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**DECAL Offers Child Care Search for
School Age Children Enrolled in Distance Learning**

Child Care Programs Ready to Assist Parents Who Can't Stay at Home

ATLANTA, Ga., (August 13, 2020) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is now offering families the ability to search for child care for school age children enrolled in distance learning. With many parents returning to work, families are not always able to stay at home and assist their children with virtual instruction. The search is offered on www.qualityrated.org or by calling 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS.

“School age children are returning to their classes, with many school systems opting for distance learning through virtual classes,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “We are hearing from parents who, because of work commitments, cannot stay home with their children. Others might not feel qualified to assist their children and give them the best experience. In this pandemic, Georgia’s child care industry stands ready to assist school age children and their families and we appreciate them answering the call.”

Jacobs said while many child care programs were forced to close in the early days of COVID-19, over sixty-two percent of the licensed 4,400 child care programs in Georgia are now open and ready to serve children and families. With attendance lower than normal on average, space and professional staff are available to assist with school age children enrolled in distance learning.

“We believe this is a win-win for child care programs and our schools in serving Georgia families during the challenging days of this public health emergency,” said Commissioner Jacobs.

To search for child care, go to www.qualityrated.org and check the box for “Fulltime care for school age children.” You may also search by zip code and distance from your home or office. Assistance can also be found by calling 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS. Licensed Georgia child care providers offering fulltime care for school age children are encouraged to log on to their KOALA accounts and update this information so it is reflected on the DECAL and Quality Rated websites.

About DECAL

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning 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.decal.ga.gov.