



*Winter 2019 Edition*



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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**Nathan Deal**  
*Governor*

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
*Commissioner*

January 2019

Dear Georgia Child Care Providers,

Happy New Year!

As we open the 2019 calendar and dive back in to projects and activities, I'd like to highlight the work of the Georgia Foundation for Early Care + Learning that so effectively complements our efforts to support you in serving Georgia's early learners and their families.

Established by Governor Deal and the state General Assembly in 2017, the Foundation shares our vision that every child in Georgia will have access to high-quality early care and education, regardless of family income or location. It works to realize that vision by raising funds from private and public charitable sources to make strategic investments that expand opportunities, improve quality, and support providers in times of need.

Though it is just 2 years old, the Foundation is exceeding all expectations for development and performance. Already, it has raised \$220,000 to buy and distribute Quality Rated signage for programs that have earned a 1-, 2-, or 3-Star rating, plus another \$430,000 in minigrants earmarked for classroom materials and equipment to improve quality in programs that are still pursuing a star rating. Last November, the Foundation made it possible for 43 licensed providers in 20 counties to receive minigrants from a \$25,000 fund donated by Save the Children to help Georgia child care programs recover from Hurricane Michael damage. If you've received money or materials through one of these Foundation initiatives, you know how beneficial they are.

It's gratifying to have such energetic and resourceful partners like all of you and the Foundation working to provide high-quality early childhood care and education throughout Georgia. On behalf of the team at DECAL, thank you for your efforts to date. We look forward to achieving even greater success during what we hope will be a safe, happy, prosperous, and productive 2019 for us all.

Sincerely,



Amy M. Jacobs,  
Commissioner

**INSIDE:**

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## *CAPS Updates*

CAPS recently improved their website. From the CAPS homepage, you will now see two buttons: [Apply for CAPS](#) and [Become a CAPS Provider](#). The *Apply for CAPS* button brings you to a webpage that details the 4-step application process. *Become a CAPS Provider* brings you to a webpage that explains the process and benefits to becoming a CAPS provider.

CAPS also added additional details to [Eligibility Requirements](#), [CAPS Funding](#), and [CAPS in the Community](#). In addition, recent families and provider communications are now consolidated on the new [CAPS Updates](#) page.

In December 2016, the DECAL Advisory Committee adopted the following:

*Quality Rated eligible providers must be star rated **by 12/31/2020** in order to continue to receive Child Care and Parent Services (CAPS) funding.*

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

*Next Phase of the Georgia Professional Development System Launched January 7, 2019!*

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has launched the second phase of the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS). The second phase means exciting changes for early care and learning professionals in Georgia. Approved trainers can schedule trainings and manage attendance through the system, which means training certificates will be issued and appear automatically in participants' GaPDS profiles. The calendar will also have many more scheduled training sessions to choose from. Please visit the GaPDS website: [www.gapds.decal.ga.gov](http://www.gapds.decal.ga.gov) to learn more!

*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!*

## South East Region: Quality Rated Program Recognition



### Congratulations to Our Newest Quality Rated Programs!



All The Children of the World - Vidalia  
 Big Apple Learning Center #2 - Sandersville  
 Bright Horizons Preschool - Valdosta  
 Butterfield's Academy - Savannah  
 Byrd, Stephanie S. - Baxley  
 Drayton, Sandra E. - Brunswick  
 Gascot, Tabatha R. - Valdosta  
 Golden Isles YMCA - Brunswick  
 Letman, Jasmine J. - Midway  
 Little People's Paradise Day Care Center - Sandersville  
 Roberson Day Care - Folkston  
 Rose, Brenda R. - Valdosta  
 Shannon Academy - Forsyth  
 Small Smiles Learning & Childcare Center - Folkston  
 Something Special Learning Center - Swainsboro  
 Star Learning Center - Forsyth  
 The Learning Place Inc. - Jesup  
 Valdosta Center Migrant and Seasonal Head Start - Valdosta

### Congratulations to Our Quality Rated Programs that Maintained or Increased their Ratings!

Annex Head Start Center - Savannah  
 Bright Horizons Little One Center - Savannah  
 Kayton Head Start - Savannah  
 The Kids Depot - Valdosta  
 King Of Peace Episcopal Day School Inc - Kingsland  
 Love In Action Preschool/Daycare - Hazlehurst  
 Patterson Head Start Center - Savannah  
 Reidsville Head Start - Reidsville  
 Smiles Giggles and Hugs Child Development Center LLC - Statesboro  
 Southeastern Tech Child Development Center - Swainsboro  
 YMCA Prime Time - Valdosta  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Clyattville Elem. - Valdosta  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Dewar Elementary - Valdosta  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Hahira Elementary - Hahira  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Lake Park Elementary - Lake Park  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Moulton-Branch Elem. - Valdosta  
 YMCA PrimeTime @ Westside Elementary - Valdosta



## South East Region: Quality Rated Endorsements



“2018 marked another exciting year for the Valdosta YMCA’s PrimeTime Afterschool Enrichment Program! We have been proudly participating in Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning’s Quality Rated program since its inception and, in fact, were the first afterschool program to attain Quality Rated status. Families searching for the perfect fit for their after-school child care needs love that QR is an easy to understand and trustworthy source to help them decide where to place their children. We decided to undergo the extensive and thorough QR application process because the tiered quality rating system was designed to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. We felt that the Star Rating would easily convey to parents/care givers our Y’s commitment to delivering a quality program above and beyond standard expectations and state licensing. Since the One to Three Star rating system is similar to other familiar service-related ratings like hotels and res-

taurants, parents/caregivers can rest assured that they made the right choice when choosing the Y.

The Y’s original eight PrimeTime Afterschool Enrichment Programs, that first attained Quality Rated status in 2015, have completed their re-certification cycle plus we had one additional site successfully attain Quality Rated status. The YMCA’s remaining two sites are preparing to submit their portfolios shortly. We are especially proud to announce that YMCA PrimeTime @ Pinegrove received a 3-star rating!

‘QR is similar to the accreditation process which is very involved and rigorous but well worth the effort,’ said Lawrence Tobey, Valdosta YMCA CEO/President. The support has been unending from the YMCA’s administration, Y board, PrimeTime staff, both the City and County School Boards, their administrators and the Child Care Resource and Referral staff. ‘Quality Rated overall is a monumental benefit for the families, the children, the YMCA, and the schools that host PrimeTime in our community’ noted Tobey. The Y looks forward to continually improving PrimeTime as a vital enrichment program for our community. For A Better US.”

**Randy Gaytan**

*Valdosta YMCA Physical Director*

*Valdosta, GA*

" Quality Rated was a blessing for us because it showed us so many things that we were not doing; when the TAs starting coming to us and helping us in the classrooms, it was an eye opening experience. The knowledge provided helped us with the results we received. When we started implementing the techniques recommended by the TAs and provided trainings we saw the change in the children. We learned to talk with children and not talk at children; it is more than the materials, it was the knowledge we got from this processes... we are grateful!"

**Janice Swan, Director**

*Hug Me-N-Luv Me*

*Savannah, GA*

“The Quality Rated process was very enriching. The trainings took our staff to the next level of professionalism and enhanced our quality of care we provide to our families.”

**Patricia Smith, Director**

*Grace Academy*

*Ludowici, GA*

“As a family child care provider, I had a great experience. I was scared and my TA made the process easy. She was understanding and resourceful. She cared about me as a professional. I enjoyed the resources. I have learned a lot.”

**Jasmine Letman**

*Family Child Care Provider*

*Midway, GA*



Did you know that DECAL offers FREE marketing tools and resources to help you promote YOUR child care program? Watch this short webinar to unlock your free promotional tools today! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yCTtL2\\_7iA&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yCTtL2_7iA&feature=youtu.be)

## South East Region: Quality Rated Endorsements - Continued

"I am happy to be apart of the QR program . This program has helped my program to strive and improved it in lot of ways. The staff has improved in training and lesson planning. I have seen so much improvement in the quality that the staff is giving to the children. Thank you, QR, for all of your support."

**Annette Hamilton, Director**

**Roberson Day Care**

**Folkston, GA**

"Providing the highest quality child-care for our children has always been my priority at Smiles, Giggles, & Hugs since opening the doors in 2004. I am so grateful God blessed me with teachers who strive to give their best to the children each day. By going through the Quality Rated process, we were able to improve upon practices already in place and implement new ones. Families trust us each day to provide a safe, loving learning environment for their children. Becoming a three star Quality Rated program helped to ensure our families that we are providing their child with high quality care and education. This helps to ensure success throughout their journey in life. We are blessed beyond measure to be a three star Quality Rated program!"~Andrea Hendley, Director



"Quality Rated is a wonderful tool to help teachers in their classrooms and how to give the best care and guidance for their students. In my experience, Quality Rated has improved the way I teach and manage my classroom greatly! Our Technical Assistance Coordinator, Shelly Lawson, helped us get everything we needed and prepared us for our big day of being observed to receive our third star. It has been a wonderful learning process, and I feel like I have become a better teacher throughout it." ~Taylor Irving, One-Year-Old Teacher

"Going through the Quality Rated process has been a huge learning experience. Being that I have been a teacher for ten years, I assumed I knew all there was to know. I'm glad this process has show me that wasn't true. There was a lot more to learn, and I am taking it all with me as I continue on to be the best teacher I can be. These years are so important and critical to their education, so everything Quality Rated has taught us needs to be incorporated into our daily routines. Consistency is key!"~Lena White, Infant Teacher

"The Quality Rated process has helped me improve as a teacher because it made us work together as a team. I had to step outside of the comfort of my classroom and work with everyone in the center. This process showed me that we have what it takes to teach our future and to give them the best of the best. Most of all it took a lot of listening and dedication. No matter how much experience you have, there is always room for growth."~LaRoslyn Robinson, Two-Year-Old Teacher

**Smiles, Giggles, and Hugs**

**Statesboro, GA**

"We learned a lot about individualized teaching during our journey to being quality rated. Our classroom arrangement improved for children's interest. Our interactions improved with the training we received from our technical assistance received. During the portfolio process Cynthia was excellent at explaining and assisting every way possible."

**Donnaline Sconyers, Owner**

**All The Children of the World Preschool**

**Vidalia, GA**

## South East Region: Quality Rated Endorsements - Continued

“This has been a great experience for me. When I took over in March I was nervous because we had a short window of time before we had to submit but with the help of Ms. Pam and Mrs. Katrina we were able to submit in 6 months, something that had taken us a long time to do. They really helped me and walked me through the whole process. I am grateful to have gone through this program and I am looking forward to continuing this process.”

*Dee Dee Baker, Director  
The Learning Place, Inc.  
Jesup, GA*

“This has been a great experience with the QR process. We appreciate all the hard work and help from our TA. We are very pleased with our score. We are excited to start working with CQI.”

*Kayla Chestnut, Director  
Love In Action Preschool/Daycare  
Hazlehurst, GA*

## South East Region: Getting to Know Your CCR&R Staff

*Jamie Richardson,  
Technical Assistance Coordinator*

Jamie has thirteen years of experience in the Early Childhood Education field. After graduating from Georgia Southern University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Child and Family Development, she pursued a career with the LEAP Early Learning Partners CCR&R (Region 3). During her almost nine years at LEAP, Jamie served as a Technical Assistance Coordinator and a Technical Assistance Team Leader. She assisted many Providers through the national accreditation and Quality Rated processes and provided state-approved trainings throughout the region.

Jamie recently moved to Savannah and is excited to be part of the Region 5 team. She has a passion for helping others and values the partnerships she develops with her Providers to help create the best environment for Georgia’s earliest learners.



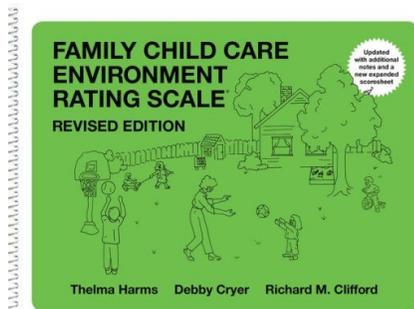
*Chante'va Harris,  
Administrative Support Assistant*

Chante'va (Te'va) is a graduate of Tennessee State University with a Bachelor’s in Psychology. Throughout her career, she has served in various administrative support roles working with the public, both in person and via telephone. Te'va served as an administrative assistant with the City of Savannah prior to joining our agency this month. She has also worked in insurance and in the medical field.

Te'va absolutely loves her two fur babies, a cat named Muffin and a dog named Bishop (They are best friends!). In addition to spending time with her fur babies, her hobbies include reading, fishing, and traveling.

## Teacher Tips: Language Interactions

By Terenia Moody, Assistant Director of Operations



A language rich environment is one in which children are surrounded by talking, singing, and reading and have many opportunities throughout their day, across all activities, to communicate with others and engage in back-and-forth conversations.

A rich language environment is important to children's early learning, and can have strong effects on early language, vocabulary, reading, and math skills, as well as on children's social-emotional development.

- Engage children in conversations
  - Encourage back-and-forth exchanges-Take turns talking; given them time to respond
  - Extend children's language-Add descriptive words; add new vocabulary; restate using correct grammar
  - Invite children to talk about what they are doing-Comment and ask questions about what they are doing
  - Encourage higher level thinking-Introduce new concepts or ideas; explain your thinking process
- Ask questions
  - Ask children about what they are doing-What are you working on today? What are your plans?
  - Ask children to make predictions-What do you think will happen next? What else could you do?
  - Ask children to provide explanations-Why do you think that happened? How did you do that?
  - Ask children to connect learning to their own lives-What does this remind you of?
- Expand on children's words
  - Scaffold language and give them more information-Add novel and interesting words; expand phrases
  - Repeat what the child says, and add a little more-Describe, name, and add more information
  - Use novel and interesting words-Ex: Enormous instead of big; adhesive instead of glue

Have engaging and interactive reading times with children by:

- ⇒ Asking them to make predictions
- ⇒ Using as much expression as you can
- ⇒ Pointing out key words
- ⇒ Asking children to play an active part
- ⇒ Reading more than once and letting children tell more and more of the story
- ⇒ Asking thinking questions (**CROWD**):
  - Completion questions
  - Recall questions
  - Open-ended questions
  - Wh- questions (who, what, when, where)
  - Distancing questions-make connections between story and personal experiences.



You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more—on Too Small to Fail's website, [www.talkingisteaching.org](http://www.talkingisteaching.org)

Talk, Read and Sing Together Every Day! Homepage. (n.d.). Retrieved December 3, 2018, from <http://talkingisteaching.org/>

*South East Region wants to hear from you! Do you have a classroom activity that you love to do with your children? Submit your activity by February 28, 2019 to [crr5@savannabtech.edu](mailto:crr5@savannabtech.edu). Please make sure you include your name, contact information, and activity details. If your activity is chosen, you will be notified and will receive a thank you gift from the CCR&R Executive Director!*

## Interactive Storytimes for the Infant/Toddler Classroom

By Shelly Lawson, Technical Assistance Coordinator

Storytime is a special time! Reading is important for developing early literacy and language skills. Getting the children involved with the story is a key factor to encourage children to become independent readers. The following activities are provided by [www.peach.decal.ga.gov](http://www.peach.decal.ga.gov). Please explore the website to use as a great resource for more fun and educational reading activities for the age group you teach.

\*What's that?-Encourage the children to point to a specific object in a book when asked. Read *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*-one of children's all-time favorites

\**Polar Bear, Polar Bear*-Ask the children questions when reading *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* By Eric Carle. Ask the children to point to and identify the different animals and colors in the book. Extend the activity by asking the children to make the sounds as well.

\**Old MacDonald Had A Farm* again, please-Young children LOVE repetition and hearing the same books over and over. It is important to continue to read those same books. This creates familiarity and a love for reading.

\*Read, please-When a child finds a book, ask the child if he/she would like you to read the book to him/her. Hold the child in your lap, if possible, so you both can look at the book together. Have the child help you turn the pages. Don't worry if the child wants to skip ahead. Learning to turn the pages is an important book-handling skill. Encourage the child to look at the pictures. Ask, "Do you see the doggy?" Extend the conversation beyond the book. "Do you have a dog at home? What's its name?"



GELDS ALIGNMENT: ages 12-24months

CLL8.1b Touches or identifies pictures when prompted.

CLL8.1c With assistance, holds book upright and helps turn pages one at a time.

CLL5.1a With prompting and support, makes sounds that relate to pictures in books.

CLL5.1b Shows preference for familiar stories.

CLL5.1c With prompting and support, responds to simple questions during

ITERS 3 ALIGNMENT:

-Staff point out and name some pictures in book for child

-Staff usually encourage children to be actively involved in use of books with them

-Staff show much interest and enjoyment in books when used with children

-Staff often give positive attention to children using book independently

Resources used:

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.gelds.decal.ga.gov/>

Harms, T., Cryer, D., Clifford, R. M., & Yazejian, N. M. (2017). *Infant/toddler environment rating scale*. New York: Teachers College Press.

# Hands-On Independent Math Learning Activities for the Preschool Classroom

By Katrina Crews, Early Childhood Educator

Many of you grew up in the era of sitting at the table learning using worksheets. Who remembers that? Or maybe you weren't old enough to remember those days. Let's throw that out the window and leave the past in the past! We'll never mind the past, let's focus on the present which will lead us to a positive future! A future of children learning through hands-on experiences in the classroom. We are finding out that children learn best from life experiences as kinesthetic learners.

One thing I loved as a teacher in the classroom were file folder games. As a teacher, I truly enjoyed making my own file folder games for the children. Here are some examples of activities that can be done in the classroom anytime of the year. These activities work on the basic math skills and allow the children to work on them alone, giving them the independence they need in the classroom. I have included GELDS codes with the activities and how it correlates with the ECERS-3 scale.

**Color** file folder games that are very easy to make. No need to stand over them as they complete these tasks, but please check in on them as they are doing it.

GELDS: CD-MA4.3b & CD-MA4.4b

ECERS-3: 12, 3.3 & 5.3 as well as 29, 5.2



**Shape** file folder games are fun and can be presented in many different ways. The children can sort them like the button game or use the shapes to create a house, building, vehicle or robot.

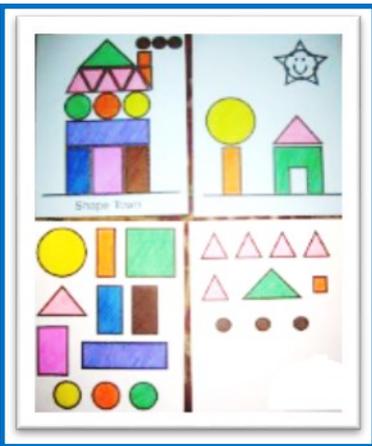
GELDS: CD-MA6.3a & CD-MA6.4b

ECERS-3: 23, 3.2 as well as 30, 5.1

You can also provide **number** games. The children can use props to help with the file folder games like the games in the pictures. The car game is using a die to locate the numbers and the child can place the corresponding color dot on the number they rolled. The umbrella game will help the children identify the number and also work on their fine motor skills by clipping the clothes pins to the corresponding number.

GELDS: CD-MA1.3b, PDM1.3a, CD-MA1.4b, & PDM6.4a

ECERS-3: 23, 5.2 & 5.4 as well as 25, 5.3



There are many other file folder games you can provide to the children to allow them to have fun and learn at the same time.



Source: [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com) and for more fun on Pinterest search "(subject) file folder games" or search "learning activities for preschool" or "learning activities for toddlers"

# How to Register for Trainings

Go to:

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

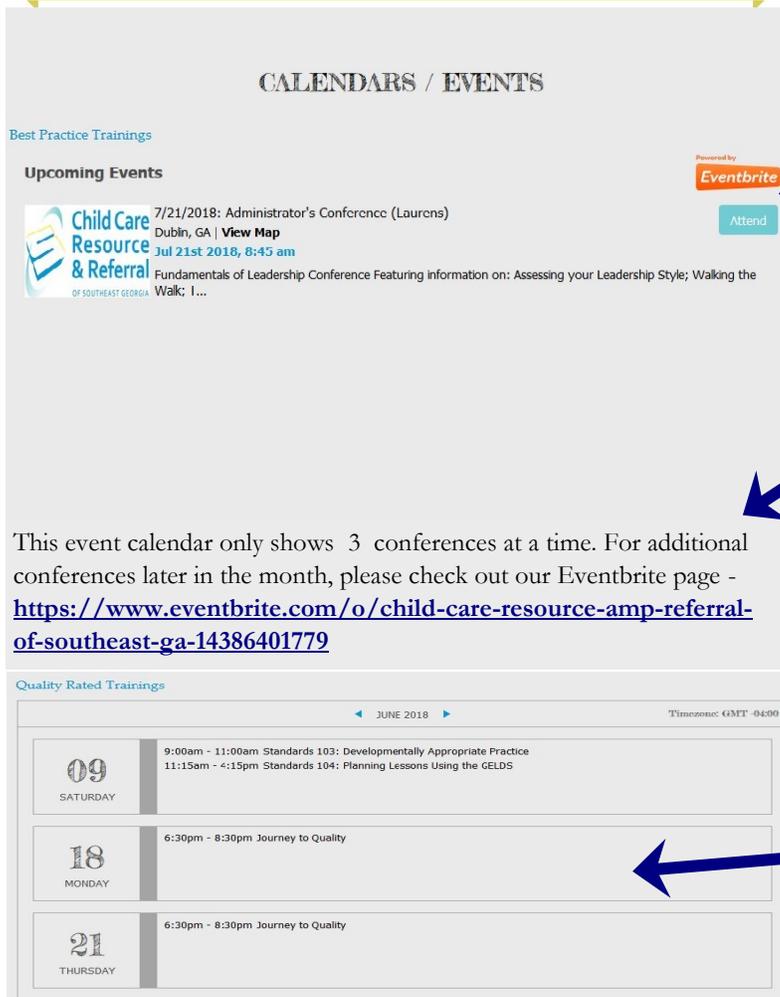
On the home page scroll down. Click on the *Training Calendar* link.

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

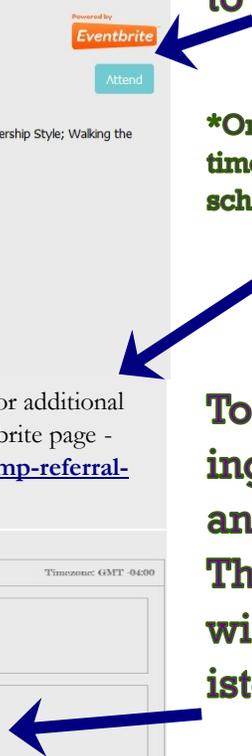
Please click the *Attend* button to be redirected to Eventbrite to register for training.

**\*Only 3 conference may be displayed at a time. For a complete list of our currently scheduled conferences, please click here.**

To register for all other trainings, please click on the date and corresponding training. The details screen will pop up with the link to GaPDS to register for the training.



This event calendar only shows 3 conferences at a time. For additional conferences later in the month, please check out our Eventbrite page - <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/child-care-resource-amp-referral-of-southeast-ga-14386401779>





## 2019 Southern Conference on Children

*“Innovations & Quality in Early Care and Learning”*

# **REGISTER TODAY!**

January 26, 2019 | Nessmith-Lane Center | Statesboro, GA

[GeorgiaSouthern.edu/scoc](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu/scoc)



**GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY**

CONTINUING EDUCATION

# On Demand Child Care Training

*Featured module:*

## Georgia Health & Safety Orientation Training

All child care professionals are responsible to keep the children in their care healthy and safe. Individuals who care for and teach children need to know how to

- 1) create safe spaces,
- 2) use safe practices with children,
- 3) develop and implement daily illness prevention and management strategies,
- 4) plan to keep children safe if an emergency occurs.



This six-hour module provides an overview of required health and safety topics for Georgia child care professionals.

Eligible for CEUs  
 Accepted for CDA  
 Approved by Bright from the Start

This module is available at no cost to professionals who work in child care learning centers and family child care learning homes in Georgia.

**Login in to On Demand to access the training at**  
<http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare/on-demand>



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This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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www.pennstate.edu/extension

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