

# 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 early care and learning impacts outcomes for young children in their early years and well beyond.

## WHAT IS QUALITY?<sup>1</sup>

- Have low child-teacher ratios
- Implement individualized instruction
- Ensure a clean and safe environment
- Support academic growth particularly in language and literacy
- Engage and support families
- Promote proper physical, social, and emotional development
- Provides supports for dual-language learners
- Employ qualified and well-trained teachers

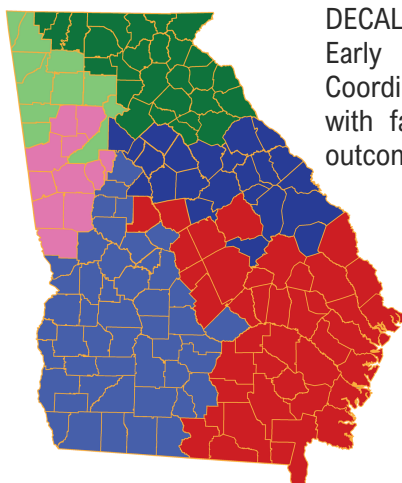
## QUALITY INITIATIVES IN GEORGIA

### Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)<sup>2</sup>

The GELDS provide a research-based, age-appropriate framework for children from birth to age five. Flexible by design, the GELDS respect each child's developmental pace, learning style, and cultural context while guiding high-quality early learning experiences.

The standards address the question, **“What should children from birth to age five know and be able to do?”** and align with the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for K-12, as well as the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Work Sampling System. Organized by age bands, the GELDS form a continuum of skills, behaviors, and concepts that support children's growth during their earliest years.

### Early Education Community Partnerships Team<sup>3</sup>



- North West
- North East
- Central East
- Central West
- South East
- South West

DECAL continues to strengthen community outreach and engagement through its Early Education Community Partnerships (EECP) Team. Six Community Coordinators, each serving one of DECAL's administrative regions, work directly with families and local organizations to share resources and improve learning outcomes for young children.

The EECP Team builds connections between state programs and community efforts, prioritizing strategies that expand access to high-quality care through Georgia's Quality Rated Child Care system. Regional Coordinators:

- Partner with local stakeholders to align services for children birth to age 8.
- Increase public awareness of early education resources.
- Serve as a regional point of contact for all DECAL programs and services.
- Convene birth-to-eight collaboratives and child care engagement networks.

## GELDS' Five Domains of Learning



Physical Development and Motor Skills



Social and Emotional Development



Approaches to Play and Learning



Communication, Language, and Literacy



Cognitive Development and General Knowledge



# QUALITY RATED IN GEORGIA

## WHAT IS IT?

**Quality Rated in a voluntary rating and improvement system** for early and school-age care programs administered by DECAL. The goal of Quality Rated is to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality within Georgia's child care programs.

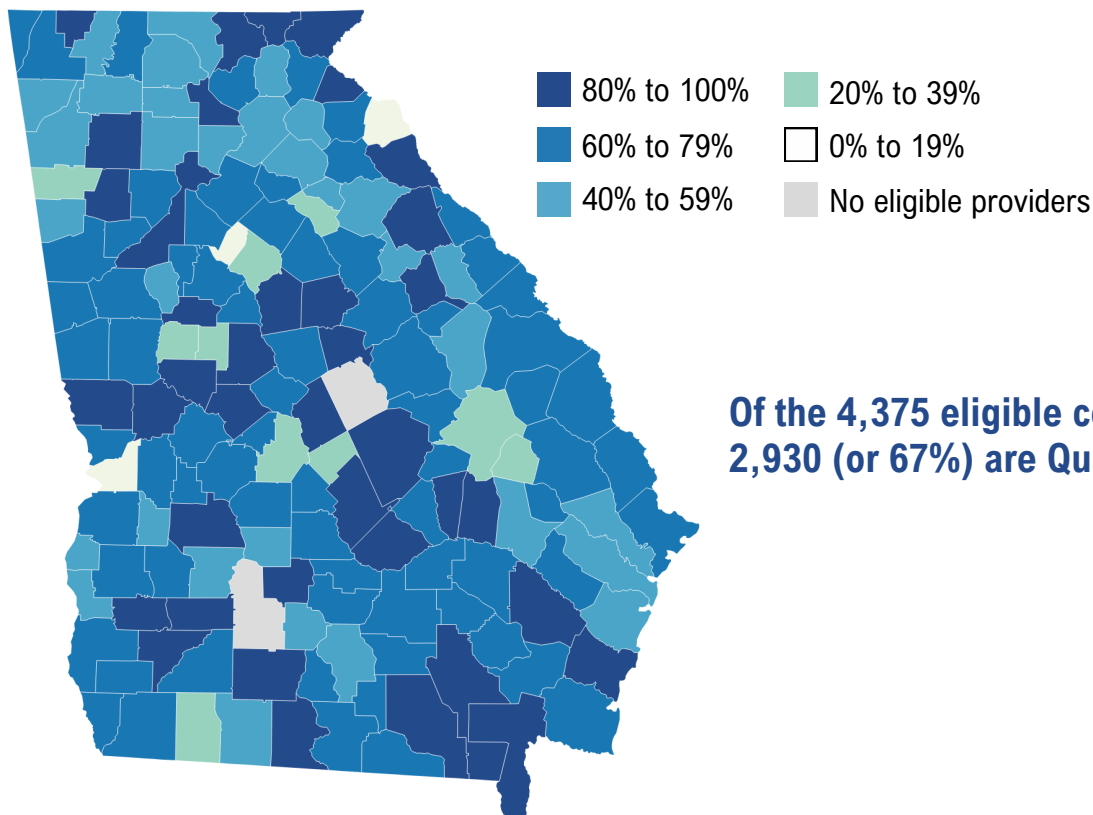


Programs become Quality Rated by completing an online portfolio and classroom observations, which together determine their Star Rating.



Quality Rated programs earn 1, 2, or 3 stars based on standards for health, safety, interactions, learning, and more.

## WHERE ARE GEORGIA'S QUALITY RATED PROGRAMS?



**Of the 4,375 eligible centers, 2,930 (or 67%) are Quality Rated.**

*Percentage of Quality Rated Centers, by County* <sup>4</sup>

## BENEFITS

### For parents:

[QualityRated.org](http://QualityRated.org) is a free, trusted resource where families can find high-quality child care and pre-k programs, with details on safety, rates, ages served, and more. Families can also call the Quality Rated Family Support Call Center at 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS for additional assistance.

### For the state:

Regardless of their rating, all participating programs are dedicated to going beyond Georgia's licensing standards to improve quality. Quality Rated also fosters a shared commitment to continuous improvement at both the community and state levels.

SCAN BELOW TO SEE  
FACTSHEET CITATIONS



# REFERENCES FOR QUALITY EARLY LEARNING IN GEORGIA

- 1 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Quality Rated Orientation (QRO). Accessed February 26, 2025 from <https://ga-decal.org/QRO/content/documents/qro-course-guide-english.pdf>.
- 2 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "Welcome to The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)." Accessed February 26, 2025 from <https://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/GELDS.aspx>.
- 3 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, professional communication, February 2025.
- 4 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, professional communication, September 2025.