



DECAL
Thriving Child Care
Business Academy

HANDBOOK



ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to the DECAL Thriving Child Care Business Academy!

We designed this Handbook to introduce you to the Academy, to describe what it offers, and to show you how it can help you—no matter how much you already know. The information can also help you figure out which training or resource might be the best place to start your Academy experience.

Those who need less-detailed guidance on the Academy training and resources and where to start can consult the Getting Started document for quick help.

We hope that after reviewing this information you will decide to take advantage of the training and resources we have created to help you acquire the knowledge, skills, and tools to improve your child care business.

First Step

Before reviewing the Academy contents and classes, it might be helpful to ask yourself some questions:

- What areas of your child care business would you like to improve or learn more about?
- How much do you already know about managing those areas effectively?
- How do you like to receive training?
 - In a group setting led by an instructor?
 - On your own watching a video or reading a guide?
 - In Spanish or English?
- How important is it for you to earn state-approved credits for the training you receive?
- How much time can you devote to business training to meet your goals and needs?

After looking through the Handbook, if you have questions or need help deciding where to start, email thriving@decals.ga.gov.

For help registering, please contact the GaPDS Support Staff in one of the following ways:

- If calling within the metro Atlanta Area or from another state: 404-267-2760
- If calling within Georgia, but outside of metro Atlanta: 1-888-92-GAPDS (42737)

The Basics

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR CHILD CARE PROGRAMS Large Group Training Developed By



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Quality Assurance



DECAL
Thriving Child Care
Business Academy

Is This Right For You?

If you need a better understanding of all the basic business concepts, you can begin your Academy experience by enrolling in one or all of these four (4) modules. Classes are tailored for center-based and family home businesses. If you fully understand the basic concepts and want more detailed training in a specific business topic, consider skipping these trainings and starting with one of the other large-group webinars or moving directly into a small study group.

What Will You Learn?

Fiscal Management: Budgets, Projections, and Planning

- Learn a process for building a budget and how to use it for decision-making throughout the year
- Understand how to project business costs, generate additional income, and plan strategically for future goals

Fiscal Management: Financial Reports and Internal Controls

- Introduce financial reports that can help you to manage your program's finances better
- Understand the concept of internal controls and how they can strengthen your program's fiscal health

Marketing for Child Care Programs

- Understand the value of marketing efforts that are focused both externally and internally
- Be able to articulate the features and benefits of the program and understand how to use them as marketing tools
- Appreciate how data can inform marketing efforts in order to achieve greater success, become more cost effective, and use time more efficiently

Staff Recruitment and Retention

- Understand best practices related to recruiting, interviewing, and hiring new employees
- Have a framework for building an effective orientation plan for new employees
- Be familiar with the components of a staff handbook
- Identify strategies for providing feedback to employees

How Much Time & Work is Involved?

Participants will earn three (3) state-approved training hours for each module. Participants completing all four (4) trainings will receive 12 hours.

Modules are scheduled by state-approved trainers; you may register for them at your convenience beginning in September 2023.

How To Register

From the Academy website at <https://www.dec.state.ga.us/Thriving>

- Click on the Schedules & Registration box on the Home Page
- Click on the green box or Screenshot of the GaPDS webpage at the top.
- Scroll down the GaPDS Find Scheduled Training Page to the Specialized Searches menu
- Check the Thriving Child Care Business Academy box
- You will see the list of Scheduled Trainings being offered through the Academy
- You will have to log in or create a GaPDS account before you can register

The Basics

BASIC TRAINING ON GENERAL BUSINESS TOPICS Large Group Training Developed By



Small Business
Development Center
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Is This Right For You?

If you think you need a fuller understanding of general business topics, you can begin your Academy experience by enrolling in one, several, or all of these webinars. You can also enroll in them as a follow-up, after taking the Strengthening Business Practices training series. But if you fully understand basic business concepts and are ready for more specialized training in a specific topic, consider starting with a small study group.

What Will You Learn?

Financial Management – Thriving Financial Foundations

- Learn to calculate and analyze costs, set prices, and build a financial plan for future growth. Leave with an understanding of the financial anatomy of a child care business and a financial analysis tool to track revenue and expenses each year.

Human Resources Management – Thrive & Grow: The Secrets of Recruiting and Retaining Staff

- Get best practices for hiring, onboarding, and keeping good employees; team building; and selecting employee benefits.

Marketing – A Thriving Brand Identity

- How to promote your services to families with engaging social media messages and print advertising campaigns, a distinctive website, and strong community relationships

Workplace Leadership – Thriving as a Servant Leader: Inspiring Success in Others

- Tips for building trust and respect; solving problems; resolving conflict; empowering, motivating, and encouraging staff, plus managing time effectively.

How Much Time & Work is Involved in Each Course?

Two (2) hours of instruction + 15 minutes of Q&A, in live, virtual sessions, offered in English only

Led by [Alyssa Foskey](#)

Two (2) hours of state-approved training credits for completing a live course

Courses will be recorded & posted online [no credit for watching recorded training]

How To Register

From the Academy website at <https://www.dec.state.ga.gov/Thriving>

- Click on the Schedules & Registration box on the Home Page
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The Basics

BASIC TRAINING ON SPECIFIC BUSINESS TOPICS

Large Group Session Developed By



Is This Right For You?

If you already understand general business concepts, you can begin your Academy experience by enrolling in any of these webinars covering specific business topics. You can also enroll in them as a follow-up, after taking a Strengthening Business Practices training module or a webinar from UGA SBDC on the related topic. But if you fully understand basic business concepts and are ready for more specialized training in a specific topic, consider starting with a small study group.

What Will You Learn?

Financial Foundations: These trainings relate to and can serve as a follow-up to the “Thriving Financial Foundations” training from UGA SBDC.

- Budgeting
- Bookkeeping & Record keeping
- Cash flow
- Profit and loss
- Rate Setting / Pricing / Cost of Care
- Time/Space and Business Use of Home
- Paying Yourself & Opening a Business Bank Account

Taxes:

- Mid-Year Tax Check-In
- Tax Education
- Depreciation
- Tax Credits for Small Businesses
- ERTC & FFCRA
- How Relief Funding Affects Your Taxes?
- Preparing Your Business for the New Year
- Getting Ready for Tax Time

Recruiting & Retaining Staff: These trainings relate to and can serve as a follow-up to the “Thrive & Grow: The Secrets of Recruiting and Retaining Staff” training from UGA SBDC.

- Compensation & Benefits
- Active Recruiting: Creating a Job Announcement / Spreading the Word
- Vetting Candidates: Reviewing Resumes / Scorecards / Interviewing
- Setting Employees Up for Success: Onboarding / Policies and Procedures
- Staff Retention

Growth & Sustainability: These trainings relate to and can serve as a follow-up to the “Thriving Brand Identity, Thriving Financial Foundations, and Thrive & Grow: The Secrets of Recruiting and Retaining Staff” sessions from UGA SBDC.

- Incorporation/ Business Structure
- Effective Sales & Marketing
- Managing Enrollment
- Retirement Planning
- Contracts & Policies
- Future Growth: Business Planning

How Much Time & Work is Involved in Each Course?

A one (1)-hour-long live, virtual session offered in English, with live Spanish translation available, led by a Civitas team member. State-approved training hours available for completing a live course. Sessions will be recorded and posted online [no credit for watching recorded training]

How To Register

From the Academy website at <https://www.dec.al.ga.gov/Thriving>

- Click on the Schedules & Registration box on the Home Page
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Tailored Training Focused On Specifics

SMALL-GROUP STUDIES ON SPECIFIC BUSINESS TOPICS

Developed By



Is This Right For You?

If you have a solid grasp of basic business practices but want to sharpen your knowledge and skills in specific areas, or to create a plan for mitigating risks and strengthening and sustaining your business in those areas, this might be a good place to start. To begin the study group experience, you will complete an intake form that collects key information including the strengths and challenges of your business. The intake information will not be shared with DECAL. It will help Civitas evaluate your knowledge level and understand your needs. Civitas will either assign you to the appropriate small group or direct you to other training that will better serve your needs

What Will You Learn?

Each group is made up of 4-10 providers with similar business types—center-based or family home—size, needs, and skill levels who will engage in a two (2)-month book study series on the selected topic. The groups are led by trainers who tailor the content to meet the group members where they are and what they need to stabilize their businesses and increase their knowledge. Participants will receive a copy of the book study material at the start and after each session a specific set of action items will be assigned as homework, so that they can apply their learning and receive support as they build new practices. By the end of the series, providers will produce an action plan describing knowledge and new practices they developed during the course and how they will apply them to their businesses moving forward. After completing one (1) book study series, participants will be invited to join others as needed. The book studies are divided into 11 topic areas:

Financial Foundations
Recruitment & Staff Retention
Mitigating Risk
Sales & Marketing
Tapping into Revenue & Growth

NEW! Navigating CAPS-QR Policy Changes
NEW! Utilizing Technology
NEW! Assessing Your Business
NEW! Financial Planning
NEW! Tax Preparation Strategies
NEW! Building a Strong Work Culture

How Much Time & Work is Involved in Each Series?

A total of four (4) live, one (1)-hour-long virtual sessions over eight (8) weeks/two (2) months
Homework from the study book assigned after each class; Action plan required at end of course
State-approved training hours and \$300 stipend available for completing a series

How To Register

Email gacoaching@civstrat.com and complete the [Intake Assessment](#)

Tailored Training Focused On Specifics

1-ON-1 COACHING ON SPECIFIC BUSINESS TOPICS

Developed By



Is This Right For You?

If you have completed a small study group series or have extensive experience and advanced business management knowledge and skills, and are facing challenges that require specialized, complex technical assistance (TA) to strengthen and sustain your business, this might be a good place to start.

You will begin the individual coaching process by completing an Intake Assessment that collects key information including the strengths and challenges of your business. The intake information will not be shared with DECAL. It will help Civitas evaluate your knowledge level, understand your needs, and determine what kind of coaching will best serve you.

What Will You Learn?

Civitas Strategies coaches will schedule individual sessions to answer specific questions about complex business issues. The 30-minute, one-time session will consist of intensive, customized technical assistance. Here are examples of the topic areas that might prompt questions that are best addressed through individual coaching:

- Business Formation/Incorporation
- Annual Business Planning
- Business Expansion
- Access to Capital
- Staffing and Recruitment
- Staff Benefits and Compensation
- Managing Enrollment
- Sales & Marketing
- Emergency Planning/Continuity
- Succession Planning
- Employee Retention Tax Credit
- Families First Coronavirus Response Act

How Much Time & Work is Involved in a Coaching Session?

Each coaching session will be a 30-minute, one-time meeting. Civitas will set schedules and content in consultation with each provider.

How To Register

Email gacoaching@civstrat.com and complete the Intake Assessment

SELF-STUDY GUIDES



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Is This Right For You?

If you want to start slowly and study a business topic on your own before or instead of diving into a training, the Academy's Self-Study Guides might be a good option. Also, you might want to try them if you learn best on your own, at your own pace, with no need for a trainer to lead you. The Self-Study Guides are also helpful if you want help building your knowledge and skills in certain areas before, while, or after taking a large-group training course.

What Can You Learn?

The Guides are available in print and video form in both English and Spanish and cover more than 80 business topics:

1. Accessing Capital
2. Annual Business Plan
3. Are You Managing Your Cash Flow?
4. Basic Bookkeeping
5. Building Financial Relationships
6. Building a Monthly Budget
7. Building a Website for your Business – Part 1
8. Child Care Business Startup Costs and Taxes
9. Child Care Parent Contract (Part 1)
10. Child Care Parent Contract (Part 2)
11. Child Care Parent Contract (Part 3)
12. Child Care Tax Opportunities
13. Classifying Your Staff
14. Contracts with Other Businesses
15. COVID Relief Spending Strategies and Ideas
16. Creating a Tuition Assistance Policy
17. Creating a Three-Part Job Announcement
18. Depreciation
19. Employee Retention Tax Credit
20. Effective Sales and Marketing Plan
21. Expansion Checklist
22. Families First Coronavirus Response Act
23. Finding Talent
24. How Can I Get Ready for the New Year?
25. How to Make Health Expenses Tax Deductible
26. How Can I Reduce Stress for Me & Staff?
27. How Can I Set up an Employee Handbook?
28. How Can I Set up a Record-Keeping System?
29. How Do I Manage My Time Effectively?
30. How Do I Prepare for Tax Season?
31. How Do I Set Rates?
32. How Relief Funding Affects Your Taxes
33. Incentive Pay
34. Liability Insurance
35. Managing Enrollment
36. Maximizing Your Tax Deductions:
37. Opening a Business Bank Account
38. Pay Increases and Payroll Taxes
39. Paying Yourself: A Guide for Sole Proprietors
40. Prorating Costs
41. Retirement Part 1:
42. Retirement Part 2:
43. Retirement Part 3:
44. Salary Exempt vs. Non-Exempt
45. Self-Assessing Taxes Online
46. Should I Incorporate My Business?
47. Tax Considerations for Selling Your Home
48. Tax Credits
49. Technology and Automation
50. Profit & Loss Statements & Balance Sheets?
51. What is the CACFP?
52. What is a CCMS and How Do I Choose One?
53. What is the Time/Space Calculation?
54. What Tax Credits Are Available?
55. Which Staff Benefits are Right?
56. Why Does My Business Need a Website?
57. **NEW!** 30 Most Commonly Overlooked Deductions
58. **NEW!** Accountable Plan
59. **NEW!** Building A Savings And Reserve
60. **NEW!** Business Practices Continuous Improvement
61. **NEW!** Business Use of Home
62. **NEW!** Capitalization Policy
63. **NEW!** Cost of Turnover
64. **NEW!** Creating A Positive Work Culture
65. **NEW!** Creating a Private Facebook Group
66. **NEW!** Emergency Preparedness Plan: Part 1
67. **NEW!** Emergency Preparedness Plan: Part 2
68. **NEW!** Employee Challenges: Part 1
69. **NEW!** Employee Challenges: Part 2
70. **NEW!** Guide for New Businesses
71. **NEW!** How Can I Hire My Spouse
72. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 1
73. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 2
74. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 3
75. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 4
76. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 5
77. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 6
78. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 7
79. **NEW!** Recruitment & Retention: Part 8
80. **NEW!** Reducing Employee Turnover
81. **NEW!** Self-Employment Taxes
82. **NEW!** Setting a Competitive Wage
83. **NEW!** Small Business Resources
84. **NEW!** Spending Strategies for Businesses
85. **NEW!** Tips for Tuition and Fees Policies
86. **NEW!** Understanding Debt, Part
87. **NEW!** Understanding Debt, Part 1
88. **NEW!** Understanding Debt, Part 2

Where To Find the Guides

- Go to the [Self-Study Guides & Video Tutorials](#) page of the Academy website
- Click on a topic from the list
- Select an English or Spanish Version of the topic and select either a Print (🖨️) or Video (🎥) Guide
- The page with the PDF or Video will open