



## Early Childhood Collaboration Support and Services FAQ (COVID-19)

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

Over the last few days state, local and national leaders have taken important steps to limit the spread of Covid-19. Leaders from various agencies are working together to establish processes and protocols that allow our most important and critical services to Georgia's citizens to continue amid social distancing. To this extent, the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) is moving in alignment with our national and state guidance during this time.

**We remain open for business and committed to protecting Georgia's most vulnerable citizens in this uncertain time. Our schedules and work locations have shifted but we will maintain core business hours (8 AM – 5 PM Monday – Friday) to address any needs or questions that may arise.**

Please continue to read this message in its entirety for pertinent information regarding the Division's continued **Early Childhood Collaboration Support and Services**.

---

### 1. I'm in immediate need of childcare services due to school closing. What should I do?

For children in the foster care system in Georgia without an existing CAPS scholarship, a referral for CAPS should be submitted via GA SHINES as soon as possible. After the referral has been submitted, email the DFCS Early Childhood Collaboration Unit ([early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov)) and you will receive a letter to give to the childcare provider to start the enrollment process while a CAPS scholarship is generated.

### 2. I have a child on my caseload who needs their CAPS scholarship changed (type of scholarship or childcare provider) due to school closings.

For children in care with an active CAPS scholarship, changes should be submitted via GA SHINES **AND** the request should be sent directly to CAPS via email at [CAPSReferrals@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:CAPSReferrals@dec.al.ga.gov). Please copy the DFCS Early Childhood Collaboration Unit ([early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov)). A letter will be provided by DFCS to give to the childcare provider to start the enrollment process while an updated CAPS scholarship is generated.

### 3. How do I know which childcare providers have closed in my area?

A listing of childcare providers reporting closure due to COVID-19 can be found on the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) website.

<http://dec.al.ga.gov/BFTS/Covid19.aspx>

4. **I need help locating an open childcare provider in my area. Is there anyone that can assist me?**  
Yes, please reach out to the Early Childhood Collaboration Unit via email at [early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov).

5. **If a foster parent opts to keep children at home due to safety concerns and/or precautions related to COVID-19, will there be any negative consequences from CAPS?**

There won't be any penalties or consequences imposed by DECAL for children who do not utilize their CAPS scholarship through the service week ending March 29, 2020. As a note, childcare programs who receive CAPS payments from DECAL will continue to receive payment for children who were in their care as of March 1st even if the children do not attend or the program closes.

6. **What resources should I give to foster parents to support learning at home for children under the age of five?**

Below are resources by age group from the DECAL to promote continued leaning while childcare programs are closed.

#### All Ages

- **49 Fun Physical Activities**  
<https://activeforlife.com/49-fun-physical-activities-to-do-with-kids-aged-2-to-4/>

#### Toddlers (1-3-year-old children)

- **Everyday learning activities for toddlers**  
<https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/development/intellectual/everyday-toddler-lessons/>
- **Fun, simple activities to engage your toddler**  
<https://thisreadingmama.com/simple-toddler-activities/>
- **Fun art, science, math and literacy activities for toddlers**  
<https://talkingisteaching.org/>
- **Great ideas to keep your toddlers busy and learning**  
<https://busytoddler.com/category/activities/>
- **Tons of simple and fun activities to encourage literacy and school readiness**  
<https://www.vroom.org/>
- **20 learning activities for toddlers and threes that use items easily available around the house**  
<https://www.powerfulmothering.com/20-easy-learning-activities-for-toddlers/>

#### Preschool (3 & 4-year-old children)

- **25 Indoor Play Activities from a Preschool Teacher**  
<https://www.parentmap.com/article/25-indoor-play-activities-from-a-preschool-teacher>
- **20 Indoor Activities besides TV**  
<https://theartofsimple.net/20-indoor-activities-for-kids-besides-tv/>

7. **Who should I contact with any questions not addressed in this FAQ?**

All childcare related questions should be directed to The Early Childhood Collaboration Unit via email at [early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:early.childhood@dhs.ga.gov).

## Safety, Health and Well-Being During This Time

Your health and safety and the health and safety of our children and families are of utmost importance. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following additional steps during this time to remain healthy and safe:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Information is available at no cost at both the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) websites:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

DPH: <https://dph.georgia.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-outbreak>