



# \$1,200 **FIRST** Program

(First-time Incentive to Raise Standards for Teachers)

## Pre-Application Form

*“Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is proud to support Georgia’s early care and education professionals through the FIRST program. This limited-time program is intended to help boost standards in our state while at the same time providing individuals an incentive to achieve a first-time credential in the field of early care and education. We also encourage FIRST recipients to enhance and continue their journey in professional development with the Department’s SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES programs.”*

*--Holly A. Robinson, Commissioner*

The **FIRST** program is Georgia’s First-time Incentive to Raise Standards for Teachers. The **FIRST** incentive is for an individual who attains his or her first valid early care and education or school-age care credential from an eligible institution. Eligible credentials are the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, the Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC), the Technical College Diploma (TCD), and the Associate Degree if earned between September 1, 2009 and February 28, 2011.

**Deadline extended to 7/1/2011**

### To Pre-Qualify for **FIRST**

- ✓ You must be pursuing an early childhood education program of study leading to your **first** early childhood education (ECE) credential or degree. Those qualifying are:
  - *Child Development Associate (CDA)* issued by the Council for Professional Recognition, or
  - *Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)*, or
  - *Technical College Diploma (TCD)* or
  - *Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education* (containing a minimum of 39 quarter hours or 30 semester hours in ECE courses)
- ✓ You must attend one of Georgia’s technical colleges or a Georgia HOPE-eligible, SACS-accredited institution with an early childhood education department.
- ✓ In the case of the CDA, the 120 clock-hours of your CDA training must be approved through the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System (see [www.training.decal.ga.gov](http://www.training.decal.ga.gov) and search for “CDA” under the “Find Training” tab).
- ✓ You must attain your credential/degree between September 1, 2009 and February 28, 2011.
- ✓ You must have been working in the early childhood education field at least three months and work:
  - As a teacher or assistant teacher at least 25 hours per week, or
  - As a teacher or assistant teacher in a school-age care program at least 20 hours per week, or
  - As a director or assistant director in an early care and education program, school-age care program, or be a registered family day care home provider at least 40 hours per week.
- ✓ You must be:
  - Working for a child care facility licensed by Bright from the Start or the Department of Defense, or
  - A registered family day care home provider, or
  - Working in a private or public Georgia Pre-K Program.

Visit [www.caresolutions.com](http://www.caresolutions.com) to see responses to frequently asked questions.

# FIRST Program - Eligible Credentials/Degrees

- CDA – Child Development Associate\*
- TCC – Technical Certificate of Credit
- TCD – Technical College Diploma
- Associate Degree

\* The 120 clock-hours of your CDA training must be approved through the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System. In addition to completing the training, you must receive the CDA credential from the Council for Professional Recognition to be eligible for FIRST.

## Why a Pre-Application?

Fill out this Pre-Application now to let us know you intend to apply for the **FIRST** incentive. The Pre-Application allows Bright from the Start to pre-qualify and track participants and anticipate funding needs. You will receive a letter indicating that your Pre-Application has been reviewed and whether you are on track to receive the \$1,200 incentive. For additional information, contact the SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES office at 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722.

## FIRST Program – Eligible Academic Programs

Georgia technical colleges offer credentials and degrees that are eligible for the FIRST incentive, including the Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC), Technical College Diploma (TCD) and Associate Degree. To find out more about a technical college near you, visit <http://www.dtae.org/teched/standards/earlychildhood/earlychildhood.html>.

## State-Approved CDA Preparation Courses & Course Work

To locate CDA preparation courses approved by the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System, visit [www.training.decal.ga.gov](http://www.training.decal.ga.gov). Search for “CDA” under the “Find Training” tab. CDA course work is also available through Georgia technical colleges, visit [www.tcsg.edu](http://www.tcsg.edu) to locate a college near you.

## SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES Programs

The Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES programs also help support Georgia early care and education professionals. Free educational advisement is available and the SCHOLARSHIPS program offers tuition assistance and a stipend for academic programs at Georgia’s colleges, universities and technical colleges. Visit the website, [www.caresolutions.com](http://www.caresolutions.com), for additional information or call 770-642-6722 or toll-free at 800-227-3410.

## APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE THIS PAGE

### Personal Information (please print):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
First-middle initial-last (as it appears on your social security card)

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street or post office box (enter only one)

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ (required)

Home Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently employed in the early childhood education field?  Yes  No Original date of hire: \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, complete the following:

Name of center or family/group day care home: \_\_\_\_\_  
Enter name as it appears on license/registration

License/Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Enter actual location as it appears on license/registration

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ (required)

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

### Facility type (check one):

- Child Care Learning Center
- Group Day Care Home
- Family Day Care Home
- Licensed School-Age Care
- Public School

### Home or center is licensed by (check one):

- Bright from the Start
- Department of Defense (DOD)

### If a Georgia Pre-K facility, indicate location (check one):

- Licensed Child Care Center
- Public Elementary School

### Job Title (mark all that apply):

- Asst. Teacher  Asst. Director
- Family Day Care Home Provider  Teacher
- Director (other non-teaching staff positions do not qualify)
- School-Age Care Provider

Are you a Georgia lottery funded Pre-K teacher?  Yes  No

Number of hours you work each week: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a teacher or an assistant teacher,  
provide the number of children in your classroom

\_\_\_\_\_ and check the **one age group** that you  
work with the **most**:

\_\_\_ Infants and/or toddlers (birth up to 3 years)

\_\_\_ Three-year-olds

\_\_\_ Four-year-olds

\_\_\_ School-age children (5-12 years old)

\_\_\_ Combined age group(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**We encourage you to achieve your *first* early childhood credential! Visit [www.caresolutions.com](http://www.caresolutions.com) for answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Your response letter will verify your eligibility and provide instructions on submitting your completed credential/degree for payment.**

