KEY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND STATISTICS

CAPS (Childcare and Parent Services): DECAL manages CAPS, Georgia’s child care scholarship program utilized by low-income working parents/caregivers of children under 13 years of age. The need-based program is primarily federally funded through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).

Georgia’s Pre-K: Georgia has a universal (i.e., not need-based) lottery-funded Pre-Kindergarten program that serves approximately 60% of the state’s four-year-olds. The program operates on a mixed delivery system, with classrooms in both private child care centers and public schools.

Head Start and Early Head Start: Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start is a federal program that provides comprehensive services, including early learning, to low-income children ages 3-5 and their families. Early Head Start programs serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3, as well as pregnant women.

Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV): MIECHV is a federal grant awarded to states in order to implement evidence-based home visiting programs for at-risk pregnant women and young children. The Georgia Home Visiting Program is operated by DPH.

Quality Rated: DECAL manages Georgia’s Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), Quality Rated, which systematically assesses and communicates the quality of child care providers in the state. Quality Rated assigns a star rating—one, two or three—to programs that go above and beyond the licensing requirements to meet a set of defined program standards.

KEY CHILD-SERVING AGENCIES IN GEORGIA

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL): DECAL licenses, monitors, and provides support for child care providers throughout the state. The agency also administers Georgia’s Pre-K program.

Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS): DFCS oversees public child welfare in the state. DFCS responds to reports of abuse and neglect against children, as well as oversees foster care placement and adoption services.

Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH): DPH takes the lead in preventing disease, injury and disability; promoting health and wellbeing; and preparing for and responding to disasters from a health perspective. DPH funds and collaborates with Georgia’s 159 county health departments and 18 public health districts. DPH works in the area of maternal and child health by administering the Georgia Home Visiting Program as well as the early intervention service Babies Can’t Wait.

Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH): DCH oversees the administration of the statewide Medicaid program, as well as PeachCare, Georgia’s need-based children’s health insurance program.

Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE): GaDOE oversees public K-12 education throughout the state. GaDOE ensures that laws and regulations pertaining to education are followed and that state and federal money appropriated for education is properly allocated to local school systems.

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD): DBHDD serves people living with mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities by operating state hospitals and providing for community-based services across the state through contracted providers.