



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Children across Georgia Have Access to Free Meals This Summer

The Summer Food Service Program is available to children 18 and under throughout the state

Atlanta, Ga., (June 28, 2019) - Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) announces that free meals are available for children 18 and under (and some eligible adults) throughout the state through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The SFSP, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is administered in Georgia by DECAL.

Parents and children can find area sites where meals will be served by visiting DECAL's website at <http://dec.al.ga.gov/Nutrition/Search.aspx>. Additionally, sites can be located by calling 1-866-348-6479 or by texting Summer Meals to 97779 (standard messaging and data rates apply). Sites can also be found by visiting USDA's Summer Food Rocks Meal Site Finder at www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks.

More than 60 percent of Georgia's school-aged children are eligible for free or reduced lunch when school is in session. The SFSP provides access to free meals in low-income areas during the summer months when students are out of school and may not have access to well-balanced meals throughout the day.

Nutrition Division Director of Provider Services, Sonja Adams, explained the importance of the Summer Food Service Program. "During the summer months, children who receive free and reduced-priced meals when school is in session, may have limited access to quality meals. The Summer Food Service Program is a vehicle that gives children access to healthy meals when school is not in session, so that they may continue to learn and grow."

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the childcare and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses childcare centers and home-based childcare, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages the voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of childcare, and works collaboratively with Georgia childcare resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decal.ga.gov.