



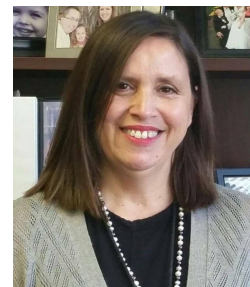
**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START



Child Care Services Fall 2021 Newsletter

Dear Child Care Providers,

I was just reading over my last newsletter message, and at that time it looked like we were making a lot of progress in terms of COVID-19. The Executive Orders had been lifted, and we were getting closer to normal operations. This was of course before we knew about the Delta variant. In my message, I mentioned that groups could now be combined, and children from different classrooms could now have meals together and share playground time. Because there is no Executive Order in place, these practices are still allowed, but I want to strongly encourage you to go back to cohorting and keeping groups of children separate as much as possible. I know that isn't easy to do (especially with staffing shortages) and it feels like a step backward. We also strongly encourage you to get vaccinated. The more people we have vaccinated, the closer we are to



putting this all behind us.

Thank you once again for being there from day one to serve families and children during a pandemic. Thank you for facing the challenges and risks everyday to ensure the health and well-being of your families and your staff. I hope my next quarterly message is about returning to the new normal.

Take care,

Pam Stevens

Pam Stevens
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services

[Contact Us](#)

The Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Guidance for Georgia Child Care Programs



The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has worked closely with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to provide you with the most up to date health and safety information to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in child care facilities. Click the button below to read more.

[Click Here to View](#)

Indicator Manuals Recently Updated

Periodically, the Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH) and Child Care Learning Center (CCLC) Indicator Manuals will be revised or updated. To ensure that you have the most up-to-date version(s), please click on the appropriate button located on the right.

[FCCLH Indicator Manual](#)

[CCLC Indicator Manual](#)

[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](#)

Small Steps for Big Vision: An Eye Health Information Tool Kit for Parents and Caregivers

Information Compiled by the [National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health](#)

The National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness partnered with the National Head Start Association to create this online resource to provide families and caregivers with the information, suggested actions, and assistance they need to be empowered partners in their children's vision and eye health, and to care for their own vision and eye health.



[Click Here to View Informational Tool Kit](#)

FREE Upcoming Virtual Core Rules Refresher Trainings

The following trainings are FREE and will be conducted using [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.

Family Child Care Learning Home Core Rules Refresher Trainings 12:30 – 1:30 PM

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Thursday, December 9, 2021

Register Now!

Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water Grant Program



The Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is pleased to announce that the [Clean Water for Georgia Kids](#) program will soon be ready to help schools and child care programs test and provide recommendations to take action on lead in drinking and cooking water.

What is the WIIN Grant?

The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act or “WIIN Act” of 2016 authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a voluntary grant program to assist local and tribal educational agencies and child care programs in testing for lead in drinking water at schools and child care programs. This is a federally grant-funded program to provide resources to train and test lead in drinking and cooking water at schools and provides recommendations for taking action to reduce lead in drinking water. The Program is a partnership between The Georgia Department of Education and RTI International with funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Why is this important?

Any amount of lead exposure is known to cause irreversible and lifelong cognitive and behavioral deficits in children. Young children are the most vulnerable population to the effects of lead.

When is Enrollment?

Enrollment for child care programs is coming soon. Stay tuned for more information.

Below is a video that will help with enrollment once it becomes available for child care programs.



Eliminate childhood exposure to lead
in drinking and cooking water.



Relaxation Techniques for Child Care Providers

Information written by the Center for Inclusive Child Care

Stress is an aspect of every profession, including the field of early care and education. Child care providers working with young children experience many rewards, but their jobs are also physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. The field requires patience, creativity, leadership skills, and an endless supply of compassion and energy, as well as the ability to nurture, motivate, teach, and influence young children.

Stress is routinely at the top of the list of reasons for sleep problems. It contributes to physical tension throughout the body making it difficult to fall asleep, while anxiety and worry create racing thoughts that make it difficult to quiet the mind. Relaxation techniques are helpful in promoting sound and restful sleep, managing stress, limiting fatigue during the day, improving cardiovascular function, and lowering blood pressure.

Breathing

Close your eyes and turn all of your attention to noticing your breathing pattern. Feel the air enter and leave your nose and mouth. Picture the flow of air as it passes through your mouth, airway, and down into your stomach and back out again. Survey

your body for areas of tension. As you exhale, feel the tension leave that part of your body. Visualize your breath reaching your forehead, neck, shoulders, arms, etc. Release the tension as you exhale. If your mind wanders, let that worry or thought go and gently redirect your attention back to your breath.



Counting

Close your eyes and relax. Count backwards slowly from 100 to zero. Visualize the numbers being written slowly and carefully on a staircase with the numbers descending from the steps. Continue until you fall asleep.

Floating

Imagine that you are floating on air. Visualize yourself floating like a falling leaf or snowflake. The lower you float the calmer you will feel.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Interested?

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