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DECAL launches New Online Child Care Search Features

Quality Rated Family Portal is One Stop Shop for Identifying Child Care in Georgia

ATLANTA, Ga., (February 12, 2018) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is revving up its search engines for families looking for quality child care and Georgia’s Pre-K Program classes. Beginning today, the state rolled out additional features at www.qualityrated.org giving families new tools in their search for child care and early learning options.

The website has an online database where Georgia parents and families can find information on early care programs in their area - regardless of what type of child care provider they prefer, whether at a home, a preschool at a center, or a program at a public school. The new features on the online database allow families to search from over 5,000 licensed child care and preschool programs throughout Georgia. On the online tool, families can search for child care programs best suited for them based on location, including along travel routes from home to work. They can also view multiple years of health and safety inspection reports, curriculum information, hours of operation, and any special activities or services offered by the programs.

Like rating systems for restaurants and hotels, families can also use the online database to see if child care programs have a one, two, or three star Quality Rated star rating, which verifies that they have gone above and beyond state health and safety requirements to provide a high-quality experience to the children in their programs.

“Searching for quality child care that meets the specific needs of your family can be daunting and sometimes intimidating,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “As a state agency serving children and families, we want to do everything possible to help families find the child care programs that are best suited for them. The enhancements to our websites will empower parents in making these important decisions that truly have an impact on the futures of our children.”

If families can’t decide among multiple child care programs, the new site allows them to perform a head-to-head comparison of their top choices. If additional assistance is required, families can speak live with a trained child care referral specialist at no cost by calling 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS (1-877-255-4254).

“In addition to information about location, cost, and hours of operation, we know parents and families are also looking for quality child care and preschool programs that will provide their children with a nurturing and educational environment so that they have a strong foundation as they grow,” explained Kristin Bernhard, Deputy Commissioner for System Reform. “The Quality Rated star rating on this new site can give families greater confidence in their child care choice, because they will know that independent early education experts have assessed whether those child care programs apply research-based best practices such as employing qualified and well-trained teachers, providing a safe, healthy and caring environment, and providing a low teacher-student ratio.”

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages *Quality Rated*, Georgia’s community powered child care rating system.

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