



EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP STATE GRANTEE PROFILE

GEORGIA

Grantee Name	Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
EHS Grantee Status	New EHS Grantee
Annual Award Amount (additional TA funds)	\$3,368,470 (\$84,212)
Proposed Funded Enrollment	168
% of Subsidy Proposed	40% of participating children

Partnership Snapshot

Georgia's Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership is designed to leverage coordination with other key organizations in order to develop a system of shared services in two high-poverty areas within the state. As the lead agency, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) provides administrative and financial management, quality assurance and monitoring, and works with state and local agencies to provide key services, including facilitation of referrals.

DECAL serves as a centralized umbrella of state governance and program administration for early care and learning. Both the Head Start Collaboration Office and CCDF state administration are housed within DECAL. The agency also oversees child care licensure and manages the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), [Quality Rated](#). In addition, DECAL administers the state's Pre-K and federal nutrition programs.

The Partnership's shared services hub model operates via contracts with an existing Early Head Start (EHS) grantee as a hub for child care centers, and a child care resource and referral agency (CCRR) as a hub for family child care homes. The hubs facilitate the child care partners' access to comprehensive services, professional development, and technical assistance. DECAL also holds MOU's with the state's Departments of Public Health and Human Resources to support comprehensive health services and assistance to children in the child welfare system. Georgia's State Advisory Council, the state's Alliance of Education Agency Heads, and a state-level Parent Policy council serve as advisory bodies to the Partnership.

Subsidy Administration

Subsidy administration in GA is centralized within DECAL, which establishes eligibility and payment rate policies, and also administers payments electronically to providers based on a contract with a private management and payment service agency.

Subsidy program software has been enhanced to identify a child as potentially eligible for EHS at the time of eligibility determination, allowing subsidy caseworkers to make referrals to local

EHS programs. All families of eligible infants and toddlers enrolled in the child care partners are offered an EHS slot.

DECAL has recently implemented a new subsidy grant process in addition to a voucher system. Partners are eligible to participate in this initiative, in which grant amounts are calculated by the proportion of enrolled children who are eligible for subsidy and EHS. This allows for a continuous, predictable funding base programs may use to invest in quality improvements and services.

Subsidy Policy Alignment

GA's efforts to align EHS and child care policies have eased the implementation of the state's Partnership program, and ultimately improve the continuity of high-quality care for participating infants and toddlers. Subsidy policies now allow EHS family activity engagement time to count toward the 17.5 parental subsidy work hour requirements.

In addition, eligibility periods for subsidy are consistent with the required minimum 12-month redetermination period under the CCDBG Act of 2014.

Leveraged Funding Strategies

Layering of funding is an essential component of GA's Partnership funding strategy. For children eligible for both CCDF and EHS funds, the state layers through annual grants. CCDF funds full-year, full-time educational care, and EHS funds comprehensive services. The state provides a 20% match to support the Partnership grant. The Partnership also relies on additional funding resources, including:

- Quality improvement support and technical assistance offered by [Quality Rated](#), GA's QRIS;
- CCDF-funded SCHOLARSHIPS program and GA's AWARDS program that promote professional development;
- Georgia's Program for Infant and Toddler Care funding that allows for onsite technical assistance, mentoring and coaching;
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks, and USDA resources support family nutrition;
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, Babies Can't Wait provides inclusion specialists and other family supports; and
- Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (MIECHV) provides professional development on screening and support to families based on referrals and outreach to community services.



- ✓ **Centralized Governance Infrastructure:** DECAL serves as an umbrella for all state early care and learning program administration, housing the CCDF lead agency, including state licensing, and the Head Start Collaboration Office
- ✓ **Shared Services Hub System:** The hubs facilitate the Partnership's access to comprehensive services, professional development, and technical assistance.
- ✓ **Layered Funding Model:** Both Federal and State funds are leveraged to provide comprehensive support to the Partnership.

GEORGIA'S CHILD CARE POLICY CONTEXT

Policy	State Child Care	EHS-CC Partnership
Redetermination Period	12 months	
Licensing Standards: Ratios	Centers: Infants 1:6 Toddlers 1:8 (1 year old) 1:10 (2 years old) Homes: 1:8 for 1 year old 1:10 for 2 years old	Centers: Infants 1:4 Toddlers: 1:4, 2:8 Homes: B-5 1:6 with no more than 2 children under 2 years old B-5 1 teacher/1 assistant
Licensing Standards: Group Size	Centers: Infants 12 Toddlers 16/20 Homes: 16/20	Centers: 8 children with 2 teachers Homes: 4 infants and toddlers with no more than 2 children under 18 months
Infant/Toddler Teacher Qualifications	Centers: CDA; State Credential; AA or BA Homes: CDA; State Credential	Centers: I/T CDA; or equivalent Homes: I/T CDA; or equivalent