



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

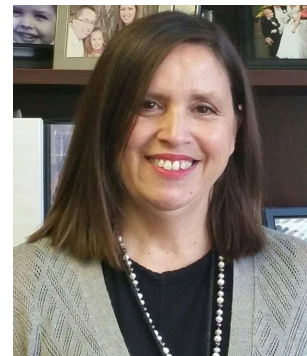


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## **Child Care Services Spring 2020 Newsletter**

Dear Child Care Providers,

During a time like this, it's difficult to know where to begin. First of all, please know that all of us at DECAL understand you've had some very hard decisions to make lately. Whether you decided to close your program or whether you are struggling to keep your program open, we support you. I have spoken with many of you and have heard stories about programs that are closed due to illness, programs that have closed due to low numbers, and programs that are trying to keep their doors open while maintaining very small class sizes. We understand that your livelihood as well as the work you've dedicated your life to are at stake. None of us knows when or how this ends, but we want you to know



that if there's anything we can do that will help during this time, we hope that you will let us know.

We have dedicated this issue of our newsletter to information and resources about COVID-19. We hope you find this helpful, and if you have any concerns, please reach out to your child care consultant or directly to me.

[Pam.stevens@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:Pam.stevens@dec.al.ga.gov).

Stay well,

*Pam Stevens*

Pam Stevens  
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services

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According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov), COVID-19 outbreaks in young children are uncommon and severe symptoms are even more rare in children. Even so, in order to prevent the spread of illness, you should continue to monitor the children in your care for signs of illness, including fever, cough, difficulty breathing, body aches, fatigue, sore throat, headache, and diarrhea. In addition, please encourage good health practices such as appropriate handwashing; covering coughs or sneezing with a tissue or into the elbow; and disinfecting surfaces. Below is a fun video that children are sure to enjoy!



## Suggestions for Programs

Below are “best practices” that can help programs during this public health emergency remain open and continue to serve children and families:

- Limit group sizes to a maximum of 10 people per room. This is based on a recommendation from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). While programs should always maintain the Staff:Child Ratios and Supervision Rules (CCLC 591-1-1-.32), it is recommended that group size be limited to 10 people per room, so additional spacing between people can be implemented.
- Cease transporting children. CCLC Rule 591-1-1-.36 (Transportation) and FCCLH Rule 293-2-3-.11 (Health, Safety, Discipline) provide transportation regulation, but due to the close confinement that results from transporting children DECAL is recommending that providers cease transportation for at least 30 days.
- Serve meals in classrooms instead of congregate/communal settings. Based on the recommendations for group settings, meals should be provided in classrooms rather than a cafeteria/communal setting.
- Health Screenings upon arrival (temperature check). Providers should have the necessary equipment to provide temperature checks for children and staff on arrival.
- Consider allowing staff from vulnerable populations the option to take extended leave. Providers should follow the guidelines provided by the CDC and DPH in determining staff who may represent characteristics of vulnerable populations.

[Click for Additional Information](#)



## Latest News on COVID-19

The Georgia Department of Public Health is providing updates online. Their updates are posted at noon and 7 PM every day. Click the picture to the left for more information.

## Feeling Stressed?

[Georgia Public Broadcasting](#) has tips on how parents and children can de-stress.

[Click Here](#)



## Call 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Se Habla Español

Connects Families to Supportive Programs and Resources in your Community

### The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline Includes:

- Courts/ Criminal Justice/ Public Safety
- Education/ Employment
- Family and Community Resources
- Food/ Clothing/ Shelter
- Healthcare
- Abuse/ Domestic Violence

### The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline is For:

- Professionals that work with families
- Parents, Foster Parents,
- Grandparents, Kin, and/or Friends
- Crime Victims or Survivors of Abuse
- Faith Communities

### New Online Resource Map

The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline contains over 3,000 resources that can also be found on PCA Georgia Online Resource Map.

Go to: [www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org](http://www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org)



Toddler Time at Home



Click the button above for great at-home toddler activities to use during the week.

Click the button above for Georgia's PreK resources to use with children at home.

# How to Talk to Children and Teens About the Coronavirus

## **Talking to Toddlers and Young Children**

Even though toddlers and young children may not know what is going on, they may pick up a parent's worry and anxiety with their "sixth sense." Preschoolers may be more tuned in to what is happening. They may have questions about germs, doctors, and even death.

### **Limit Exposure to Stressors**

- Stick to the facts and don't burden them with your own anxiety but allow children to express their concerns or ask questions.
- Eliminate or limit exposure to media depending on the age of the child.
- Don't be surprised if they are more irritable and touchy. Be extra patient. Some children may act out scary feelings through misbehavior. Others may become more withdrawn. Pay attention to these cues and ask them to tell you about their feelings.

### **Keep Healthy Routines**

- Make efforts to maintain your children's normal routines and rituals when possible. If school, daycare or events are canceled, try to create and stick to other routines when you can. Explain that this is part of the precautions grown-ups are taking to prevent people from getting sick.
- Remind them that they can stay healthy by washing hands and make hand-washing fun with songs.
- Take frequent breaks and encourage play whenever possible.

## **Talking to Pre-teens and Teens**

Children in these age groups will likely be very aware of what is going on. They have seen news coverage on television and online and are discussing the virus with teachers or friends. Talk to your children and answer any questions they may have. This will help you determine how much they know and may help you correct any misinformation they might have heard. They might have fears about what this will mean for their own health, schooling, schedule or safety.

### **Empower your Teen**

- Help guide your teen's worry into things they can do – like learning more about how to prevent the spread of the virus including washing hands, healthy eating and getting enough sleep.

### **Adjust your Communication Style to Accommodate your Teen and Listen**

- Some teens may want to block out the whole thing. It may appear that they do not care. This might be masking real worries. Ask questions and be ready

to listen.

- Others may make jokes. Humor can be a way to help them cope, but discourage them from using humor as the only way to talk about the virus.
- Stick to the facts in your conversations and talk to your teens about what they see on TV or read online. Point them towards reliable sources of information like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention or Department of Public Health websites.

## Activities to do with Children to Reduce Stress

### Sensory Bags

Sensory bags provide hours of mess-free sensory play (especially provided that you seal the edges of the bag with duct tape). You can fill them with different textures and colors. The possibilities are endless!



Sensory bags can even be used with infants and toddlers (with adult supervision). Sensory bags are great for tummy time. For younger children, you may want to tape the sensory bag to a table which will allow your child to still explore through touch but be less tempted to bite the bag or put it in their mouth.

Sensory play impacts many areas of development including:

- Language skills – a child will expand and develop their vocabulary and grammar as they describe the senses they are experiencing.
- Sensory input – providing sensory input to meet a child's needs.
- Fine motor skills – through manipulating small objects, a child's fine motor skills are improved.
- Social skills – by communicating what they are experiencing and sharing sensory play with others, a child will naturally improve their social skills.



The instructions for creating a sensory bag are simple. Fill a good quality resealable bag with one or more fillers. Some suggestions for fillers are listed below. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal the entire bag with duct tape on all sides.

Filler suggestions for sensory bags are water beads, hair gel, erasers, beads, buttons, plastic letters, shaving cream, pompoms, googly eyes, paint, playdough, glitter, rice, leaves, flowers, seashells, foam shapes or foam stickers, aloe vera gel, popcorn seeds, salt, dried noodles, etc.

# Making Dream Boards for School Age Children

To begin constructing a dream or vision board, school age children will need to:

- 1) Collect some old magazines & newspaper clippings
- 2) Find some photos that are special to them
- 3) Find some quotes or sayings that inspire

These images and words can literally be anything! From words that inspire them, to a sport they want to try, to their favorite foods. Finally, pick up a poster board at your local craft or dollar store and get started!



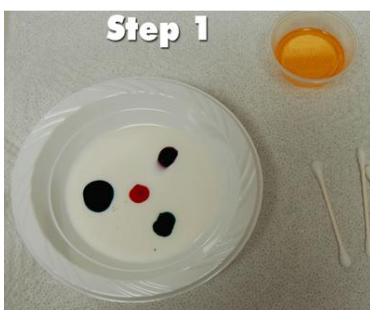
## Colorful Milk Art Experiment

### Materials Needed:

- A bowl
- 1/2 cup of milk
- Dish soap
- Cotton swab
- Food Coloring, more than one color

### Instructions:

1. Pour the milk into the bowl. Be careful not to move the bowl, you want the milk as still as possible.
2. Put one drop of each color in different places in the milk.
3. Put just a tiny amount of soap on the end of the cotton swab, then touch it to one of the colors. WOW!
4. Let the experimenting begin!
5. To clean up, just pour the milk down the drain. (Do not drink it)



### How It Works:

Milk has fat in it and the food coloring floats on top of the fat. The fat is all connected with bonds. Think of it like the little pieces of fat all holding hands with each other. Dish soaps are used on greasy or oily dishes because it breaks the bonds in fats allowing them to separate. When you add the dish soap to the milk, the fat separates and moves making your magical milk art!



## Patchwork Body Collage

Children lie on the floor and get traced on a large piece of paper. Then glue scraps of fabric, construction paper or tissue paper to create their likeness and clothes on their body outline.

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# Interested?

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



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