



2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, SE, Suite 754, East Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334  
(404) 656-5957

**Brian Kemp**  
*Governor*

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
*Commissioner*

Commissioner’s Letter

Dear Georgia Child Care Professionals:

As this year of unprecedented challenges draws to a close, I want to express my gratitude for everyone who works in the child care industry—teachers, directors, owners, technical assistants, consultants, trainers, and support staff. The resilience I have seen demonstrated throughout the pandemic makes me proud to serve Georgia’s children alongside you.

I also want to ask your help in promoting the SOLVE program. You may recall that SOLVE stands for Supporting Onsite Learning for Virtual Education, and the program provides scholarships for Georgia public school children whose school districts provide primarily virtual learning to receive supervision and support at licensed child care facilities during the school day. It is my hope that SOLVE will improve the stability of child care businesses by filling some of the empty seats vacated during the public health emergency. Please help us spread the word about this important support for families.

To be eligible for SOLVE scholarships, a family’s income may not exceed 85% of the state median income (SMI), and parents must be working, attending school, or a combination of the two. Children must be 5–12 years old (kindergarten through 7th grade) and enrolled in a Georgia public school district that is primarily offering virtual learning (50% or more of classroom instruction is virtual). Scholarships are for three months and may be extended if the school system continues to offer a primarily virtual instructional model. Complete eligibility requirements and other details are available at: <https://www.decal.ga.gov/CAPS/Solve.aspx>

Families apply for SOLVE through the Georgia Gateway system at: <https://gateway.ga.gov/access/>. As of November 5 DECAL had awarded 3,398 scholarships to children in 2,343 families in 42 counties across the state. SOLVE applications are processed by CAPS, and there is currently no backlog.

The following school districts were offering primarily virtual instruction as of November 2:

Atlanta Public Schools	DeKalb County	Rockdale County
Bibb County	Dooly County	Savannah-Chatham County
Calhoun County	Dougherty County	Stewart County
City Schools of Decatur	Dublin City Schools	Sumter County
Chattahoochee County	Greene County	Taliaferro County
Clarke County	Hancock County	Warren County
Clay County	Macon County	Wilkinson County
Clayton County	Quitman County	

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## *Commissioner's Letter Continued*

If you are a licensed provider and you are already registered with CAPS, please let us know if you are available to accept children with SOLVE scholarships. Go to your KOALA account at [www.decalkoala.com](http://www.decalkoala.com) and indicate that you are open and providing supervised distanced learning.

If you need to register with CAPS, please follow the instructions at: <https://caps.dec.state.ga.us/en/CAPSProviderHowTo>.

SOLVE is funded by the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding allocated to Georgia through the CARES Act in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

I wish you a safe and joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,



Amy M. Jacobs  
Commissioner

## *How Your Support Sustains Quality Rated*

*by Bentley Ponder and Denise Jenson*

We are grateful to all of you in the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies and the child care provider industry for helping Georgia build a solid foundation of high-quality early care and education (ECE) through Quality Rated over the past eight years. During the past eight months, we have had to make a series of changes to Quality Rated to preserve that foundation and promote continuous quality improvement in the face of COVID-19's challenges.

A continued priority for us during this time has been maintaining the momentum toward the goal of having all CAPS providers become Quality Rated (the CAPS/QR Goal). We realize that the modifications we have made related to the CAPS/QR Goal have required all of you to be flexible and patient. And you all have really stepped up to the plate.

The Goal has provided some exciting opportunities for us to experiment with new approaches that enhance Quality Rated and further strengthen GA's ECE system. At each stage of our planning, including the changes we have made to adjust to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we have received helpful input from our CCR&R partners. You have offered useful feedback on all of our proposals. Now, as we begin to implement a new set of changes, we will need your help more than ever to ensure that providers can smoothly navigate the Temporary Alternate Rating Options (TARO), and the Quality Rated Virtual Process (QRVP) in 2020 and 2021.

We have always known that the hard work and commitment of child care providers are essential to Quality Rated's strength. It has been gratifying to see that despite extraordinary daily challenges, you have remained enthusiastic about becoming Quality Rated. We are amazed and proud that the number of centers and learning homes receiving star ratings has continued to increase during this pandemic. Going forward, your dedication to delivering high-quality early care and learning will continue to be the backbone of Quality Rated and we will continue to assist you in those efforts.

Your dedication to making the necessary changes to improve your program's quality will determine your star rating.

**Contact your CCR&R to get started on your *Quality Rated* journey TODAY!**

## *DECAL Launches New Developmental Milestones Website*

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is excited to announce the launch of our new Developmental Milestones website, a resource to help families and caregivers monitor children's development. Developmental Milestones are skills such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving "bye-bye." Tracking these important milestones can help families see if their child's development is on track, or if they need extra support and intervention. Tracking milestones can be done by watching, interacting, and playing with children and recording their skills on a milestones checklist.

DECAL's new website features milestones from ten different age groups, broken down into four different domains: Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Cognitive Development, and Movement/Physical Development. The website is easy to navigate and has a unique feature that allows families or teachers to compare milestones for up to three different ages. Using this tool, families can look across age ranges for a complete picture of their child's development. This new website helps families, teachers and child care provider know what to expect at each age of child development, and how to use this information to track the children's developmental milestones. It also offers downloadable developmental checklists in both English and Spanish that make it simple for families and caregivers to keep track of milestones.

If a child is missing a milestone, it is important to act early to be sure that concerns are addressed and that children can receive any needed supports such as early intervention. The new DECAL Developmental Milestones website contains links to local Georgia resources that families can use to find help and support if there is a concern. There are also links to free resources and helpful articles, links to DECAL programs, and information about the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Encourage families and caregivers to take a look at the new website, and be sure to take a look yourself at: [development.dec.ga.gov](http://development.dec.ga.gov).

## *GAEYC's Technical Assistance Specialist of the Year*

### **Rebecca Lehto,** CCR&R of Southeast Georgia at Savannah Technical College

I admire her ability to relate well to a variety of people, demonstrates sensitivity to cultural differences, and customizes technical assistance to meet the individual improvement needs of each program by providing virtual/distance/phone/email/face to face TA and training opportunities to her programs. Her technical assistance style enables the child-care programs to understand best practices and make decisions on their own to sustain quality improvement changes after the TA has ended. She provides them the tools to feel empowered and confident to continue on their own after rating.



*We are extremely proud of you, Becky!*

*CCR&R of Southeast Georgia's very own rock star!*



### Free Your Feels: A Youth Mental Health Awareness Campaign

4.4 million kids, ages 3-17, have diagnosed anxiety. ([CDC](#))

Child care providers and children are reconnecting as more and more centers re-open each day. Everyone is coming back together with more stress and in need of more support than ever before given the uncertainty of these times. The **Free Your Feels** youth mental health awareness campaign is here to help children of all ages and the caregivers in their lives!

The recently launched year-long **Free Your Feels** mental health awareness campaign equips children, teens, parents, caregivers, educators, and childcare providers to **Speak. Listen. Connect.** It empowers youth to *speak* out and express their real feelings, encourages adults and peers to check-in with each other and *listen* judgement free, and *connects* everyone to resources for further guidance or help.

We know that prevention begins early with our youngest children. With that in mind, the campaign has specific messages and resources for caregivers of young children. Childcare providers can visit the **Free Your Feels** website to access age-appropriate [resources](#), including the DECAL helpline for early learning professionals, expert tips from Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Strong4Life, learn the signs to act early, webinars, and more.

Join the statewide #freeyourfeels campaign by promoting messages and resources on social media and by cultivating an environment where it is not only safe to express feelings, but it is celebrated. You can find pre-made graphics and captions to post directly to your social media platforms [here](#).

For more information about the **Free Your Feels** campaign, please visit [www.freeyourfeels.org](http://www.freeyourfeels.org) (website available in English and Spanish). Follow the campaign on Instagram (@free.your.feels) and on Voices' Facebook and Twitter pages (@georgiavoices).

#### Sample social media graphic 1:



#### Sample caption for graphic 1:

Be a responsive caregiver to the youngest in your care. Provide them the space to express their feelings without getting into trouble. #freeyourfeels Register for DECAL's Infant Toddler Webinar series to learn more! <https://tinyurl.com/DECALInfantWebinar>

#### Sample social media graphic 2:



#### Sample caption for graphic 2:

Little kids have BIG feelings. Tantrums and defiance are a normal part of a toddler's social-emotional development. Set limits but always listen so the child knows they're safe to express their feelings with you. #freeyourfeels Find more resources at [www.freeyourfeels.org](http://www.freeyourfeels.org).

# Presents the Online Learning Library Initiative (OLLI)

Interested in starting a child care program? Need help with behavior and classroom management or intentional teaching practices, etc.?

## **OLLI can help!**

OLLI houses free Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) approved training courses for Georgia child care providers and trainers covering the following topics:

- Child Care Licensing Center Orientation
- Family Child Care Learning Home Orientation
- Family Engagement in Child Care Programs
- Intentional Teaching and Planning with the GELDS
- Intentional Teaching Using the Math Sub-Domain
- Intentional Teaching Using the Science Sub-Domain
- Intentional Teaching Using the Social Studies Sub-Domain
- SEEDS: Behavior Expectations and Classroom Rules
- SEEDS: Understanding the Daily Schedule, Routines, and Transitions
- SEEDS: Count Me In
- SEEDS: Nurturing Responsive Relationships
- The Pyramid Model in Early Childhood Environments
- Understanding Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Educators
- Understanding Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Trainers

**Access these OLLI trainings in GaPDS at:**

**<https://gapds.decals.ga.gov/>**

**Call 404-267-2760 for assistance with GaPDS registration or creating an account**



*Did you know over 20,000 people shop for child care and summer camps on DECAL's website every month? If you're a child care provider, update your profile on <https://decalkoala.com/> TODAY to make sure you're putting your best foot forward!*

## *Southeast Region: Quality Rated Program Recognition*

Congratulations to the following programs for earning new ratings, maintaining ratings, or increasing ratings since January 1, 2020!

Donna Head  
 St. Matthew's Learning & Day Care Center  
 Jennifer Riemann  
 Roseland Child Care  
 Bright Beginnings Day Care  
 Twiggs Head Start  
 Allegiance Learning Center  
 Hazzard Hill Early Head Start  
 YMCA Pryme Tyme May Howard Elementary  
 Letitia Johnson  
 Kids First Learning Center  
 Sweetie Bees Learning Center  
 Union Cathedral Academy  
 Bay Harbour Child Care  
 Discovery Montessori School  
 Kiddie Kampus Learning Center  
 LEAP Youth Development Program  
 Harvest Christian Academy  
 Quaeisha Oglesby  
 Saint Simons United Methodist Preschool  
 Tree House Academy  
 Happy Hearts Learning Academy  
 Maria Portugal  
 West Chatham YMCA Child Learning Center  
 YMCA Central Y-Time  
 Grannies' Playcare Center  
 Krayons Academy 2  
 Mother Goose Nursery School  
 Roberta Benique  
 Micah's Playhouse Inc.  
 Tamika Davis  
 Elizabeth Grisson  
 YMCA Prime Time @ S.L. Mason Elementary  
 First Baptist Preschool  
 Center Y-Time  
 Tiniki Harris  
 Patterson Y-Time  
 Trilogy Achievement Academy

YMCA Pryme Tyme Bloomingdale Elementary  
 Mosaic Preschool  
 Quintella Johnson  
 Sonshine Learning Center  
 Patricia Ford  
 Little Country Day Care Preschool #1  
 Red Trolleys Daycare Center  
 Remington Academy  
 Shaquitha Whitfield  
 YMCA Pryme Tyme Blandford Elementary  
 YMCA Pryme Tyme Ebenezer Elementary  
 YMCA Pryme Tyme Rincon Elementary  
 Charlton County Head Start  
 Little Blessyn's Childcare Learning Center  
 Mary Mosley  
 Allegra Dorman  
 Tabatha Gascot  
 Patricia Lonnon  
 Cynthia Mcfadden  
 Brittany Milton  
 Shannon Mitchell  
 Cassandra Smith  
 Tiny Hands Big Hearts  
 Tiny Treasures Learning Academy  
 YMCA Pryme Tyme Springfield Elementary  
 Humble Beginnings Childcare Learning  
 Academy



## Recovering From a Pandemic

2020 has been quite an interesting year! Who would have ever thought it would take a pandemic for the entire nation to finally recognize the value of the child care industry? You are definitely **ESSENTIAL!** Without you, our workforce would not be able to continue as we have known it. Without you, our economy would take an astronomical hit.

Have your day-to-day activities changed tremendously since March and some days you are barely able to get through the day? Are you anxious and worried about how to recruit and train staff when you reopen? Do you wonder when it will be smoother? The CCR&R of Southeast Georgia at Savannah Technical College has continued to be here for you to support you in any way we can during this pandemic. Even if you don't think you are focused on your Quality Rated goals right now, we can still support you if you are on our caseload.

What can we do for you? We can help you do the following and more:

- develop onboarding plans that will have you ready to hire the right staff.
- develop schedules that will allow you to have smoother classroom operations.
- explore and develop policies and procedures that will allow you to operate to your greatest potential in this “new normal.”

All you have to do is reach out to us and we can help! If you are not already on caseload and receiving services, please go to the following link and click on your county to find out who can help you today: <https://www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org/service-area>.



*Did you know there are almost 100 grant opportunities listed on our website?  
Check out the link below to see if there are any that meet your needs!*

<https://www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org/grant-opportunities-professionals>

## *Pumpkin Math*

Counting Skills –Count the number of pumpkins that fit in a wagon or box.

Number Recognition –Talk about the numbers while reading the prices of pumpkins.

Geometry–What shape is a pumpkin?

Spatial Concepts/Positional Concepts –Where do pumpkins grow? (on the ground)

Patterns–Use small gourd pumpkins in different colors (orange & white) to make patterns.

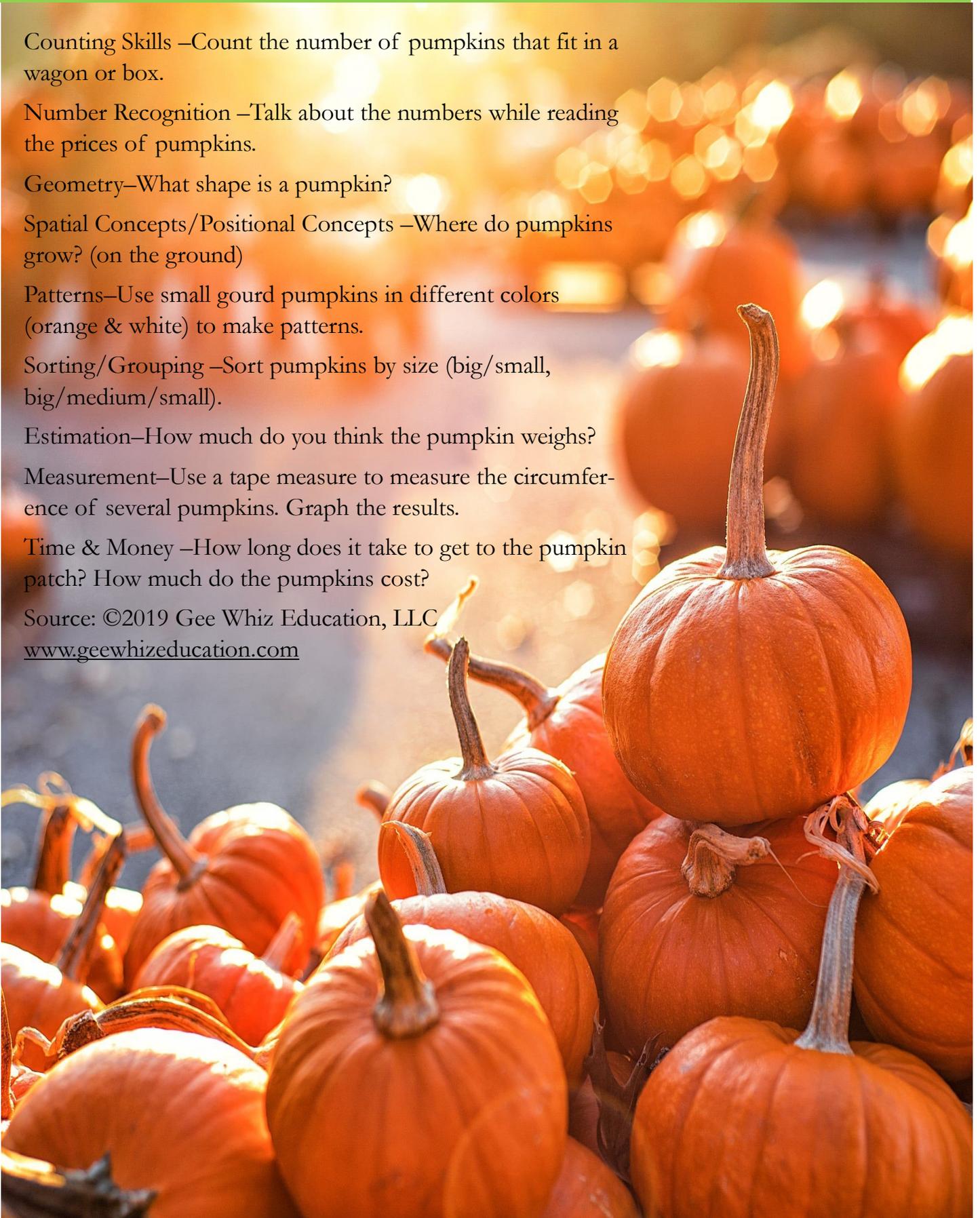
Sorting/Grouping –Sort pumpkins by size (big/small, big/medium/small).

Estimation–How much do you think the pumpkin weighs?

Measurement–Use a tape measure to measure the circumference of several pumpkins. Graph the results.

Time & Money –How long does it take to get to the pumpkin patch? How much do the pumpkins cost?

Source: ©2019 Gee Whiz Education, LLC  
[www.geewhizeducation.com](http://www.geewhizeducation.com)



## Professional Learning Opportunities

### Fall Virtual Training Day II: Saturday 11/14/20

#### Admin Track

**9:00-11:00**

Giving Employee Feedback on Interactions & Teaching Strategies:

[Click Here to Register](#)

**11:30-1:30**

Successful Management of Challenging Employees:

[Click Here to Register](#)

#### Teacher Track

**9:00-11:00**

Standards 102 (GELDS Training): Child Development:

[Click Here to Register](#)

**11:30-1:30**

Teaching Strategies for Quality Interactions:

[Click Here to Register](#)

**Each session is approved by BFTS for 2 hours credit. Sessions must have 10 participants 48 hours prior to training event or will be cancelled.**

**\*PLEASE NOTE YOU MUST REGISTER FOR EACH CLASS SEPARATELY. ATTENDANCE WILL BE TAKEN VIA NAME AND PDS NUMBER SO PARTICIPANTS MUST PROVIDE THEIR PDS NUMBER DURING THE CLASS SESSION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE CREDIT. \*ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE ABLE TO VIEW OUR PRESENTATION FOR TRAINING CREDIT. DEVICES THAT ALLOW FOR ONLY AUDIO ACCESS ARE NOT ALLOWED. PLEASE READ THE CLASS INFORMATION SECTION DURING PDS REGISTRATION FOR MORE INFORMATION ON REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS.**

## Professional Learning Opportunities

### New Online Virtual Webinar Trainings

\*We heard your requests! The below new trainings can be taken for 1 BFTS Approved Training Hour. Look for them in the future!

*Exploring Themes of Dramatic Play*  
*Supporting the Stages of Pretend Play*

*Let's Get Organized*  
*Attention! Attention!*

Admin-specific 1-Hour Training  
*Monitoring Systems*

Admin-specific 2-Hour Training  
*Successful Management of Challenging Employees*

\*Updated virtual Standards 102: Child Development (GELDS Training)-2 BFTS Approved Training Hours  
*Standards 102: Child Development*

\*Please note you will need a device (computer, laptop, or mobile device) with internet access to the Zoom website in order to participate in this training. You must be able to see our visual presentation in order to receive credit.

\*Please note we will not be offering training sessions in December, so plan accordingly if you are still in need of annual training hours!  
<https://www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org/calendars-events>

**SOUTHERN CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN**  
JANUARY 23, 2021

2021 THEME: NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL

WE ARE GOING VIRTUAL!

GEORGIASOUTHERN.EDU/CONTED/SCOC

# How to Register for Trainings

Go to: [www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org](http://www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org)

On the home page, scroll down until you see the quick menu.



Click on the *Training Calendar* link.

From there, you will be redirected to the Calendars/ Events page.



## CALENDARS / EVENTS

### Trainings

To register for all other trainings, please click on the time and title of the training you are interested in. The details screen will pop up with the link to GaPDS to register for the training.

◀ JUNE 2019 ▶		Timezone: GMT -0400
03 MONDAY	9:30am - 4:30pm 2019 Family Child Care Learning Home Licensure Orientation Meeting (FCCLH-LOM) (Chatham County)	
10 MONDAY	6:30pm - 8:30pm Journey To Quality (Lowndes County)	
13 THURSDAY	12:30pm - 2:30pm Quality Rated Orientation Training Webinar	

**Childcare Resource & Referral of Southeast Georgia  
at Savannah Technical College  
190 Crossroads Parkway  
Savannah, GA 31407  
[www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org](http://www.ccrrofsoutheastga.org)  
Telephone: 912.443.3011  
Toll Free: 1.877.935.7575  
Email: [ccrr5@savannahtech.edu](mailto:ccrr5@savannahtech.edu)**

Dana Driggers Assistant Director of Operations 912.667.4563	Melissa Cole Executive Director 912.443.3016	Terenia Moody Assistant Director of Operations 912.433.9482
Jenna Tucker Fiscal Coordinator 912.443.5080	Rachale LaVoie Community Outreach Coordinator 912.443.3383	Johnnye Rogers Community Engagement Specialist 912.443.3384
Kristin Goetz Professional Learning Manager 912.443.3381	Monica Natoli Professional Learning Coordinator 912.677.3517	Pam Scalf Professional Learning Coordinator 912.663.0100
Jessica Boshuizen Professional Learning Coordinator 912.650.3937	Jeneine Barlow Technical Assistance Manager 912.704.8192	Jennifer McMichael Technical Assistance Manager 912.659.7454
Allison Wall Technical Assistance Manager 912.433.9577	Cynthia Akins Technical Assistance Manager 912.655.6682	Sheila Booker Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.433.3307
Linda Reed Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.659.5263	Mandy Roe Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.663.0137	Cindy Beecher Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.663.0218
Linda Taylor Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.433.1116	Cathy Hawes Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.663.1762	Letty Kinslow Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.659.6663
Becky Lehto Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.650.1303	Shelly Lawson Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.650.1777	Stephanie Rozier Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.433.0462
	Cantina Gandy Technical Assistance Coordinator 912.655.8143	



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