



\$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.

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 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 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. Search for “CDA” under the “Find Training” tab. CDA course work is also available through Georgia technical colleges, visit 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, 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 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.

APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE THIS PAGE

The **FIRST** Program Pre-Application process will determine if your planned program of study is eligible for the \$1,200 incentive. Awards will be processed for credentials that are earned between September 1, 2009 and February 28, 2011 or when all funds are expended, whichever comes first. All required credential verification must be received on or before March 15, 2011.

Education Plans:

Are you currently enrolled in a program of study leading to your first credential in early childhood education?

Yes No

Please check the credential or degree you are pursuing or plan to pursue:

- CDA – Child Development Associate (The 120 clock-hours of CDA training must be approved through the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System.)
- TCC – Technical Certificate of Credit
- TCD – Technical College Diploma
- Associate Degree

Name and address of institution/agency you are attending or will attend: _____

Have you been accepted? Yes No What is the first term you were or will be enrolled? _____ / _____
Month Year

Have you completed your program of study? Yes No

Educational History (complete all that apply):

Have you already earned any other credential or degree?

Credential/Degree Earned:	Institution	Major (field of study)	Year Earned
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Certificate of Credit	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical College Diploma	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree	_____	_____	_____

STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION: Read carefully before signing and dating.

I _____ (Applicant's Name) attest that all of the information appearing on this application is true to the best of my knowledge. I also attest that this is my first degree or credential in early care and education. I understand that any false or incomplete information knowingly provided on this application or supporting documents may be grounds to be denied participation in this program and may prevent me from future participation in the program. I understand that intentionally providing false information on this application or supporting documents is a violation of state law and may result in civil or criminal proceedings. I authorize any agent or employee of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to verify this information and release it to any necessary party for my consideration in this program. I understand that, if approved for the incentive, I will receive a 1099 tax form.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Complete and submit this FIRST Pre-Application as soon as you know your intended course of study or if you are currently enrolled in an eligible credential/degree program. Mail your completed Pre-Application to: **FIRST Program, c/o Care Solutions, Inc., 5555 Glenridge Connector – Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30342**



For additional information, contact the SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES office
at 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722 or visit www.caresolutions.com

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