB so far in 2026



\$5.5 million

distributed

**July applications are still being processed.*



QRWB Survey Overview

Purpose

- Evaluate the effectiveness and perceived impact of the QRWB program
- Understand recipients' experiences with the program and application process
- Identify opportunities to strengthen future implementation
- Gather feedback from Child Care Staff, CCLC Directors, and FCCLH Owners

Participation

- Child Care Staff: 8,723 respondents — 44% response rate
- CCLC Directors: 1,003 respondents — 45% response rate
- FCCLH Owners: 141 respondents — 46% response rate

Nearly 9,900 responses across the three surveys.



Who We Heard From

Child Care Staff

- Average 11.7 years in the field
- 77% were teachers or assistant teachers

CCLC Directors

- Average 19.9 years in the field
- 27% were also owners of their center

FCCLH Owners

- Average 21.5 years in the field
- 56% operated without additional staff

Respondents across all three groups brought substantial experience in early childhood education.



Initial Findings: Application Experience

	Child Care Staff	CCLC Directors	FCCLH Owners
Application was easy to complete	86%	87%	83%
Eligibility requirements were clear	89%	87%	77%

Percent who agreed or strongly agreed.

Most respondents found the application easy to complete and eligibility requirements clear, indicating an overall positive application experience.



Initial Findings: Workforce Impact

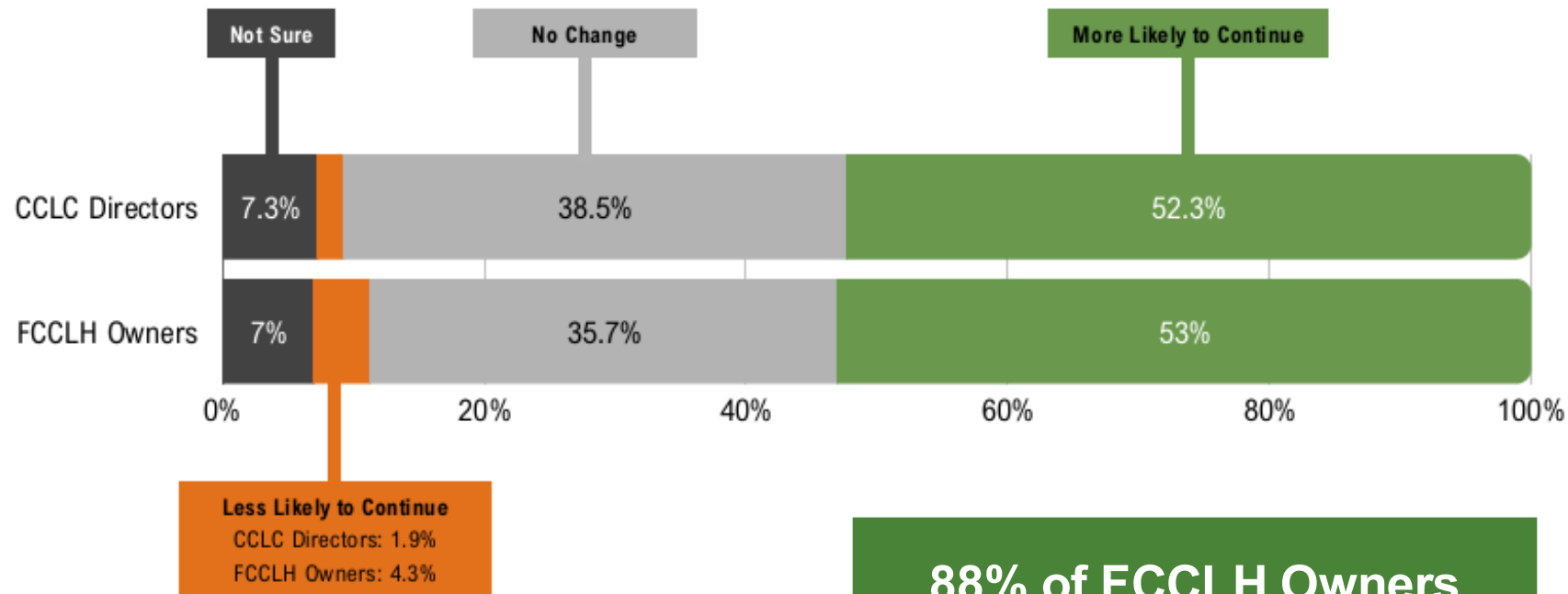
Initial findings suggest the QRWB positively affected job satisfaction and may support workforce retention.

- **75%** of staff reported a moderate or significant improvement in job satisfaction.
- **58%** of staff said the QRWB had a moderate or significant influence on their decision to stay in the job.
- **30%** of directors saw an improvement in retention.



Initial Findings: Provider Impact

Influence of the Bonus on Continuing Quality Rated



52% of CCLC Directors and 53% of FCCLH Owners reported that the QRWB made them more likely to continue participating in Quality Rated.

88% of FCCLH Owners described the QRWB as “very meaningful.”



Child Care Services Updates

Pam Stevens, Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services



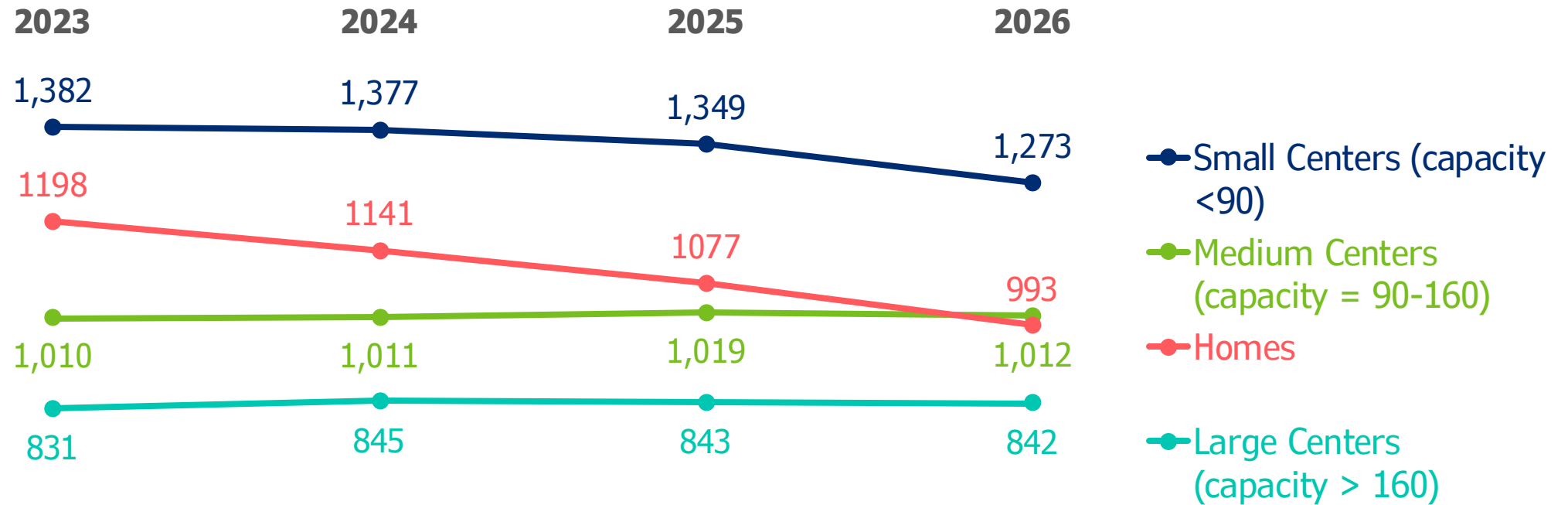
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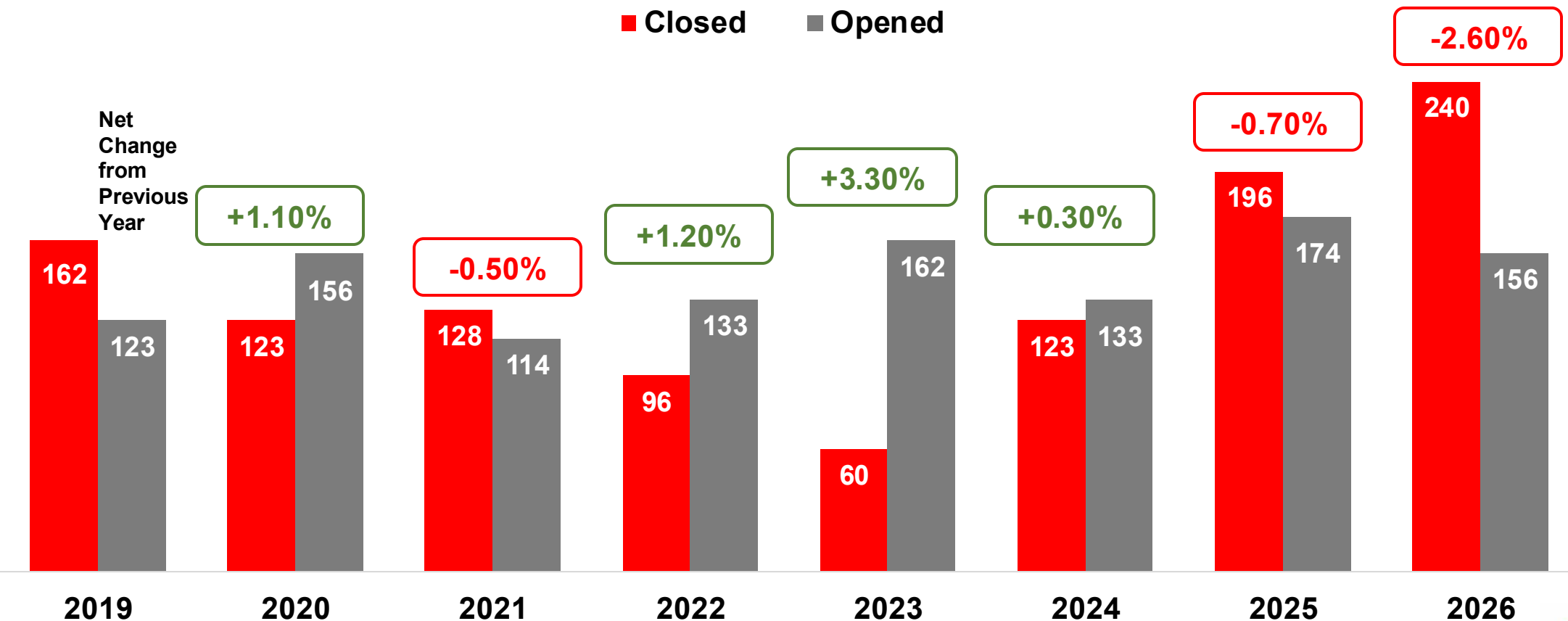
Provider Count Change, by Size (June 2023 to June 2026)



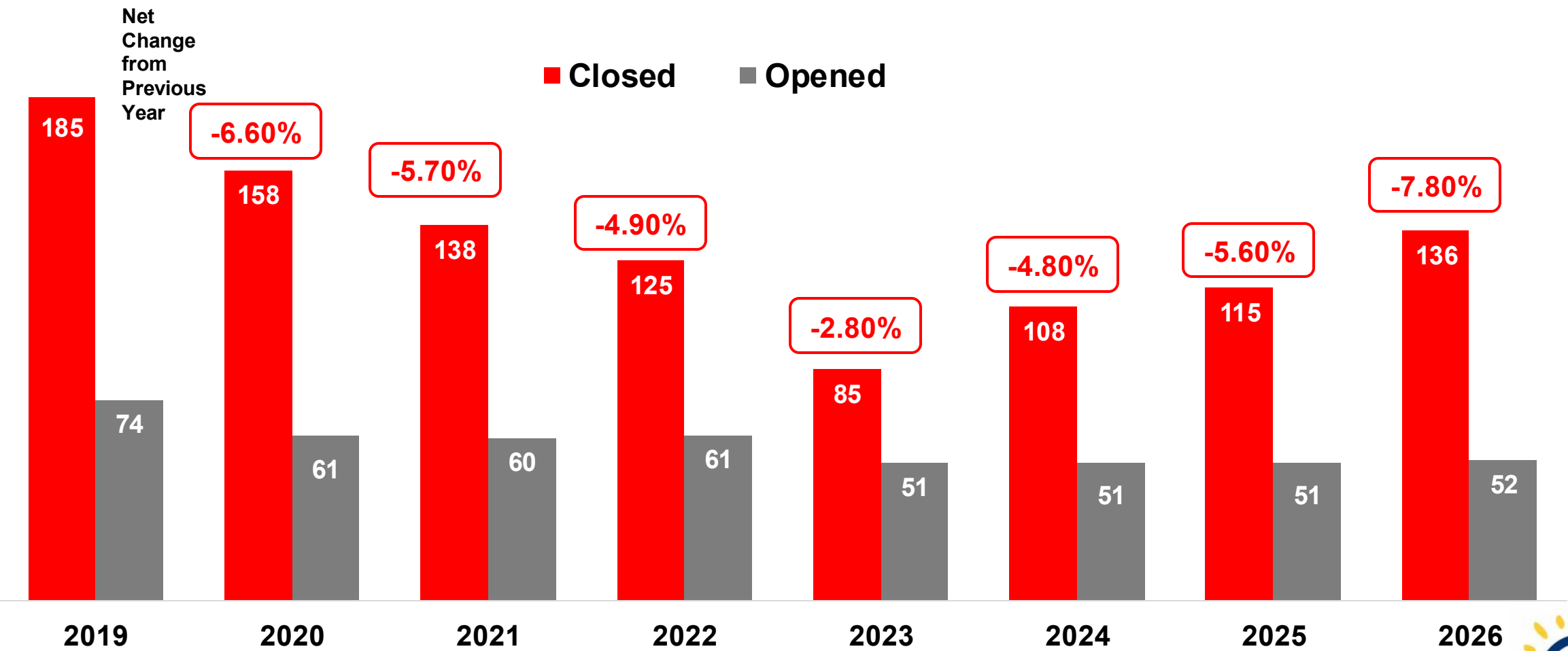
	<u>% Change</u> <u>June 2023 – June 2026</u>	<u>% Change</u> <u>June 2025 – June 2026</u>
Small Centers	-7.9%	-5.6%
Medium Centers	+0.2%	-0.7%
Large Centers	+1.3%	+0.1%
Homes	-17.1%	-7.8%



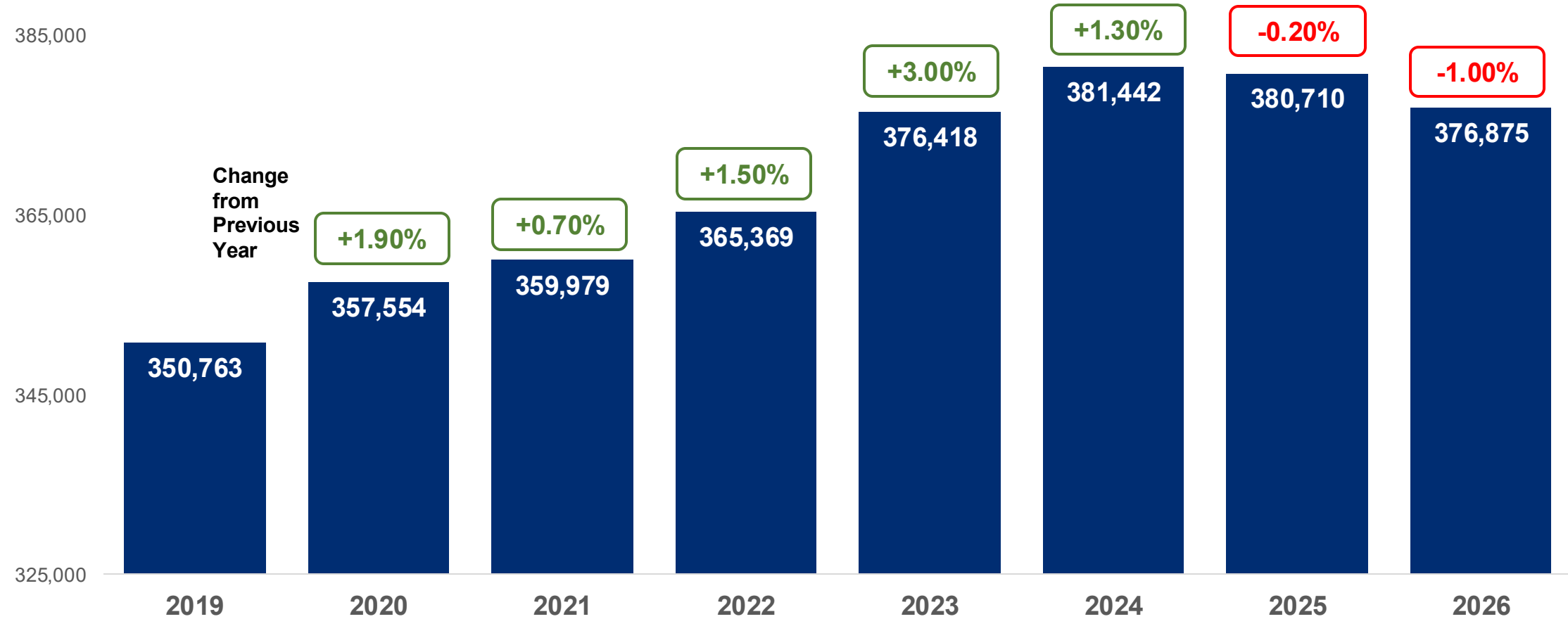
Centers Churn by Fiscal Year



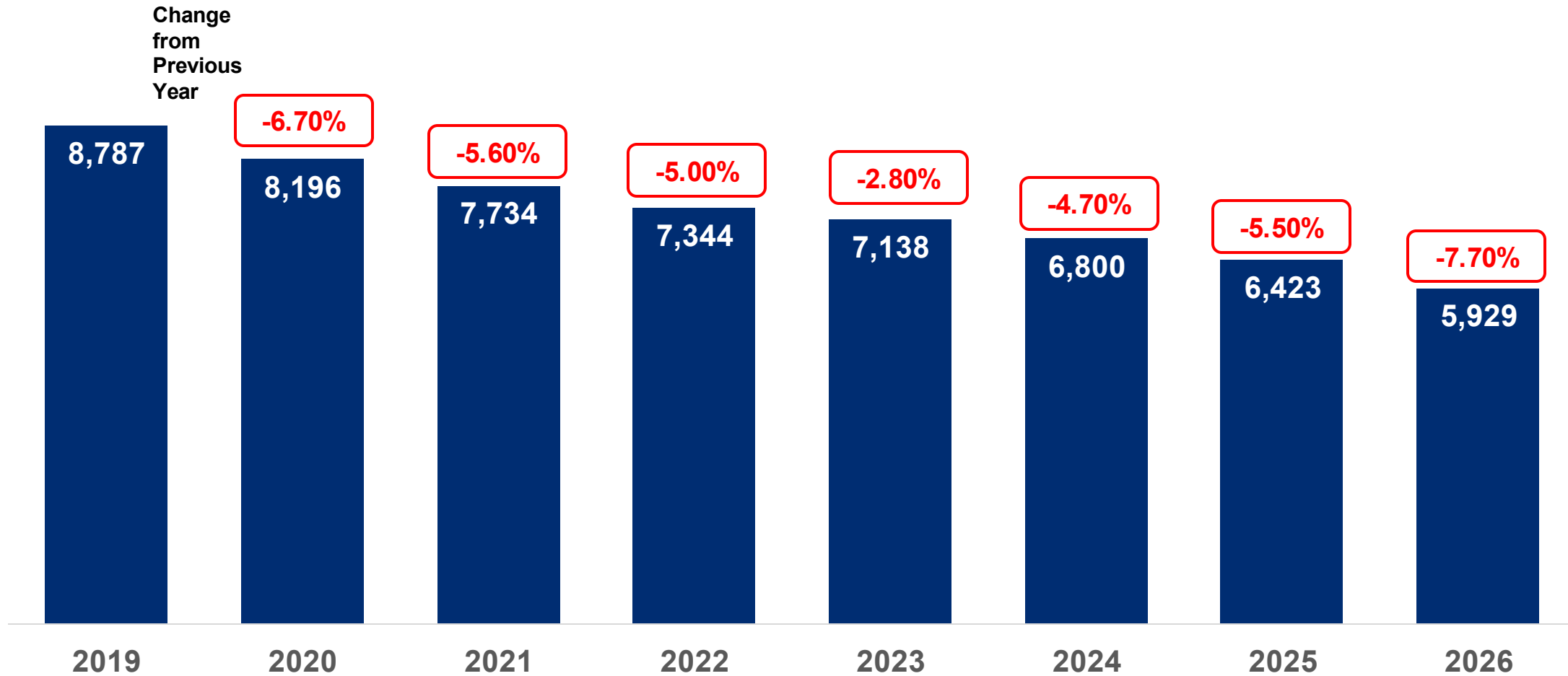
Homes Churn by Fiscal Year



Centers Capacity



Homes Capacity





Proposed October 1, 2026 Rule Amendments & Adoption



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Changes needed to:



Modify the definition of school age children



Better align with and meet compliance with CCDF requirements



Remove duplication and provide clarification



Clean up: code reference corrections, matching language, and rule alignment for Secretary of State



Create a new rule chapter for an Exemption category for Family Child Care Learning Homes



Child Care Learning Centers

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **591-1-1-.02 Definitions**

- **Correct O.C.G.A. code reference within the definition of “crime”**

(h) “Crime” means

4. A violation of O.C.G.A. § ~~16-21-1~~16-12-1, relating to contributing to the delinquency of a minor;

- **Change the definition of “school-age children”**

(kk) "School-age Children" means children who are at least ~~five (5)~~ four (4) years old by the first of September of the current school year and ~~who are eligible to attend public school.~~



Child Care Learning Centers

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies and Procedures**

- **Rule clarification for CCDF requirements**

(1) The policies and procedures shall include the following:

(p) A written plan for handling emergencies, including but not limited to severe weather, fire, and other emergency situations (i.e., loss of electrical power or water and death, serious injury or loss of a child, a threatening event, or natural disaster) which may occur at the Center.

- **591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools and Water Related Activities**

- **Rule clarification for water that is 2 feet deep**

(3) Supervision of Children in Water ~~Over~~ Two (2) Feet Deep and Over. For water-related activity (such as swimming, fishing, boating or wading) in water ~~over~~ two (2) feet deep and over, continuous supervision of children must be provided as follows:



Family Child Care Learning Homes

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **290-2-3-.03 Definitions**

- **Correct O.C.G.A. code reference within the definition of “crime”**

(f) “Crime” means:

4. A violation of O.C.G.A. § ~~16-21-1~~16-12-1, relating to contributing to the delinquency of a minor;



Family Child Care Learning Homes

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **290-2-3-.07 Staffing and Supervision**

- **Remove requirements for personal information in staff files**

(4) A Home must maintain a personnel file on the Provider, all Employees, Provisional Employees, Personnel, Staff, Students-in-Training, Volunteers, Clerical, Housekeeping, Maintenance and other Support Staff for the duration of the term of employment plus one (1) calendar year, and it shall contain the following: identifying information to include: name, date of birth, ~~social security number~~, current address and current telephone number;...

- **Rule separation and realignment**

(7) Health and Safety Orientation. The Provider, Employees and Provisional Employees with direct care responsibilities shall complete health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment. The state-approved training hours obtained will count toward required first year training hours. The training must address the following health and safety topics: ...

(i) precautions in transporting children; ~~recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and~~

(j) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and

~~(j)~~(k) child development to include all major domains: cognitive; social and emotional; physical development and motor skills; communication, language, and literacy; and approaches to play and learning.

- **Rule clarification for water that is 2 feet deep**

(20) If Children are allowed to participate in water activities where the water is ~~over~~ two feet in depth or over, the Provider or an Adult shall supervise such activities and must have successfully completed a training program in lifeguarding offered by a water-safety instructor certified by the American Red Cross or YMCA or other recognized standard setting agency for water safety instruction.

(a) For water-related activities where water is ~~over~~ two feet in depth or over, the following Staff: Child ratios shall be maintained:



Family Child Care Learning Homes

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **290-2-3-.08 Children's Records**

- **Remove duplicative rule and provide clarification for CCDF alignment and renumber**

(b) The policies and procedures shall also include written procedures for the following:

2. Handling ~~medical emergencies~~ ~~emergency medical care~~, including where the Children will be taken for emergency medical care;
3. Administering medication, ~~and~~ recording noticeable adverse reactions to medication, and notifying parents of these adverse reactions;
4. Notifying Parent(s) in writing of their Child's: illness, injury, and exposure to a notifiable communicable disease or any cases or suspected cases of viruses or illnesses (COVID-19, etc.) identified during a public health emergency, within twenty-four (24) hours after the Home becomes aware of the illness or the next working day;
- ~~5. Noticeable adverse reaction to medication(s);~~

- **290-2-3-.12 Equipment and Supplies**

- **Remove duplicative rule and renumber**

~~(3) Furniture and equipment shall be kept clean and in a safe usable condition.~~

- (43) All indoor and outdoor furniture, activity materials, and equipment shall be: used in a safe and appropriate manner by each Provider, Provisional Employee, Employee and child in attendance and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, recommendations, and intended use.
- (54) All indoor and outdoor furniture, activity materials, and equipment shall be free from hazardous conditions such as, but not limited to, sharp rough edges or toxic paint and kept clean and in a safe usable condition.



Family Child Care Learning Homes

Proposed Rule Adoption

- **290-2-3-.22 Exemptions**
 - **Creating a new rule chapter**

290-2-3-.22 Exemptions

1) All programs providing group care for children shall obtain either a License, Permit, or a Commission for an early care and education program or an exemption from the Department, as applicable. Any person or entity operating or planning to operate a program that meets the criteria for exemption from licensure, as listed below, shall complete an online self-assessment through the Department to determine eligibility.

(a) Requirements for Exemption Self-Assessments

1. The following exemption category shall complete an online self-assessment through the Department: Category MRF – Military Regulated Family Child Care Learning Home.
2. Programs that self-assess, do not affect the authority of local, regional, or state health department officials, the state fire marshal, local fire prevention officials, local or regional building officials or zoning officials to inspect and approve facilities and locations. Programs must operate in a residence, and the self-assessment is only valid at the address listed and for the services indicated.
3. A program that completes a self-assessment and deems itself exempt but has subsequent material changes in the operation of the program, such as, but not limited to, a change of physical location, a change in operating months, days, and/or hours, or a change in the ages served, shall complete a new self-assessment.

(b) Exemption Category. The following type of program shall be exempt from licensure:

1. Category MRF – Military Regulated Family Child Care Learning Home that meets all of the following:
 - (i) Program is regulated by a branch of the U.S. Military.
 - (ii) Program serves military families only, on or off base.
 - (iii) Program will not participate in the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program.



Support Centers

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **591-3-1-.03 Definitions**

- **Correct O.C.G.A. code reference within the definition of “crime”**

- (e) “Crime” means

- 4. A violation of O.C.G.A. § ~~16-21-1~~16-12-1, relating to contributing to the delinquency of a minor;

- **Update definitions of “Comprehensive Records Check Determination” and “Valid Evidence” to align with current Department definitions**

- (d) “Comprehensive Records Check Determination” means a satisfactory or unsatisfactory determination by the Department, based upon a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint based criminal record check, a search of appropriate sex offender registries, repositories, or data bases, compliance with relevant state and federal law, the National Crime Information Centers National Sex Offender Registry, and a search of the following registries, repositories or databases in the state where the actual or potential employee or director resides and in each state where such individual resided during the preceding five years: criminal registry or repository, ~~with the use of fingerprints being required in the state where the individual resides and option in other states;~~ state sex offender registry or repository; and state based child abuse and neglect registry and database.

- (q) “Valid Evidence” means ~~either paper or~~ electronic proof of a satisfactory Fingerprint Records Check Determination or a satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination as follows:.....



Support Centers

Proposed Rule Amendments

- **591-3-1-.04 Support Center Requirements and Registration Applications**
 - **Update language to align with current Rules and Regulations for CCLCs and FCCLHs – only allowing electronic evidence for records check information.**
 - (1) Support Center Requirements
 -
 - (i) Valid Evidence of a satisfactory Fingerprint Records Check Determination or a satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination must be maintained at the Support Center for each Eligible Employee for the duration of employment or residency plus one year, and such ~~paper or~~ electronic evidence must be made immediately available to the Department upon request





The following Committee meetings are in session:

Programs and Rules – Hickory Conference Room

Budget and Finance – Cypress Conference Room

Quality Innovations and Partnerships – Oak Conference Room

The Public Hearing Period will commence at 1:00 pm.



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Welcome to the Board of Early Care
and Learning

Public Hearing

August 27, 2026



Georgia Dept
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Committee Reports

Board Action



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Board Action On:

Rules and Regulations for Child Care Learning Centers

Rule Chapter 591-1-1-.02 Definitions

Rule Chapter 591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures

Rule Chapter 591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools and Water-related Activities



Board Action On:

Rules and Regulations for Family Child Care Learning Homes

Rule Chapter 290-2-3-.03 Definitions

Rule Chapter 290-2-3-.07 Staffing and Supervision

Rule Chapter 290-2-3-.08 Children's Records

Rule Chapter 290-2-3-.12 Equipment and Supplies

Rule Chapter 290-2-3-.22 Exemptions



Board Action On

Rules and Regulations for Support Centers

Rule Chapter 591-3-1-.03 Definitions

Rule Chapter 591-1-3-.04 Requirements and Registration Applications



FY 2028 Budget Requests

	Current FY 2027 Budget	Proposed AFY 2027 Budget	Proposed FY2028 Budget
By Programs			
Child Care Services	\$457,800,119	\$457,800,119	\$457,800,119
Nutrition	\$170,000,000	\$170,000,000	\$170,000,000
Pre-K + (HS)	\$594,164,145	\$594,164,145	\$610,180,577
Quality Initiatives	\$57,243,738	\$57,243,738	\$57,243,738
Totals	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,295,224,434
By Funding Sources			
State General	\$77,508,972	\$77,508,972	\$77,508,972
State Lottery	\$593,989,145	\$593,989,145	\$610,005,577
Federal	\$607,659,885	\$607,659,885	\$607,659,885
Other	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Totals	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,279,208,002	\$1,295,224,434



Board Action On: Revised Bylaws



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Board Meeting Dates 2026

-
- ~~February 19, 2026~~
 - ~~May 21, 2026~~
 - ~~August 27, 2026~~
 - November 19, 2026

