



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

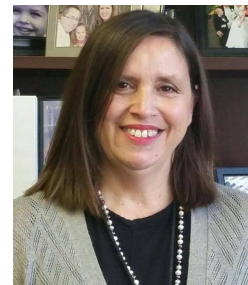


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## **Child Care Services Summer 2020 Newsletter**

Dear Child Care Providers,

None of us could have predicted what 2020 would bring. This is a challenging time for the child care industry and for families. We want to do everything we can to support you, and we stand with you to ensure health, safety, and justice for Georgia's children.



Child Care Services is learning new ways to interact with providers, and we welcome your feedback as we move forward. We miss seeing you in person and hope to be back to visit your program soon (we may be looking forward to this more than you are 😊).

Please remember to keep your program's open/closed status updated in DECAL KOALA. As many businesses are reopening and people are going back to work, it is more important than ever for families to be able to access open child care facilities. DECAL also relies on the open/closed data in DECAL KOALA to make important decisions around monitoring, funding opportunities, and supports to programs. Use these easy steps to update your program's operating status:

1. Update your open/closed status in DECAL KOALA at [www.decalkoala.com](http://www.decalkoala.com).
2. From the Green Menu Bar, click Facility Update.
3. Click Operating Details.
4. Enter your program's COVID-19 info, in the Blue area.

Take care of yourself, your staff, and the families you serve, and please let us know how we can help. We have resources for you at <http://www.dec.ga.gov/BFTS/Covid19.aspx> and remember, your CCS consultant is only a phone call or an email away.

All the best,



Pam Stevens  
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services

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## Healthy Coping Strategies for Children

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased everyone's stress levels, including kids and teens. Now, more than ever, we need to practice healthy strategies for managing feelings and coping with stress.

Coping is not something we are born knowing how to do; it's something we learn how to do with practice. It's never too early or too late to start developing healthy coping skills, and teaching your kids healthy coping strategies will help them become more resilient (better able to handle life's ups and downs).



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[Learn Coping Skills](#)

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## How to Use Children's Books to Talk to Children About Race and Racism

Article by PBS Kids

Storytime opens up new worlds for our children. They can learn new words, meet new people, and discover new ideas — all while cuddling with you at home. Dr. Aisha White, Director of the P.R.I.D.E Program at University of Pittsburgh says that makes picture books a safe place to start when talking to children about race and racism.

For babies and toddlers, parents can simply focus on buying books that show children and adults of many and races in everyday life. As children begin talking, parents can use storytime as an opportunity to ask questions and find out what children might already think about race.

The goal is for children to learn that “it’s okay for me to point [race] out because mom or dad is pointing it out. And it’s okay for me to ask questions because mom or dad is asking questions,” says Dr. White. This gives us a way to ease into conversations, without telling or preaching, and helps us prepare for more discussions in the future.

Research suggests that “if a parent just reads the book and doesn’t have a conversation — doesn’t start to talk about racial disparities and racial discrimination and racism in America — then it won’t really affect a child’s attitudes toward race,” says Dr. White. “It comes back to parents having a background knowledge before speaking with their children, and being brave enough to have the tough conversations.”

[Click to Read Entire Article](#)

# Why Children Bite

Biting is typical behavior for children up to about three years of age. The first step to eliminate biting is to discover why that child bites.

Click the button below to find out different reasons why children bite and ways to stop children from biting.



[Learn More](#)

## Stress Relieving Activities for Young Children

Stress is often thought of as a grown-up condition, but children can also experience stress. Stress in children can result from school, homework, friends, family disruptions, changes in routines, and many other situations.

Stress can be observed as an obvious physical reaction such as crying or a headache, or it can be an emotional or behavioral reaction such as worrying or shyness. Reactions to stress can vary with the child's age and stage of development.

If early childhood practitioners can identify stress in young children, they can intervene with stress-relief strategies before little pressures turn into big problems. There are several strategies children can be taught to help them cope with stress.



**Exercise** - This is one of the best stress relief activities for children (and adults too!). Children can participate in an organized sport or just spend time outside playing with friends. Regular exercise can help children feel less stressed, and if children experience a



### Writing in a Journal -

Journaling offers a place for older children to release their feelings about a stressful situation. A journal can be as simple as a plain notebook decorated by the child. Encourage children to write about their thoughts and feelings. Younger children can draw pictures. A



particularly stressful day, a few hours of active play can reduce their stress.



**Music** - Some children are able to reduce stress and boost feelings by listening, exercising, or dancing to music. Practitioners can work with children to experiment with different types and styles of music to help encourage relaxation.

journal may help children figure out how to handle a particular stressful situation.



**Sensory Activities** - These can have a calming effect on children when they experience stress. Play dough is a popular childhood material that provides a wonderful sensory experience. When children feel stress, give them play dough to squeeze, pound, and manipulate. Finger painting and playing with water or sand are other sensory activities that can be used to reduce stress.

[Click for More Activities](#)

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## Do It Yourself "I Spy" Bottles



These Do It Yourself (DIY) I Spy bottles are a fun and creative sensory activity for children of all ages. Simply fill an empty bottle 3/4 full with rice or small beans and a variety of small objects (beads, pom-poms, small figurines, toy insects, etc.). Lastly glue the top on tightly.

Children will enjoy finding all the hidden treasures inside!

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# Interested?

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