Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, 670 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334
Phone: (404) 657-5562 WWW.DECAL.GA.GOV

Date: 9/12/2025 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit **Arrival:** 1:05 PM **Departure:** 3:05 PM

CCLC-63961
Growing Hearts and Hands Early Learning Center, Inc.
1103 N. Highway 113 Carrollton, GA 30117 Carroll County
(678) 601-3067

Regional Consultant
Kara Williams
Phone: ()
Fax:
kara.williams@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation		
09/12/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing
06/24/2025	Complaint Investigation by Phone	Good Standing
09/12/2024	Initial Licensing Study	Good Standing

Compliance Zone Designation - A summary measure of a program's 12 month monitoring history, as it pertains to child care health and safety rules. The three compliance zones are good standing, support, and deficient.

Good Standing - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.
Support - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules.
Deficient - Program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.

Ratios/License Capacity

Building	Room	Age Group	Staff	Children	NC/C	Max 35 SF.	35 SF. Comp.	Max 25 SF.	25 SF. Comp.	Notes
Main	1L-Gym/Activity Room		0	0	C	47	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Main	1R - 18mths - 2yrs	Two Year Olds	1	6	C	8	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	2L- 3yrs - 4yrs	Three Year Olds	1	7	C	7	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	3L- 2yrs old		0	0	C	5	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Main	3R - 6wks - 18mths	Infants and One Year Olds	1	8	C	16	C	NA	NA	Floor Play,Nap
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 83			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 21		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 83			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground	18	C

Enrolled Children

Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
5	5	10	11	2	0	14

Comments
Consultant discussed rule changes and updates effective July 1, 2025.

Any rule violation which subjects a child to injury or life-threatening situation or any rule violations previously cited but not corrected, may result in the imposition of an adverse enforcement action. Serious or continued noncompliance may also jeopardize participation in one or more DECAL program(s).

Please refer to the website, http://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx , for information regarding October 1, 2018 rule changes about Criminal Records Checks that may affect your facility. In summary,

- New records checks will be required to be completed if a staff member experiences a six month break in service from the child care industry
- New clearance is required at least once every five years
- Any staff member solely responsible for supervising children will be required to have completed a comprehensive background clearance
- All staff members are required to have completed at least a national fingerprint based clearance check
- Any staff member with only the national fingerprint based clearance, must be under constant and direct supervision of a staff member with a satisfactory comprehensive records check clearance
- Facilities are required to use DECAL KOALA for Criminal Records Checks, including to verify portability of an employee

O.C.G.A. Section 42.1.12(i)(2) requires Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to notify licensed child care programs on accessing and retrieving from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's (GBI) website a list of the names and addresses of all registered sexual offenders. Please see GBI's website located at http://gbi.georgia.gov to access the Georgia Sex Offender Registry.

Refutation Process:

You have the right to refute any of the citations noted in this report with which you disagree. To refute a citation(s), do the following:

1) Log into DECAL KOALA www.decalkoala.com with the userid for your program
2) On the home page scroll down to the Inspection Reports and select 'Refute Citation' for the visit report in dispute
3) Select the specific rule number(s) that you are refuting, add the reason for disagreement regarding the rule citation, and upload supporting documentation
4) Submit the refutation in DECAL KOALA to Child Care Services (CCS) within 10 business days of the completion date.

Your refutation will be forwarded to the appropriate CCS manager, who will follow up with you about your concerns. If you have any questions about this process, contact our office at 404-657-5562.

Bright from the Start recommends that all licensed child care providers carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect its clients. If you do not have this liability insurance, you are required to post a notice with ½ inch letters in a conspicuous location in the program, notify the parent or guardian of each child in care in writing, obtain their signature to acknowledge receipt and maintain this written acknowledgment on file at the program at all times while the child attends the program and for 12 months after the child's last date of attendance. (O.C.G.A. Section 20-1A-4)

Important Quality Rated/CAPS Update:

As January 1, 2022, child care providers must be Quality Rated to receive Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS). Newly licensed, or new to CAPS providers may be eligible for the new CAPS/QR Provisional Status, allowing for scholarships while working toward a star rating.

Contact the Quality Rated help desk at 855-800-7747 or qualityrated@decal.ga.gov for more information. Free technical assistance is available!

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Summary Report

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The following information is associated with a Monitoring Visit:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.12 Equipment & Toys(CR) **Met**

Comment
Equipment and furniture observed to be properly secured, as applicable.

591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools & Water-related Activities(CR) **N/A**

Comment
Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

591-1-1-.08 Children's Records **Defer**

Defer
591-1-1-.08(2)-This citation was deferred until the next regulatory visit.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
Center staff will have and use a plan to track immunization forms for all enrolled children and to ensure the form or affidavit are obtained from the parent or guardian within 30 days of enrollment. Parents will be informed their child cannot remain enrolled in the center without this documentation.

Correction Deadline: 7/4/2025

Facility

591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR) **Met**

Comment
Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center on this date.

591-1-1-.25 Physical Plant - Safe Environment(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.25(13) requires that potentially hazardous equipment, materials and supplies be stored in a locked area inaccessible to children. It was determined based on observation that the following hazards were observed accessible to children:
* Classroom 1R- two full bottles of Lysol spray, Lysol wipes, and baby wipes labeled "keep out of reach of children", were left on top of the small shelf sitting to the front right side of the classroom.
* A plunger, toilet brush, mop, and a bucket filled with water and cleaner, were observed in the children's bathroom in the main hall way.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will identify all hazardous items and keep them in a locked area inaccessible to children. The Center will inform all Staff about hazardous items and the safe storage of those items.

Correction Deadline: 9/12/2025

591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR) **Met**

Comment
Discussed maintenance of resilient surface. Please fluff and redistribute.

Health and Hygiene

591-1-1-.10 Diapering Areas & Practices(CR) **Met**

Comment
Staff stated proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

591-1-1-.17 Hygiene(CR) **Met**

Comment
Please ensure lids remain on trash cans containing organic waste.

Comment
Staff were observed to remind children to wash hands on this date.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR) **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.20(1) - Discussed with provider to ensure all fields are completed and signed by a guardian for each child with a medication form.

Correction Deadline: 9/12/2025

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.21(4) - Discussed updating the Center's policies and procedures to include the program’s practices regarding the expulsion and suspension of children enrolled for care within the description of behavior management and discipline actions used by the Center.
Also discussed to ensure a description of the practices followed by the Center to prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma in children up to five years of age that includes the following information: how to recognize, respond to, and report the signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; strategies to assist staff members in understanding how to care for infants and how to cope with a crying, fussing, or distraught child; strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to five years of age; and a list of prohibited behaviors when dealing with children.
Additional information can be found in the CCLC Indicator Manual found on DECAL’s website at: https://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: https://dontshake.org/.

Correction Deadline: 9/17/2025

Safety

591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR) **Met**

Comment
Please be mindful of voice tone in redirecting children.

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR) **N/A**

Comment
Center does not provide routine transportation.

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR) **Not Met**

Finding

591-1-1-.30(2) requires the Center to provide a safe sleep environment in accordance with American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) recommendations as listed in these rules for all infants. Center Staff shall place an infant to sleep on the infant's back in a crib unless the Center has been provided a physician's written statement authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant that includes how the infant shall be placed to sleep and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed. When an infant can easily turn over from back to front and back again, Staff shall continue to put the infant to sleep initially on the infant's back but allow the infant to roll over into his or her preferred position and not re-position the infant. Sleepers, sleep sacks and wearable blankets that fit according to the commercial manufacturer's guidelines and will not slide up around the infant's face may be used when necessary for the comfort of the sleeping infant. Swaddling shall not be used unless the Center has been provided a physician's written statement authorizing its use for a particular infant that includes instructions and a time frame for swaddling the infant. Center Staff shall not place objects or allow objects to be placed in or on the crib with an infant such as but not limited to toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items and shall not attach objects or allow objects to be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, such as, but not limited to, crib gyms, toys, mirrors and mobiles. It was determined based on observation that an infant was observed sleeping in a crib with a blanket, and two empty cribs were observed to contain blankets and bottles. Additionally, staff was observed placing an infant to sleep on their stomach.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will take all steps necessary to provide a safe sleep environment for infants as listed in these rules; will train Staff to follow these rules; and will monitor for compliance.

Correction Deadline: 9/12/2025

Finding
591-1-1-.30(2)(c) requires that infants shall not sleep in equipment other than safety-approved cribs, such as, but not limited to, a car safety seat, bouncy seat, highchair, or swing. Infants who arrive at the Center asleep or fall asleep in such equipment, on the floor or elsewhere, shall be transferred to a safety-approved crib. It was determined based on observation that in classroom 4L-6wks-18mnths an eight-month-old child was asleep on their stomach, on the classroom floor, with the lights dimmed. Staff were unaware the child was asleep on the floor.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will only place infants in safe cribs to sleep and will transfer them to a safe crib when the infants are asleep in other equipment.

Correction Deadline: 9/12/2025

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 8 **Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1**

Staff # 6 Not Met

Date of Hire: 03/17/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing,.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate,.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing

591-1-1-.09 Criminal Records and Comprehensive Background Checks(CR) **Met**

Comment
Director provided 2 file(s) for employees hired since last visit.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR) **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.14(1)(a) - Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, new staff are required to obtain pediatric First Aid and pediatric CPR training within 45 days of employment. It was further discussed that programs must have at least one person with current pediatric First Aid and pediatric CPR training in each classroom at all times.

Correction Deadline: 10/12/2025

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.33(2)(a)-(n) - Discussed that all Employees, including volunteers, independent contractors, students-in-training, etc. should have a completed initial program orientation form on file.

Correction Deadline: 9/13/2025

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.33(5)(b)1. - New - Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, all staff are required to obtain at least two hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices and at least two hours in on-going child development and health and safety related topics as part of their 10 hours of annual training.

Correction Deadline: 10/12/2025

591-1-1-.31 Staff(CR) **Met**

Comment
Discussed that all lead staff must enroll in an approved education program within 6 months of hire and complete degree within 18 months.

Comment
Staff observed to be compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

Staffing and Supervision

591-1-1-.32 Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size(CR) **Met**

Comment
Discussed combining children of mixed ages.

Comment
Discussed naptime ratios.

Comment
Discussed proper supervision: responding promptly, bathrooms and playgrounds.

591-1-1-.32 Supervision(CR) **Not Met**

Comment
Discussed proper supervision: responding promptly, bathrooms and playgrounds.

Finding
591-1-1-.32(7) requires that children be supervised at all times appropriate to the individual age, needs and capabilities of each child. Such supervision must include, but not be limited to, indoor and outdoor activities, mealtimes, naptime, transportation, field trips, and transitions between activities. "Supervision" means that the appropriate number of Staff members are physically present in the area where children are being cared for and are providing watchful oversight to the children, volunteers and Students-in-Training. The persons supervising in the child care area must be alert, positioned to maximize their ability to hear and see the children at all times, and able to respond promptly to the needs and actions of the children being supervised, as well as the actions of the volunteers and Students-in-Training, and provide timely attention to the children's actions and needs. Staff shall be attentive and participating with all children during mealtimes and shall be seated within an arm’s length away from children thirty-six (36) months of age and younger. It was determined based on observation that staff in classroom 1r-18mths-2yrs left the classroom for approximately one minute, leaving the children unsupervised. No other staff were observed in the classroom.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will train Staff and monitor to ensure they are providing supervision and watchful oversight to the children at all times.

Correction Deadline: 9/12/2025