



Federal Stimulus Child Care and Development Block Grant Funds: Using the Dollars Wisely

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Georgia should receive approximately \$82.8 million in Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds. This includes \$72 million for child care and afterschool subsidies for low-income working families (administered by the Department of Human Resources) and \$10.8 million for quality improvement initiatives (administered by the Department of Early Care and Learning), of which \$4 million is to be used for infant and toddler programs.

The Governor should accept these funds and use them to stimulate the economy by supporting low-income working families and those seeking to find employment and investing in our future workforce. The Georgia Afterschool Investment Council (GAIC) offers the following recommendations:

SUBSIDY FUNDING

Subsidy funding should support low-income working families in their efforts to attain or maintain employment by providing subsidies and ensuring program requirements are aligned with current recession reality. GAIC supports Georgia Budget and Policy Institute's (GBPI) recommendations:

- 1) **Eliminate the CAPS waitlist and serve 4,000 to 7,200 additional children.** Demand for child care support is far greater than supply; parents across the state are on waitlists for subsidy support.
 - 2) **Extend the job search period from 4 weeks to 3 months.** This allows parents with subsidies to retain child care support while they seek employment.
 - 3) **Waive copayments for families under 100% of the federal poverty level.**
 - 4) **Update the CAPS income eligibility definition from 2005 poverty levels to 2009 poverty levels and update the definition annually.**
-

QUALITY FUNDING

CCDBG quality dollars provide support to programs serving young children (0-4) and school-age children (5-13). Quality funding from the stimulus package should support professional development, technical assistance, scholarships and incentives to ensure all programs are of high-quality and aligned with positive youth outcomes. Specific recommendations for school-age programs include:

- 1) **Support existing professional development initiatives aligned with positive youth outcomes.** The *Georgia Afterschool Institute* (GAI) and the *Afterschool Program Assessment System* (APAS) offer professional development linked with 21st century skills, academic goals, and youth development and an assessment system to enable quality improvement and accountability.
- 2) **Expand DECAL's Quality Initiatives Program** to increase the capacity of afterschool educators to deliver high-quality programming through technical assistance, scholarships, and incentives.