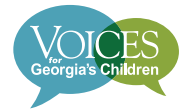


# Quality Early Learning in Georgia



Quality early care and learning is essential to the growth and development of Georgia's youngest learners. Multiple studies have shown how quality impacts outcomes for young children in their early years and well beyond.

## WHAT IS QUALITY?

Although the elements of quality early care will vary by age, quality early learning should:



Have low child-teacher ratios



Implement individualized instruction



Employ qualified and well-trained teachers



Ensure a clean and safe environment



Engage and support families



Promote proper physical, social, and emotional development



Support academic growth particularly in language and literacy



Provide supports for dual-language learners

## QUALITY INITIATIVES IN GEORGIA

### Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)

GELDS are **Georgia's high-quality, research-based early learning standards** created by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) for children ranging from birth to age five.

The standards define the desired content and outcomes for early learning that are aligned with K-12 standards. The standards support children's individual rates of development, approaches to learning, and cultural contexts.



The standards are organized into five domains of learning with corresponding standards and age-specific indicators. **The five domains of learning are:**

1

Physical Development and Motor Skills

2

Social and Emotional Development

3

Approaches to Play and Learning

4

Communication, Language and Literacy Cognitive

5

Development and General Knowledge

### Early Education Empowerment Zones (E<sup>3</sup>Zs)

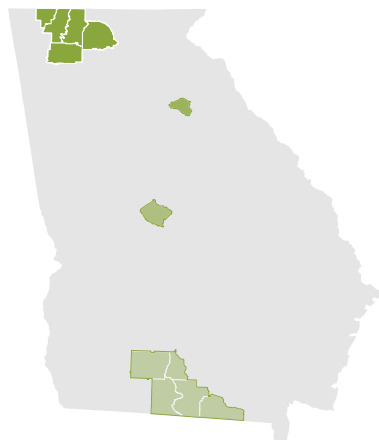
In 2014, DECAL established four E<sup>3</sup>Zs in regions of the state with large populations of underserved young children with high needs.

**North:**  
Catoosa, Whitfield,  
Murray, Gordon and  
Gilmer counties

**East:**  
Clarke County

**Central:**  
Bibb County

**South:**  
Colquitt, Cook,  
Brooks, Lowndes  
and Echols counties



This three-year pilot is meant to improve the quality of early education through targeted services and for the four selected regions **to serve as models** for other communities across the state.

#### Services provided to E<sup>3</sup>Zs include:

- ✓ Increased child care subsidies
- ✓ Voluntary center-based home visiting services
- ✓ Health screenings, assessments, and referrals
- ✓ Additional professional development for early childhood educators
- ✓ Support to get 100 percent of child care programs Quality Rated

## QUALITY RATED



**Quality Rated is a voluntary quality rating and improvement system** for early and school-age care programs administered by DECAL. Quality Rated is meant to **assess, improve, and communicate** the level of quality of a child care program.

To become Quality Rated, programs must submit a portfolio with self-reported information and receive a site visit by independent experts. Based on their star rating, programs receive a **tiered reimbursement package** that includes training, materials, and equipment or financial bonuses.



Quality Rated is a **three-star rating system** that awards programs a star rating based on standards.

### Benefits for Parents and Families



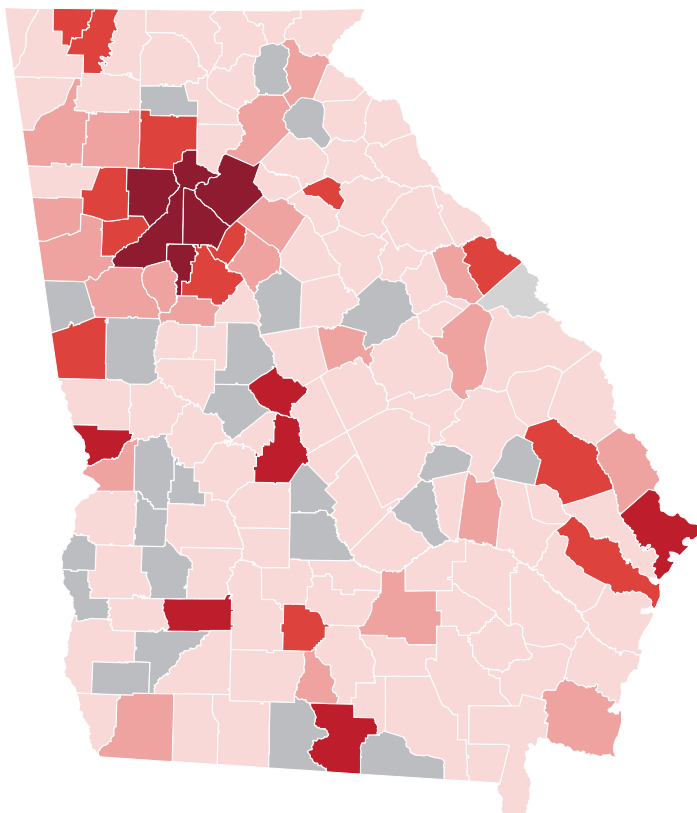
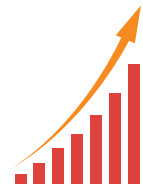
Quality Rated helps parents and families find high-quality child care so they can make the **most informed choice** for their child.



Parents can use the **FREE, online tool** to access information about specific programming including safety and inspection reports, teacher credentials, and ages served. To find Quality Rated programs in your area, visit **[www.QualityRated.org](http://www.QualityRated.org)**.

### Benefits to Georgia

Regardless of their rating, all programs that participate are committed to improving the quality of their program by **going above and beyond Georgia's licensing standards**. At a community and state level, Quality Rated creates a shared understanding of quality learning and a commitment to achieving it.



Of over **5,000** state licensed and monitored child care programs, over **1,100** are Quality Rated and more than **1,400** are in the process of becoming Quality Rated.

Of Georgia's **159** counties, **135** have at least one Quality Rated child care center.

*\*As of July 2016*

#### Number of Quality Rated Centers Per County

0	11-15	16-20
1-5	6-10	21+



For more information about Voices for Georgia's Children, go to **[www.georgiavoices.org/earlyed](http://www.georgiavoices.org/earlyed)**. For more information about GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students, go to **[www.geears.org](http://www.geears.org)**.