



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

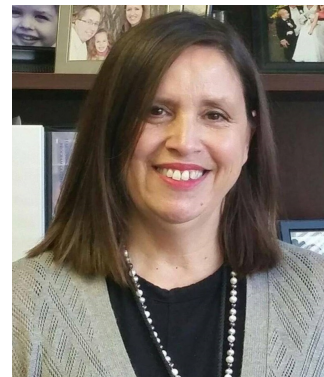


## Child Care Services Spring 2023 Newsletter

Dear Child Care Providers,

Happy spring! I hope you're enjoying this wonderful season with the children and families you serve.

I want to make sure that you know about and are able to benefit from the new Health and Safety Grants that were released at the end of March and will eventually be open to all licensed programs. The purpose of these grants is to support programs in licensing compliance. Health and safety upgrades to programs often involve big ticket items, and these grants are designed to fund things like fencing, playground resurfacing, vehicle alarms, cribs, etc. The grants will be released through ClassWallet in two rounds. Funds for Family Child Care Learning Homes and Child Care Learning Centers with a licensed capacity of up to 100, were released in March. Funds for Child Care



Learning Centers with a licensed capacity of over 100 will be released in the fall.

We're so excited to see the results of how you use these grants, and we encourage you to start planning now and to start your projects as soon as the funds are made available to you. There are still delays with goods and services, and we want you to be able take full advantage of this opportunity.

For more information, see below or go to [Child Care Services Health & Safety Grants \(ga.gov\)](https://www.ga.gov/childcare/grants). If you have specific questions about the grants, please email us at [CCSHealthSafetyGrants@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:CCSHealthSafetyGrants@dec.al.ga.gov).

Take care,

*Pam Stevens*

Pam Stevens  
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services



**Child Care**  
**SERVICES**

[Contact Us](#)

## Child Care Services Health & Safety Grants

The Child Care Services (CCS) Health & Safety Grants are grants given to licensed child care programs to purchase equipment and materials that will support compliance with health and safety rules and regulations. Funding for these grants has been allocated for \$80 million and made available through the American Rescue Plan Act.

All open, operating, and licensed Child Care Learning Centers (CCLCs) and Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLHs) who are currently serving children are eligible to receive these grants. Grant awards are being issued based on the program's licensed capacity, ranging from \$5,000 - \$40,000.

The Health & Safety Grants will be rolled out in two phases:

- March 20, 2023 – September 30, 2023 – grants will be awarded to FCCLHs & CCLCs with a licensed capacity up to 100. All money must be spent by September 30, 2023.
- October 2, 2023 – March 31, 2024 – grants will be awarded to CCLCs with a licensed capacity of 101+ and school age programs operating in public school buildings. All money must be spent by March 31, 2024.
- Due to additional discussions and planning that may need to occur between programs utilizing public school space and those entities on how funding can best be utilized and spent, all school age programs housed in public school buildings (regardless of licensed capacity) are being deferred to the second phase.

All items that are purchased with the Health & Safety Grants must be equipment and materials that will support compliance with health and safety rules and regulations. A list of allowable/disallowable purchases can be found on the Department of Early Care and Learning's website [here](#).

Click to Read  
More

Frequently Asked  
Questions



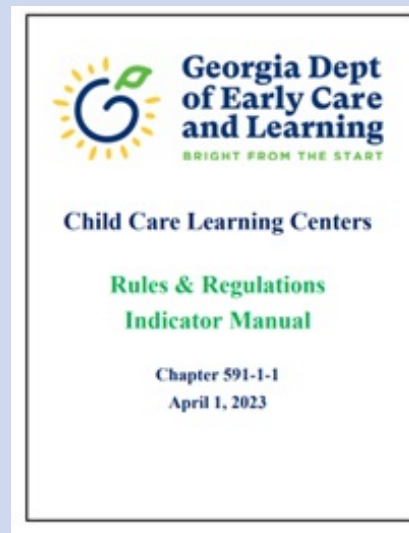
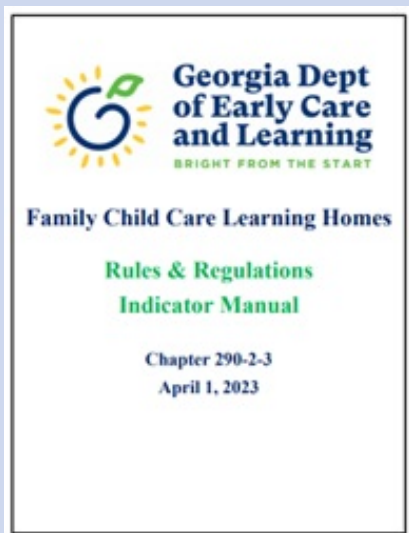
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## Recent Changes to Indicator Manuals

The Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH) and Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) Rules & Regulations Indicator Manuals continue to be updated every quarter to stay current with ever changing clarification and best practice. To ensure that you have the most up-to-



date version(s), please click on the appropriate manual below.



## Explore the Updated GELDS Website

The new Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) website merges the Planning Educational Activities for Children (PEACH) online lesson planning, activities and media resources with the GELDS standards and resources website to streamline lesson planning for child care programs. At this website, child care providers can view the standards, create custom lesson plans, design their own template, upload activities and media, create or customize activities and more.



Visit our Updated Website

## What is Technical Assistance within Child Care Services?

The goal of Child Care Services' Technical Assistance (TA) Unit is to provide support to licensed child care programs and to improve the quality of care being provided to the children they serve. Assisting both Child Care Learning Centers and Family Child Care Learning Homes, the TA Unit works with programs in any compliance category (i.e., Deficient, Support or Good Standing), prioritizing programs that are in Deficient and Support statuses, in an effort to provide foundational support and a collaborative and coordinated approach to facilitating change.

Technical Assistance is a voluntary service and mutual partnership that offers a variety of resources and referrals, as well as coaching/modeling/mentoring to staff, customized trainings, action plans for developing goals, and steps to target identified areas needing assistance or improvement.

Check Out Our NEW  
Website!!



Clean Water for Georgia Kids™

There is no safe level of lead in drinking water.  
Register for the **Clean Water for Georgia Kids Program** now!!



#### About the Program

*The Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning are helping schools and child care programs protect children from childhood lead exposure with a free program. Identify and eliminate lead at every drinking and cooking tap where children learn and play.*

#### Next Steps:

1. **Register and attend a brief training webinar** at <https://bit.ly/3jSMxg6>.
2. **Enroll** at [www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/Georgia](http://www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/Georgia).
3. **Once your test kit arrives, collect and ship** your water samples per instructions.
4. **Get your results and**, if needed, follow-up support and recommendations to get the lead out!

LEARN MORE >

Visit [www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/georgia](http://www.cleanwaterforUSkids.org/georgia)  
or call 1-855-997-3183

## Are You Looking for FREE Virtual Trainings?

The Technical Assistance Unit within Child Care Services offers FREE trainings via [ZOOM](#) meetings. All participants must register for the



trainings through the [Georgia Professional Development System \(GaPDS\)](#). Once registered, a link will be sent to your email to join the training via webinar.

**ALL trainings will be held from 12:30 - 1:30 PM.**

TRAINING NAME	DATE
2022-2023 Child Care Learning Center Core Rules Virtual Refresher	Thursday, April 13, 2023
2022-2023 Active Supervision	Thursday, April 27, 2023
2022-2023 Transportation & Field Trip Safety	Tuesday, May 2, 2023
2022-2023 Food Allergies & Modified Diets	Tuesday, May 9, 2023
2022-2023 Playgrounds – That’s a Rule	Thursday, June 1, 2023
2022-2023 Handwashing During Critical Times	Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Questions? Please email [ccs.ta@decal.ga.gov](mailto:ccs.ta@decal.ga.gov) or call (770)344-5891.

Register Now!

Learn  
More!

## Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Resources by Head Start/Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center

Head Start/Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) has created a resource collection that focuses on understanding and using highly individualized teaching strategies to meet the unique learning needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities. Share these with staff who are supporting inclusion for infants and toddlers with disabilities and suspected delays across early learning programs and environments.



## Brain-Building Through Play: Activities for Infants, Toddlers and Children

Article By Center of the Developing Child: Harvard University

From infancy on, play is an important part of a child's life. For babies and toddlers, simple, playful interactions with adults help develop sturdy brain architecture, the foundations of lifelong health, and the building blocks of resilience. Through games and playful activities, children can practice and strengthen important executive function skills that will help them throughout their lives, including learning to focus their attention, strengthening their working memory, and developing basic self-control.



Click to Read Full Article

## Preparing Children to Play Outside During Allergy Season

Children in child care are required to participate in outdoor play each day. The following four tips will help child care program staff prepare children to play outside during allergy season:

1. Know the symptoms of spring allergies. These may include an itchy nose and eyes, a tickly throat, sneezing, puffy eyes, a runny or stuffy nose, and skin rashes. For some children, allergies may trigger asthma.
2. Check daily pollen reports. Check your local weather station or visit the [National Allergy Bureau](#) website for local pollen and mold counts. Besides following daily pollen counts, it's good to know when children may be exposed to the highest levels of pollen during the day when going outside. Encourage outdoor playtime when pollen counts are low and there is less risk of exposure to potential allergens. Remind child care program staff that daily schedules may be altered to ensure that children are playing outside at the best possible time of day according to the daily pollen reports. In the spring and summer during grass pollen season, pollen counts peak in the evening. During ragweed pollen season in the late summer and early fall, pollen levels are highest in the morning.
3. Check the weather forecast. Dry, hot, and windy days can be

particularly problematic for children with pollen allergies, as this is when pollen counts tend to be highest. Birds, insects, and wind can all carry pollen from plant to plant. While pollen helps fertilize plants, it can trigger a flare-up of allergies. In general, child care program staff should schedule outdoor activities for later in the afternoon or after a heavy rain, when pollen counts drop. But as noted above, if children have a grass pollen allergy, earlier in the day might be better.

4. Ask parents to ensure children shower/bathe in the evening. After being exposed to pollens during the day, children should take a shower or bath to wash off the pollens before bedtime. Remove clothes and wash them too. While in child care, staff should ensure that children are thoroughly washing their hands when returning inside from outdoor play as required by rule.

## Consumer Product Safety Commission Children's Products Recalls



Sign up today to receive up-to-date email notifications whenever children's products are recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

**[Click Here to Enroll](#)**

# Interested?

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



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