



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Bright from the Start Announces:

\$1,200 **FIRST** Program!

(First-time Incentive to Raise Standards for Teachers)

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible for **FIRST** – a \$1,200 first-time incentive – if you are currently studying for or have just earned **your first early care and education credential** – it can be a:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) credential*
- Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)
- Technical College Diploma (TCD)
- Associate Degree (AA)

See reverse for eligibility tool!

- ☺ Teachers & Assistant Teachers, Directors & Assistant Directors – eligible!
- ☺ School-Age Care Providers – eligible!
- ☺ Georgia Pre-K Teachers in public and private settings – eligible!

* CDA must be earned through either the Technical College System of Georgia or through a community-based CDA program that is approved through the Professional Development System

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

The **FIRST** incentive can only be paid once to an individual on their first **valid early childhood education credential** awarded between September 1, 2009 and February 28, 2011. (Ex.: If you already have a CDA, then earn a TCC, that would not qualify for the incentive.)

Deadline extended to 7/1/2011

Approval is not a guarantee of payment. Payment is based on the availability of funds and the eligibility of the applicant at the time the applicant presents his/her credential.

The **FIRST** incentive can only be awarded to the individual whose name appears on the official certificate, diploma or transcript. Applicants who are awarded funds will receive an IRS form 1099 and are required by the IRS to report the income on their tax return.

Credentials must be earned through either the Technical College System of Georgia (CDA, TCC, TCD, AA) or through a community-based CDA program approved through the Bright from the Start Professional Development System. Associate degree must be obtained from a SACS-accredited, HOPE-eligible public or private institution.

PRE-APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

at www.caresolutions.com or by
calling 800-227-3410 (toll-free) or 770-642-6722.



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This program is funded by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning using the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It is managed by Care Solutions, Inc.



Are you studying for your **FIRST credential?
Child Development Associate (CDA)?
Technical Certificate of Credit?
Technical College Diploma?
Associate Degree?**

There is a pre-application process that will allow you to determine if your current employment situation and planned program of study will qualify you for the \$1,200 **FIRST** (First-time Incentive to Raise Standards for Teachers) program.

Answer the following questions to see if you should fill out the pre-application:

1. Are you pursuing an early childhood education program that will lead to earning your first Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, Technical Certificate of Credit, Technical College Diploma or Associate Degree by February 28, 2011 **Deadline extended to 7/1/2011** Yes No
OR
Did you earn your first credential or degree after September 1, 2009 and before February 28, 2011? Yes No
2. Are you working in a child care center (includes after school) that is licensed by Bright from the Start or the Department of Defense?
OR
Are you a family child care provider registered with Bright from the Start?
OR
Are you working in a private or public Georgia Pre-K Program? Yes No
3. Are you working as a teacher or assistant teacher in preschool at least 25 hours per week *or* in a school-age care program at least 20 hours per week *or* as a director or assistant director at least 40 hours per week? Yes No
4. Have you been employed with your current qualified employer for *at least three months*? Yes No
5. Did you attend/are you attending/will you attend:
One of Georgia's technical colleges *or*
A HOPE-eligible, SACS-accredited institution with an early childhood education department *or*
A 120 clock-hour CDA training approved through the Georgia Training Approval System. Yes No

**If you answered "Yes" to all of the above questions,
you are on track to receive the \$1,200 **FIRST** program award!
A pre-application will be available November 2, 2009 at www.caresolutions.com**