



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

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Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

December 20, 2019

Dear CAPS Family,

We are writing to share important updates to the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program that might affect your family. The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) wants to ensure that your child(ren)...and ALL children in Georgia...receive high quality child care. To accomplish this goal, we have set a deadline that all child care providers accepting CAPS scholarships become Quality Rated by December 31, 2020.

What is Quality Rated?

Quality Rated is Georgia's system to determine, improve, and communicate the quality of child care programs. Like rating systems for restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated assigns a 1-, 2-, or 3-star rating to child care programs that meet or exceed minimum state licensing requirements. When child care programs participate in Quality Rated, they show their commitment to improving the quality of care they provide to children and families. Children thrive when in high quality child care. Georgia currently has more than 2,000 Quality Rated child care providers across the state in 155 counties.

To become Quality Rated, a child care provider follows best practices, such as:

- Employing qualified and well-trained teachers
- Providing a safe, healthy, and caring environment
- Offering a curriculum that prepares children for kindergarten
- Focusing on social-emotional development
- Engaging families
- Maintaining a lower teacher-child ratio

In addition to the educational benefits for your child, your family benefits also. CAPS provides a 15% discount to the family fee for each child enrolled in a 1-, 2-, or 3-star Quality Rated program.

To find out if your child care provider is Quality Rated, visit www.qualityrated.org, and use the search feature or call 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS. If your provider is not star rated, ask them if they

are participating in Quality Rated and, if not, if they plan to meet the Quality Rated 2020 deadline.

Key Dates

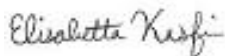
You should be aware of two key dates related to the 2020 deadline.

1. May 1, 2020: After this date, families cannot move their child(ren) to a child care provider who has not committed to earning their star rating by the end of 2020. A child care provider demonstrates this commitment by signing up to be evaluated.
2. January 2, 2021: If your provider has not received a Quality Rating by the deadline, you will have to choose a Quality Rated provider at your 2021 annual redetermination to continue receiving financial support from CAPS. CAPS program staff will help you find a Quality Rated provider.

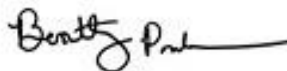
If you have questions about the 2020 Quality Rated deadline or about the CAPS program, complete the Contact Us webform at: <https://caps.decal.ga.gov/en/ContactSupport> or call us at 1-833-4GACAPS (1-833-442-2277).

We look forward to continuing to support your child's early education needs.

Sincerely,



Elisabetta Kasfir
Deputy Commissioner
Federal Programs



Bentley Ponder, PhD
Deputy Commissioner
Quality Innovations & Partnerships