



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

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

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Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Happy Helpings, Georgia’s Summer Food Service Program ready
to kick-off in Richmond County**

*Happy Helpings served more than 2.8 million nutritious meals to children &
teens last summer*

ATLANTA, Ga., (June 17, 2024) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning’s Nutrition Services Division announced it’s partnering with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Augusta to kick-off the summer meals season. The kick-off event will be held on Thursday, June 20 at E.W. Hagler Club in Augusta.

During the event, children and teens enrolled in the Club’s summer camp will receive free nutritious meals through Happy Helpings, Georgia’s Summer Food Service Program; a program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In addition to the nutritious meals, children will enjoy physical activities like hop scotch, egg toss, bean bag toss and jump rope, a hydration station and taste testing of local fruit and vegetables.

“We are excited to partner with Boys and Girls Club of Greater Augusta to bring summer meals and fun physical activities to the children of the Augusta community,” said Tamika Boone, Director of Nutrition Services for DECAL’s Nutrition Division. “Happy Helpings’ meals can help fill the nutritional gap during the summer when school is out, so that kids get the nutrition they need to learn, play and grow,” she added.

Last summer, more than 2.8 million free meals were served to kids at 997 meal sites in 100 Georgia counties.

Happy Helpings' meal sites are located throughout the state at designated sites including parks, libraries, churches and apartment complexes. Families can find a Happy Helpings meal site in their area by texting "summer meals" to 914-342-7744 or using the www.FoodFinder.us website or app.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

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About DECAL

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, 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.decal.ga.gov.