

CROSS AGENCY CHILD COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Preschool
Development
Grant
Birth through Five

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CROSS-AGENCY FAMILY COUNCIL

Mission and Purpose

The Cross Agency Family Council (CAFC) was created by the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) from funding provided by the Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five (PDG B-5). The PDG B-5 was awarded to Georgia by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education. The mission of the CAFC is to provide children in Georgia from birth through age five access to high-quality, affordable childhood care and education. The CAFC amplifies families' voices and engages families in their children's care and education to bring an authentic family voice to Georgia's early childhood care and education mixed-delivery system.

The CAFC provides a high-level structure by bringing together existing family advisory groups that serve agencies and organizations with services for children birth through five. The CAFC will provide recommendations on policies, provide knowledge of the family experience within the system, and become a bridge to existing family councils serving state agencies or organizations to develop strong feedback loops within the birth through five system.

Membership

The CAFC has a current total membership of fifteen people. Members are family representatives from the Cross Agency Child Council (CACCC) and other state-level child- and family-serving agencies and organizations that have active parent advisory committees or family members on their advisory boards. The members of CAFC were recruited from the following agencies and organizations:

Agency/Organization	No. of Member Representative
Department of Education (GDOE)	4
Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)	2
Department of Families and Children Services (DFCS)	3
Head Start	1
Department of Public Health (DPH)	1
Black Child Development Institute-Atlanta (BCDI)	1
Parent2Parent of GA	1
Children's Hospital of Atlanta (CHOA)	1
Children's Museum of Atlanta	1

Council Meeting

On June 10, 2021, CAFC held its first council meeting with 15 of its recruited members in attendance. At the meeting, the purpose, mission, goals of CAFC and the expectations of its members were discussed. The Council members were provided with a brief overview of Georgia's Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five (PDG B-5). Among things discussed were the PDG B-5 focal programs or services, PDG B-5 needs assessment, and the five goal areas the PDG B-5 strategic plan hopes to accomplish, which include: system building, workforce, data and research, family engagement, and access and quality. The next meeting is scheduled for September 2021.

For more information about the PDG B-5 strategic plan, needs assessment and focus group reports, please visit [this website](#).

For more information about the CAFC, contact Bridget Ratajczak at Bridget.Ratajczak@dec.al.ga.gov.



TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE CARE GRANTS

DECAL has awarded 2021 Trauma-Responsive Care Grants to community-based organizations in four counties across the state. Cobb Collaborative, Dalton/Whitfield County Family Connection, Jasper County Family Connection, and Jones County Family Connection will each be awarded a one-year Trauma-Responsive Care Grant of up to \$10,000 to fund projects that increase community and regional awareness of trauma.

Grantees will also work in their communities to create a collective understanding of how early childhood trauma can impact future learning and development of children. Funding for the grants was made possible by the \$11.2 million Preschool Development, Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Renewal Grant received in January 2020 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education. Read below for more information regarding the grantees and their intended program goals:

Cobb Collaborative

Cobb Collaborative plans to create learning environments that build the capacity of staff, families, and community members to support student needs. Program activities include design and creation of a local and culturally friendly resource toolkit for parents and caregivers. Plans for dissemination of the toolkit include hosting an event called "Operation Graduation" across local neighborhoods.

Dalton/Whitfield County Family Connection

Dalton/Whitfield County Family Connection plans to expand the knowledge of trauma-responsive care by offering trainings to childcare providers and child- and family-serving agencies. Dalton/Whitfield County Family Connection will also use funds to partner with Girl Creative, Inc. to create a community-wide trauma-responsive care public awareness campaign.

Jasper County Family Connection

Jasper County Family Connection will embed evidence-based trauma-responsive care practices across Clarke, Jasper, and Putnam counties in Georgia. Jasper County Family Connection will use funding to enhance adult capacity to foster strong and secure family relationships through training families in the Circle of Security Parenting curriculum.

Jones County Family Connection

Jones County Family Connection will use these grant funds to build resilient and trauma-responsive communities in central Georgia. Jones County Family Connection plans to provide Connect Now trainings to parents and caregivers of children in early care, Head Start, and Georgia's Pre-K. Funds from the grant will also be used to develop self-care rooms for teachers of young children and age-appropriate sensory cool down areas for young children experiencing trauma.



COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION GRANTS

DECAL has awarded Community Transformation Grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$75,000 to eight communities to fund programs that serve families with children birth to five. These grants are designed to provide communities with financial and other supports to create and implement an innovative project that addresses one of nine needs identified in Georgia's PDG B-5 Needs Assessment.

The Grant recipients were selected from 34 partnership groups that participated in a rigorous application process. The grants are funded from the three-year, \$11.2 million PDG B-5 funds. The Community Transformation Grants have a term of 18 months and DECAL hopes that many projects will be expanded or scaled-up over time. Researchers from the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) will provide support to grantees.

Details about Community Transformation Grant awardees follow.

Communities in Schools Milledgeville Baldwin County

Communities in Schools Milledgeville Baldwin County's *Bee Strong in School* project will increase access to high-quality early education programs for 20 young children with an incarcerated parent. The project will provide opportunities for lifelong learning by providing children with supports that will positively influence their success in Head Start and Pre-K. The entire school population will benefit from the grant, as well, because programming events will be open to all students and their families.

Cook County Family Connection

The *Well-Fed & Well-Read* initiative in Cook County will help reduce food insecurity for children birth through five and their families while incorporating books and literacy materials that promote healthy nutrition. Six early education partners will serve at least 500 children and families with low incomes for 18 months. *Well-Fed & Well-Read* will use innovative project design that includes family food drops, on-site food pantries, community garden projects, monthly produce deliveries, quarterly nutrition fairs with cooking classes, and an aggressive marketing strategy.

Georgia Organics

Georgia Organics will co-design the *Family Farm Share Program* with a group of Ware County community partners to give working families with children birth through five access to low-cost, high quality, fresh, local food. The cornerstone of the program will be a specifically designed sliding scale, low-cost vegetable box with recipes and resources for families and their children birth through five.

Greenbriar Children's Center

Chatham County's Greenbriar Children's Center will partner with Parent University to provide mental health services for the birth through five population and their parents and caregivers. The Center will educate families and caregivers on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and teach how to mitigate the lifelong impact of ACEs on the physical and emotional health of young children. The project will also create curriculum materials, distribute surveys, and build awareness of ACEs through social media.



PT. 2 COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION GRANTS

Gwinnett Building Babies' Brains

Gwinnett County's *Building Babies' Brains in Every Language and Culture* project will increase access to high-quality early childhood programs for children birth to three and build community awareness around the importance of early learning. The program will provide children abundant, language-rich adult-child interactions, and train partners to prepare children and families for preschool.

Quality Care for Children

Quality Care for Children and partners plan to reduce food insecurity for children birth to five and their families in Clayton County through a nutritional intervention program at four early care and education sites. The four sites will pilot a centralized kitchen and meal catering service and serve as ambassadors to share experiences and best practices with other early childhood education providers.

United Way of Central Georgia

United Way of Central Georgia will focus on increasing access to high-quality early education programs for dual language and rural families with children birth to five in four counties. Funding will support hiring a bilingual full-time Parent Educator and collaborating with First Steps to identify, engage, and enroll families from Spanish-speaking communities. The project will also engage with partners to connect Spanish-speaking residents to screening and home visitation services. Partners will document systemic cultural barriers, identify cultural competency needs, and define strategies for system improvement.


University of West Georgia, College of Education (COE) Early Learning Center


University of West Georgia COE Early Learning Center will create a resource toolkit. The project is called *Suri Spider: A Collection of Social-Emotional Resources for Challenging Behavior at Home and School* and will build capacity for educators and families to practice and promote problem-solving skills for the youngest learners. The goal is to distribute these tool kits to reduce suspensions and expulsions from early learning programs.



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Please send any agency updates you would like to include in a future newsletter to the e-mail address above.

UPCOMING EVENTS

09/23/2021
CAFC
MEETING

11/18/2021 CACC
MEETING

11/30/2021
CAFC MEETING