



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

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239
reg.griffin@decals.ga.gov

DECAL Launches Thriving Child Care Business Academy

Free Online Training and Tools to Strengthen Provider Business Practices Available September 2023

ATLANTA (September 26, 2023) -- The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) announced that it has created the Thriving Child Care Business Academy of free online training to help providers enhance their business and financial management skills.

DECAL believes that a stable early care and education industry made up of thriving child care businesses is important to the state's economic growth and to preparing future generations of young learners for academic success. Through the Thriving Child Care Business Academy, owners and administrators can receive training in best business management practices, much like the training they receive in best early childhood education practices on other platforms.

“Over the past two years, DECAL has distributed \$1.6 billion in federal financial supports to help child care providers mitigate the negative business impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “We created the Thriving Child Care Business Academy to be an additional industry support that helps providers acquire the knowledge, skills, and tools to become financially self-sustaining as those federal funding programs end.”

All of the Academy's training and resources will be free and open to Georgia child care business owners and administrators. They will be able to access the offerings through the DECAL website beginning in late September 2023. The training will be delivered live, online by approved trainers, covering topics in planning and budgeting; financial accounting and tax preparation; organizational leadership; staff recruitment and retention, enrollment management; and marketing—all tailored to the child care business setting. Participants will be able to register for basic business education presented in large-group virtual trainings, focused instruction on single topics taught in small study groups, and guided in-depth technical assistance delivered through individual coaching. The training will include topics, information, and examples for both center-based and home-based businesses; and some of the large group trainings will be offered in English and Spanish. Additionally, the Academy will include a library of more than 50 bilingual guides on various business and financial topics for downloading and self-study. Participants who successfully complete the live training in large- and small-group settings can earn state-approved training hours. Those who complete a full small-group training series can also earn a stipend.

The training and materials offered through the Academy have been developed by [Civitas Strategies](#), a national management consultancy, the [University of Georgia Small Business Development Center at Valdosta State University](#) (UGA SBDC), and the [National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance](#). Training will be led by state-approved trainers from Civitas, UGA SBDC, and Georgia Resource and Referral Agencies. For more information visit the Academy website at <https://www.decals.ga.gov/Thriving>.

About Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program and federal nutrition programs, and manages Quality Rated, Georgia's community-powered child care rating system. The Department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decals.ga.gov.