

THE VISION FOR GEORGIA

By 2020, all Georgia students enter kindergarten prepared to succeed and on a path to “read to learn” by third grade.

WHAT IT TAKES

- All of Georgia’s children birth to five are in high quality environments that support learning and development.
- Families have the information, skills and supports needed to create safe, nurturing and language-rich environments that support children’s early learning and healthy development.
- Business and community leaders champion and public officials implement equitable public policies and practices that support families with the greatest needs.
- The research community works together to identify and share innovative practices related to early brain development.
- Data systems are accessible and used to inform policies and practices as well as measure progress.
- Public systems are interconnected and aligned to provide effective support for families and children.

WHAT WE KNOW¹

Brain Development

The first three years of life represent the most rapid period of brain development, and experiences during these years critically shape future development.

Effects of High-Quality Early Learning

Children who attend high-quality early learning programs are:

- More likely to graduate high school, have a job and earn higher wages.
- Less likely to drop out of school, depend on social services or be arrested.

Economic Impact of Early Education

- Every \$1 invested in high-quality early learning yields \$7 in savings.
- In Georgia, the early care and education industry generates \$4.7 billion in economic activity each year.
- A conservative estimate of the level of parents’ annual earnings supported by the availability of child care in Georgia is \$24 billion.

OUR MISSION

To support high-quality early learning and healthy development for Georgia’s youngest children, from birth to five by championing policies, promoting innovative and evidence-based practices and building public will.

WAYS WE DRIVE CHANGE

COMMUNICATE, CONVENE AND COLLABORATE

We educate, inform and mobilize stakeholders for collective action and impact to ensure all Georgia families achieve the economic, community and health benefits of setting a strong foundation prenatally and in the first five (5) years of a child’s life.

ADVOCATE

We advocate for effective policies that support access to high-quality early learning and encourage healthy development.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATE

We are a trusted source who brings the most promising innovation and evidence-based practices and research to the state on behalf of Georgia’s youngest children.

¹For additional information about research data and sources, please refer to the GEEARS website at www.geears.org.

OUR STRATEGIES

COMMUNICATE, CONVENE AND COLLABORATE

- Engage and train Georgia advocates in each Congressional District.
- Be a catalyst to ensure stakeholders work together to improve early childhood policy, practice, and research.
- Provide opportunities for business and philanthropic leaders, policy makers and parents to deepen their understanding of current issues.

ADVOCATE

- Advocate for child care quality, accessibility and affordability.
- Ensure a healthy start for all of Georgia's children, with a particular focus on mental health and social-emotional development.
- Champion policies to close the opportunity gap.
- Foster collaboration, joint planning and alignment between early education providers and public schools.
- Ensure Quality Rated is sustained, supported and valued.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATE

- Facilitate the development and adoption of a statewide definition of and success benchmarks for "kindergarten readiness."
- Support Georgia-specific research projects to improve social emotional health for children and influence public policy development.

OUR 2017-2019 GOALS

GOALS

Identify and communicate gaps in early learning quality and access.

Ensure policy makers and partners have the data and resources needed to improve policy and practice.

Identify and develop a diverse group of business and community leaders across the state to champion early learning.

Increase funding for high-quality and accessible early learning.

In anticipation of upcoming elections, cultivate relationships with emerging state and local leaders.

PROXY METRICS

Maps, Quality Rated participation, % of CAPS subsidy recipients enrolled in QR program, opportunities to present data, social media engagement.

Legislature engagement, social media engagement, presentations, requests for data and information.

Speaker trainings, speaker series attendance, champions demonstrate willingness represent GEEARS in the media, making legislative visits, hosting events.

Increases in funding.

Candidates at summit, candidate briefings, early education issues included in platform.