



DECAL Thriving Child Care Business Academy

OVERVIEW

The DECAL Thriving Child Care Business Academy is an online platform of free training and resources to give owners and administrators the knowledge and tools to enhance their financial management skills with the goal of making their centers and family homes thriving child care businesses.

The Academy's training, modules, and resources 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 (NCECQA). Funding for the Academy's training and resources content is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

DIRECT PROVIDER SUPPORTS & RESOURCES

Virtual Training

Providers will be able to choose live, large-group virtual training covering the basics of financial planning and management; recruiting and retaining staff; marketing; and leadership. The sessions will be facilitated by approved trainers from Civitas and UGA SBDC and will be funded through ARPA. The content and scheduling of the live sessions from Civitas and UGA SBDC will be aligned and sequenced coherently. The Academy will also include training modules on Strengthening Business Practices developed by NCECQA, facilitated by approved trainers from DECAL and Georgia Child Care Resource & Referral agencies (CCR&Rs), and funded through CCDF. Participants who successfully complete the live training can earn state-approved training hours. The large-group training will be recorded and posted online, but no training hours will be given for viewing recorded sessions.

Civitas Strategies

The training sessions from Civitas will be one (1) hour long, offered in English and Spanish simultaneously, and will be recorded and posted online. No training hours will be given for viewing recorded sessions.

UGA SBDC

The training sessions from UGA SBDC will be two (2) hours long and offered in English only. They will be recorded and posted online. No training hours will be given for viewing recorded sessions.

NCECQA

The training on Strengthening Business Practices developed by NCECQA consists of four (4), three (3)-hour modules offered in English only. The trainings are also available in a version tailored to family home providers.

Small Study Groups

Small groups of up to 10 providers can take deep dives into selected business topics using study books. Each group will meet for a series of four (4), one (1)-hour live sessions conducted virtually and spread over eight (8) weeks. Classes will be led by approved trainers from Civitas. Participants who successfully complete a full study group series can earn state-approved training hours and a stipend.

Individual Coaching

Participants will receive one-on-one detailed technical assistance tailored to their needs from Civitas coaches. Typically, these are one-time sessions lasting up to 30 minutes. Civitas will set schedules in consultation with each provider. No training hours will be given for individual coaching.

Resource Library

For use before, during, and after the virtual training sessions, the library of print and video self-study guides on 50+ business topics in English and Spanish. No training hours will be given for viewing self-study guides.

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ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Needs Assessments & Intake Data

At the beginning of the project, Civitas will conduct a needs assessment using focus groups and individual interviews with a sample of providers to select the live, virtual large-group training topics. Civitas will also collect and analyze intake data from providers interested in participating in the study groups and receiving individual coaching to align the content to their needs and knowledge levels.

Project Evaluation

Toward the end of the Academy's first year, Civitas will interview a sample of providers who have participated in the different tiers of training offered by the Academy. These interviews, along with feedback from the needs assessment, intake data collection, and periodic surveys will help Civitas evaluate the provider experience. The information will also serve as the basis for individual provider profiles included in the evaluation report.

PARTNERS

Civitas Strategies

Civitas Strategies is a national management consultancy founded in 2009. The firm's mission is to provide high-value support to help organizations become more efficient, effective, and sustainable. Twenty-four (24) of the Thriving Child Care Business Academy's large-group virtual trainings have been developed and will be facilitated by members of the Civitas team. The firm developed the Academy's entire small group study series and the business coaching sessions, which its team will also deliver. Civitas also created the self-study guides and videos in the Academy's Resource Library.

University of Georgia Small Business Development Center at Valdosta State University

The University of Georgia Small Business Development Center (UGA SBDC) provides tools, training, and resources to help small businesses in Georgia grow and succeed. Its goal is to enhance the economic well-being of Georgians by providing a wide range of educational services for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. UGA SBDC developed four (4) of the Academy's large-group virtual trainings. The classes will be facilitated by Alyssa Foskey, area director at UGA SBDC's Valdosta State location.

National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance

The National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (NCECQA) supports state and community leaders and their partners in the planning and implementation of rigorous approaches to quality in all early care and education settings for children from birth to school age. NCECQA developed the Strengthening Business Practices training that will be facilitated by approved trainers from DECAL and the CCR&Rs.

For details on Academy Resources, Trainings, Schedules, and Registration, please visit <https://www.dec.state.ga.us/Thriving>.