



Nathan Deal
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239
reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



**Foundation Awards Grants to Georgia Child Care Programs
Impacted by Hurricane Michael**

*Forty-three mini-grants will help support 1,343 children
and 220 teachers across 20 Georgia counties*

ATLANTA, GA (November 21, 2018) – Forty-three licensed child care programs in Southwest Georgia impacted by Hurricane Michael will receive special mini-grants from the international organization Save the Children and administered through the Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning. The mini-grants, totaling \$25,000, will help support 1,343 children and 220 teachers across 20 Georgia counties approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for individual assistance. The programs are in Clay, Columbia, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Laurens, Miller, Randolph, Seminole, Sumter, and Thomas counties.

Created in 2017 by Governor Nathan Deal and the Georgia General Assembly, the foundation serves as the nonprofit organization through which Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) secures private funds to enable the agency to expand support for and recognition of child care programs and early childhood educators.

“We appreciate the support of Save the Children and the Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning for these child care providers, especially here at Thanksgiving,” said Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Providers have reported everything from wind and water damage both outside and inside their facilities to trees uprooted and equipment destroyed outside on their playgrounds.”

Earlier this month, the Georgia General Assembly met in special session to provide roughly \$470 million of emergency and tax incentives for victims of Hurricane Michael. It was one of the worst natural disasters in Georgia history.

Carrie Ashbee, Executive Director, explained that the Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning “makes strategic investments to improve and expand high-quality early education to help ensure all children in Georgia are prepared to succeed when they enter kindergarten regardless of family income or location.”

Programs in the impacted area were informed about the grant program by consultants in DECAL’s Child Care Services Division, staff with the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, and through DECAL’s social media channels.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decals.ga.gov.