



Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning

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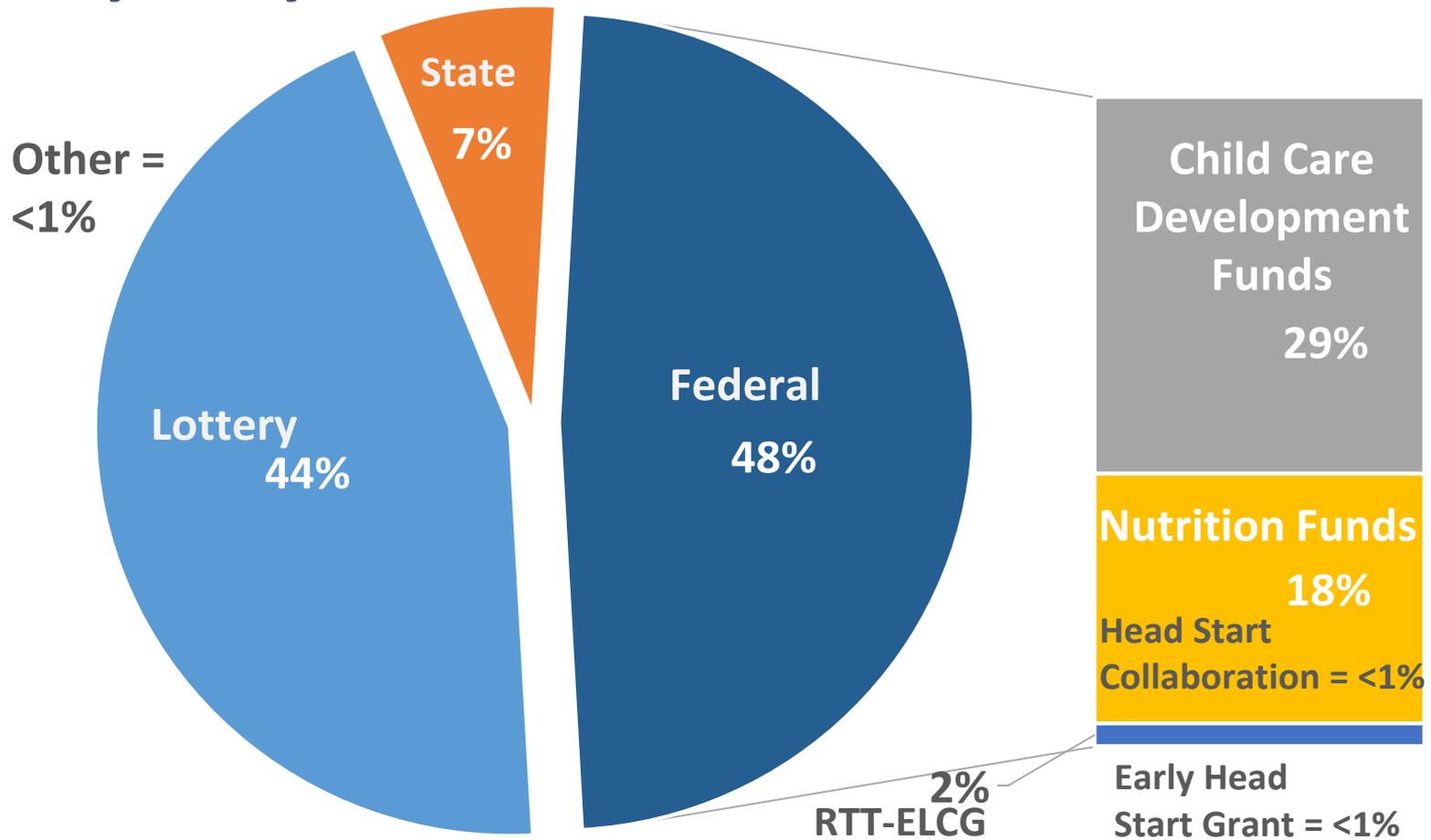
Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.state.ga.us

Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning (DECAL)

- Created in 2004
- Aligned key early education programs and initiatives
- Administers
 - Georgia's Pre-K Program
 - Child Care Licensing
 - Child Care Subsidy (CAPS)
 - Quality Rated
 - Head Start State Collaboration Office
 - Federal Nutrition Programs
 - Other Early Learning Initiatives

FY 2018 DECAL Funding = Approximately \$816,094,219



About 85 percent of human brain growth occurs in the first three years of life.

A young child's brain develops 700 new neurons every SECOND

Research shows that for every dollar invested in high-quality early learning programs, at least \$4 is saved in future costs related to social services, remedial education, public safety and juvenile justice.

Children who enter kindergarten ready to succeed are more likely to read on grade level by third grade, graduate from high school, go on to college, and be productive members of the workforce.

There are about 2,000 days from when a child is born to when they start kindergarten. Every day matters.

As early as nine months old, children in poverty begin to show signs of slipping behind in their development.

Child Care Services Data *(as of 11/7/17)*

- **Child Care Learning Centers – 3,091**
 - Typically, care is provided in a commercial type building.
 - These facilities can care for 7 or more children.
- **Family Child Care Learning Homes- 1,670**
 - Typically, care is provided in a private home.
 - These programs can care for three to six unrelated children.
- **Family, Friend, and Neighbor - approximately 250**

Overview of CAPS

- Supports families who are considered low-income with the cost of care so they can work, attend training, or school.
- Upholds DECAL's efforts to ensure access to high quality early learning for all children, regardless of income or location.
- Funded primarily by the Child Care Development Fund(CCDF).

CCDF Subsidy Program – Statewide

Stats for FFY 2017 (10/01/16 – 9/30/17)

- Number of families served: **47,636**
- Number of children served: **83,866**
- Number of child care programs receiving payments: **3,863**
- Number of Quality Rated child care programs receiving Tiered Bonus payments: **939**
- Number of children served by Quality Rated child care program: **28,858**

CCDF Subsidy Program – Zone 3

Stats for FFY 2017 (10/01/16 – 9/30/17)

- Number of families served: **5,405**
- Number of children served: **8,158**
- Number of child care programs receiving payments: **522**
- Number of Quality Rated child care programs receiving Tiered Bonus payments: **120**
- Number of children served by Quality Rated child care program: **2,312**

Barriers for Rural Communities

- High Cost of Child Care
- Limited Access to Quality Child Care
 - Fewer child care programs
 - Transportation to and from care
- Workforce issues
 - Lack of qualified teachers
 - Compensation

CAPS Eligibility Transition

- CAPS started to transition to DECAL around 2012.
- The eligibility determination function remained with the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS).
- A transfer of the eligibility function is underway to bring all components of the CAPS program to DECAL.
- The transfer is near completion.

CAPS Eligibility requirements for **families** include:

- Georgia Resident
- Income (less than 50% State Median Income)
- Activity Requirement
 - Work 24 or more hours per week
 - Enrolled full-time in an educational/vocational program

CAPS Eligibility requirements for **children** include:

- Ages 0-13 years
- Up to 18 years if special needs or court ordered
- US citizen
- Immunization or opt out affidavit

Priority Groups

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families(TANF) applicants, recipients or families transitioning from TANF.
- Child Protective Services(CPS) and court ordered supervision cases.
- Children in GA DFCS custody.
- Children with special needs.
- Grandparents raising grandchildren.

Priority Groups Continued...

- Minor Parents.
- Persons who have experienced a natural disaster.
- Persons considered homeless.
- Persons experiencing domestic violence.
- Very low income (50% FPL).
- Children enrolled in a GA Pre-K (after care).

Highlights of Recent Changes

- Increased tiered reimbursement.
- Additional state funding to support quality.
- 12 month eligibility.
- Expanded subsidy grants.
- Enhanced focus on family support and engagement.

“Sliding scale” discussion

- Generally, work or an approved activity is a requirement for participation.
- 12 month eligibility.
- At present, a new family is eligible if in one of the priority groups and eligibility requirements are met.
- Very low income priority group is at or below 50% of federal poverty level (FPL).

“Sliding Scale” Continued...

- Once on the program, priority groups no longer apply and the parental authority may remain on the program until their income exceeds 85% of state median income(SMI).
- In other words, they may take a new job, receive a promotion, get a salary increase, and remain on the program as long as they don't exceed 85% SMI. The 85% is a federal mandate.

Family of Four Example Today

- 50% of FPL = \$12,300
- 85% of SMI = \$60,060
- Therefore, the family could potentially increase their income by approximately \$47,760 or 388% to better their financial circumstances and still remain on the program.

Potential ideas, solutions, & moving forward

- At this point, the program is still in transition and evolving from recent changes.
- We strive for continuous improvement, welcome suggestions, and would certainly follow up on any specific recommendations from the RDC.
- However, currently we don't feel any additional legislation or funding for this particular purpose is required. Program oversight and changes could be addressed through rule, policy, management, etc.

Questions & Discussion