



BRIGHT FROM THE START

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
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Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

Bobby D. Cagle, MSW
COMMISSIONER

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Dear Child Care Provider:

I am writing to remind you about a serious issue related to the safety of children in your care. Recently, several finger injury incidents have occurred in child care programs. Children's fingers are particularly vulnerable to injury because of how quickly and easily small fingers fit into places where the end of the finger can be lacerated, crushed, or amputated. The leading cause of childhood finger injury is from children's hands being caught, jammed, or crushed in the hinge area of a door. A child care program may be held responsible for injuries that occur because a door is not fitted with adequate safety devices or because of lack of supervision of a child.

Current research recommends installing safety devices to prevent finger injury. A protective strip or door hinge guard can be installed to cover the hinge of the door when it opens. Both safety devices cover the area where the door is joined to the wall thus preventing access to areas where children's fingers can be injured. These safety devices are available at a reasonable cost, are fairly simple to install, and do not require the removal of the door. Another important safety measure is to educate child care staff to prevent children from playing near doors. Supervision of children at all times is the key to preventing any type of injury.

The following is a list of suppliers of door guards. Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) does not recommend any company over another. This information is provided as a resource to providers for further investigation. You may also be able to purchase door guards from a local building supplier or hardware store.

Finger Shield Safety USA
www.fingershieldsafety.com

Perfectly Safe
www.perfectlysafes.com

finger safe usa, inc.
www.fingersafe.com

If you have questions about children's finger safety, child care licensing rules, or any issues relating to child care services, contact your licensing consultant directly or call our office at 404-657-5562. Thank you for partnering with us to serve Georgia's children and families.

Sincerely,

Kristie Lewis
Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services

cc: Keith D. Bostick, L.C.S.W.
Deputy Commissioner for Programs