



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

**Sonny Perdue**  
*Governor*

10 Park Place, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
(404) 656-5957

**Holly A. Robinson, Ed.D.**  
*Commissioner*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Stacey Moore

404-656-0239

[Stacey.Moore@dec.state.ga.us](mailto:Stacey.Moore@dec.state.ga.us)

**Thousands of Georgia's early childhood educators get a bonus**

**ATLANTA, Ga., (January 7, 2008)** – Nearly 3,000 early care and education professionals across the state of Georgia recently received an incentive check for their dedication to the children they serve.

The INCENTIVES program, sponsored by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, distributed approximately \$1.2 million to 2,874 people. The checks, ranging from \$200 to \$1,000, were awarded to eligible child care professionals.

“The INCENTIVES program is designed to encourage those who work with young children to enhance their education level as well as lengthen their period of employment in their current setting,” Carol Hartman, grants supervisor for Bright from the Start, said. “Studies recognize that it is important for young children to form strong attachments with their primary caregivers, which is possible when there is longevity among the caregivers serving Georgia’s children,” she stated.

**-more-**

**Page 2 – Thousands of Georgia’s early childhood educators receive monetary incentive**

Bright from the Start receives many letters every year from long-time providers who simply enjoy what they do.

“I have been a provider for about 24 years and I love it,” Carolyn Phillips said. “I wanted to do some things to improve my nursery for the children, but my finances would not allow me to do them at the time. The monies that I receive will help me to buy some nice educational toys and other needed items for the nursery.”

To be eligible for the program, participants must work at least 25 hours per week and have 12 consecutive months of employment with the same employer at a licensed child care learning center, group day care home or registered family child care home that serves subsidized children or participates in the federal government’s Child and Adult Care Food Program. In addition, educators must also earn less than \$14.45 per hour as well as have a valid qualifying credential or degree in early childhood education, child development or child care administration.

Now in its seventh year, the INCENTIVES program has impacted the state tremendously by distributing more than \$8.77 million in supplements to approximately 4,650 individuals employed in early care and education. Administered by Care Solutions, Inc., the INCENTIVES program is funded by Bright from Start using federal Child Care Development funds and with the support of Smart Start, the Early Learning Division of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta.

**-more-**

**Page 3 – Thousands of Georgia’s early childhood educators receive monetary incentive**

For more information about the INCENTIVES program, visit [www.caresolutions.com](http://www.caresolutions.com).

###

**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 known Georgia Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers federal nutrition programs, manages the voluntary quality enhancement programs, houses the Head Start 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.dec.state.ga.us](http://www.dec.state.ga.us).