



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: 2/10/2025 **VisitType:** Licensing Study

Arrival: 10:55 AM **Departure:** 4:00 PM

CCLC-16643

Kidz Fortress Childcare Learning Center

2421 Mike Padgett Highway, Suite A Augusta, GA 30906

Richmond County

(706) 798-1072 kidzfortress@comcast.net

Process & QI Unit Consultant

Melyn Smith

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Mailing Address

Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation			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.
02/10/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
09/10/2024	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
02/21/2024	Licensing Study	Good Standing	

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	GA PreK	2	16	C	20	C	28	C	Centers,Transiti oning,Music
Main	1R	Two Year Olds and Three Year Olds	1	11	C	15	C	21	C	Story,Lunch,Mu sic
Main	2 R		0	0	C	10	C	NA	NA	
Main	2L	Two Year Olds	1	3	C	9	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Story,Nap
Main	3L	Infants and One Year Olds	2	6	C	14	C	NA	NA	Nap,Lunch
Main	3R		0	0	C	16	C	23	C	
Main	4L	Two Year Olds and Three Year Olds	1	6	C	9	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Nap
Main	4R		0	0	C	8	C	12	C	
Main	5R	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	8	C	8	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Nap
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 109					Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 134					
Total # Children this Date: 50					Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 134					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Left	31	C
Main	Right Back	61	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
4	15	15	6	6	20	30

Comments

The purpose of this visit was to conduct a licensing study and to follow up on the previous visit.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date

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@dec.al.ga.gov for more information. Free technical assistance is available!



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(Findings Report)

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The following information is associated with a Licensing Study:

Activities and Equipment

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

Technical Assistance

Comment

A variety of equipment and toys were observed throughout the center.

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.12(4) requires that equipment and furniture is secured if it is of a weight or mass that could cause injury from tipping, falling, or being pulled or pushed over. Please ensure the television in the 3R Classroom is anchored to prevent it from tipping, falling, or being pulled over when children are present.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025

591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools & Water-related Activities(CR)

N/A

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

Records Reviewed: 5

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 4

Child # 1 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 2 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Number Missing

Child # 3 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)-Doctor, Clinic, Phone Numbers

Child # 5 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

591-1-1-.08 Children's Records**Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.08(1) requires the Center Staff to maintain a file for each child while such child is in care and for one year after that child is no longer enrolled. In order for the file to be complete, the file shall contain the following: child's name, birth date, sex, address, living arrangement, name of school if applicable; names of both Parents, home and work addresses, and home and work telephone numbers; name(s) and addresses of the person(s) to whom the child may be released including address, telephone numbers, relationship to child and to Parent(s), and other identifying information; name(s) and telephone number(s) of person(s) to contact in emergencies when the Parent cannot be reached; name and telephone number of the child's primary source of health care; and a statement regarding known allergies, physical problems, mental health disorders, intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities which limit the child's participation in the program. It was determined, based on review of records, that out of five children's files reviewed, two were lacking the addresses for release persons, one was lacking the phone number for the child's primary physician, and one was lacking the work phone numbers for the child's parents on this date.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

Center staff will develop a plan that includes how to obtain all required information for currently enrolled children and how to ensure this is done for future enrollees as well. The plan will also include how and where to maintain files for the required amount of time. The plan will be implemented and followed.

Correction Deadline: 2/14/2025**Evening Care****591-1-1-.32 Staffing/Supervision(CR)****N/A****Comment**

No evening care hours provided

Facility**591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms****Technical Assistance****Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.06(4) - 591-1-1-.06(4) requires a Center first licensed after March 1, 1991, and Centers that remodel or add to existing plumbing facilities, to have the bathroom area fully enclosed and ventilated to the outside of the building with either an open screened window or functioning exhaust fan and duct system and requires Centers without fully enclosed bathrooms to ensure there is adequate ventilation to control odors and adequate sanitation measures to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Please ensure that all exhaust fans are in operating order and free of dust.

Correction Deadline: 3/12/2025**591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR)****Met****Comment**

Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center.

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 storage closet in the back hallway was observed to be open and contained three bottles of Clorox, mops, mop buckets, and washing machine.

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: 2/10/2025

Finding

591-1-1-.25(3) requires the Center and surrounding premises to be kept clean, free of debris and in good repair. Hygienic measures such as, but not limited to, screened windows and proper waste disposal procedures shall be utilized to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, roaches and other vermin at the Center. It was determined, based on observation, that two windows were observed broken on the exterior of Classroom 3R and accessible to children as they travel down the ramp to the playground.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will have the Center and surrounding areas cleaned, make repairs where needed, and remove all debris is removed. The Center will implement a plan to keep areas clean and in good repair that includes regular monitoring.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.25(3) requires the Center and surrounding premises to be kept clean, free of debris and in good repair. Hygienic measures such as, but not limited to, screened windows and proper waste disposal procedures shall be utilized to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, roaches and other vermin at the Center. Please ensure that the stained ceiling tiles and blinds are replaced.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025

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

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.26(4) requires that playgrounds be protected from traffic or other hazards by a (4) four foot high fence or other barrier approved by this Department. Fencing material shall not present a hazard to children and shall be maintained so as to prevent children from leaving the playground area by any means other than through an approved access route. Fence gates shall be kept closed except when persons are entering or exiting the area. It was determined, based on observation, that the bottom of the fencing between the Right Front playground and the Right Back playground and the fencing along the front fence of the Right Front playground were observed to not be anchored at the bottom and curved upwards in some places, causing potential entrapment hazards. The front gate of the Right Front Playground and the gate to the Right Back playground from the Left playground were observed to have gaps measuring between four and five inches on this date.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will routinely check the fence to determine if it is in good repair and remains at least 4 feet high, and will repair any hazards. The Center will train Staff to identify and report any fence hazards and to keep the fence gates closed when not in use.

Correction Deadline: 2/24/2025

Finding

591-1-1-.26(7) requires that climbing and swinging equipment be anchored. It was determined, based on observation, that the following equipment was observed to not be anchored on this date:

- Left Playground: The blue equipment with the three steering wheels was observed to not be anchored and could easily be moved.
- Right Front Playground: The red and blue Skee-ball equipment and the play house were observed to not be anchored.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will remove or repair equipment that is not anchored and will regularly inspect the equipment to ensure it remains anchored.

Correction Deadline: 2/21/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.26(8) requires climbing and swinging equipment to have a resilient surface beneath the equipment and the fall zone from such equipment must be adequately maintained by the Center to assure continuing resiliency. Please fluff and redistribute the resilient surfacing and remove the small patches of grass around the slide and swings on the Right Back playground.

Correction Deadline: 2/20/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.26(9) requires the playground to be kept clean, free from litter and free of hazards, such as but not limited to rocks, exposed tree roots and exposed sharp edges of concrete. Please ensure that equipment is free of standing water, as the red spinning equipment was observed to have approximately one inch of water standing on the inner part where the children's feet rest. Also, please ensure that the concrete under the ramps to the Right Back playground are even with the ground.

Food Service

591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition**Not Met****Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.15(2) requires that a signed written feeding plan for children less than one (1) year of age shall be obtained from Parent(s) and that instructions from the Parent(s) shall be updated regularly as new foods are added or other dietary changes are made. The feeding plan shall be posted in the child's assigned room and must include the child's feeding schedule, the amount of formula or breast milk to be given, instructions for the introduction of solid foods, the amount of food to be given and notation of any type(s) of commercially premixed formula which may not be used in an emergency because of food allergies. Please ensure that the infant feeding plans are updated regularly, as the infant feeding plans were observed to be last updated in September 2024 on this date.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025**Finding**

591-1-1-.15(5) requires that the Center provide a menu listing all meals and snacks to be served during the current week except for School-age Centers where the food may be provided by the Parent(s) by agreement between the School-age Center and the Parent(s). Substitutions shall be recorded on the posted menu and menus shall be retained at the Center for six (6) months. It was determined, based on review of records, that the current menu was not posted or complete on this date. The only weekly menu observed in the kitchen was lacking what will be served for PM Snack.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will list all of the current week's meals and snacks and all substitutions on the menu and keep past menus on file for six months and will implement a system to monitor this.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025

Health and Hygiene

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

Staff state proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

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

Staff were observed to remind children to wash hands.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR)**Met****Comment**

Documentation for medication dispensing observed complete.

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals**N/A****Comment**

Center does not keep animals on premises.

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

Please be mindful of voice tone in redirecting children.

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)**Not Evaluated****Comment**

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

Comment

The vehicle had an approved fire extinguisher and first aid kit on this date.

Finding

591-1-1-.36(4)(b) requires that the interior of a transportation vehicle be clean, in safe repair and free of hazardous items, objects and/or other non-essential items which could cause injury. It was determined, based on observation, that the navy van PWR8511 was observed to have a seat belt frayed and twisted, the rubber mat flooring with tears, the headliner drooping, and the heating and air control unit detached from the top of the vehicle in the front of the vehicles. It was further determined that the white van RRJ176 was observed to have two seat belt plastic latch covers missing.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The center will maintain that all transportation vehicles are clean, in safe repair, and free from hazards.

Correction Deadline: 2/21/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.36(4)(f)1. requires that all transported children be secured in a child passenger restraining system or seat safety belt in accordance with current state and federal laws and regulations and according to manufacturer's directions. Please ensure that the expired Harmony booster seats are replaced in the vehicles used for routine transportation.

Correction Deadline: 2/11/2025

Sleeping & Resting Equipment**591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR)**

Met

Comment

Pleasant naptime environment observed.

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

Met

Comment

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.14(3) requires the Center to have a first aid kit in each building of the Center and in any vehicle used by the Center for transportation of children, that contains scissors, tweezers, gauze pads, adhesive tape, thermometer, band-aids, assorted sizes, antibacterial ointment, insect-sting preparation, an antiseptic cleansing solution, triangular bandages, rubber gloves, protective eye wear, a protective face mask, and a cold pack. The first aid kit, together with a first aid instruction manual which must be kept with the kit at all times, shall be stored so that it is not accessible to children but is easily accessible to Staff. It was determined, based on observation, that the following first aid kits were not complete on this date:

- Center: The first aid kit was lacking the tweezers and first aid manual on this date. The antibacterial ointment and antiseptic cleaning solution were observed to be expired on this date.
- Navy van PWR8511 - The first aid kit was lacking the protective face mask, antiseptic cleaning solution, triangular bandage, and the first aid manual. The baking soda used for insect sting preparation and the antibacterial ointment were observed to be expired on this date.
- White van RRJ176 - The first aid kit was lacking the protective face mask, triangular bandage, and first aid manual. The baking soda used for insect sting preparation and the antibacterial ointment were observed to be expired on this date.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

Center Staff will provide any missing first aid kits, add any missing items to each first aid kit and will develop and use a plan for checking the kits and replacing missing items in each kit in the future. First aid kits and instruction manuals will be stored so that they kits are not accessible to children but are easily accessible to Center Staff.

Correction Deadline: 2/20/2025

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training**Met****Comment**

Documentation observed of required staff training.

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

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

591-1-1-.32 Supervision(CR)**Technical Assistance****Technical Assistance**

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. Please ensure staff are within arm's reach of all children thirty-six (36) months of age and younger during mealtimes and snacks to prevent choking.

Correction Deadline: 2/10/2025