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: 1/6/2026 **VisitType:** Licensing Study **Arrival:** 8:20 AM **Departure:** 11:00 AM

CCLC-52927
Rays of Hope Childcare
745 West Moores Crossing Road Thomaston, GA 30286 Upson County
(706) 647-0050

Regional Consultant
Brandi Mangino
Phone: (478) 314-9726
Fax: (478) 599-0169
brandi.mangino@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation		
01/06/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing
08/29/2025	Complaint Closure	Good Standing
08/20/2025	Monitoring Visit	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	A - (1R) 5-12 yrs	Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds	1	21	NC	10	NC	14	NC	Free Play
Main	B- (2R) 1's	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	6	C	9	C	NA	NA	Diapering,Circle Time
Main	C- (3R) 2's	Two Year Olds	2	5	C	12	C	NA	NA	Circle Time
Main	D - (3L) 4's	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds	1	13	C	21	C	NA	NA	Free Play
Main	E - (2L) 3's		0	0	C	13	C	NA	NA	
Main	F - (1L) 6wks-18mths	Infants	2	7	C	19	C	NA	NA	Floor Play
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 84			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 88					
Total # Children this Date: 52		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 84			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 88					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground A - 6wks-12 yrs	111	C

Enrolled Children

Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
10	8	7	7	7	0	16

Comments
Plan developed on this date.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date

CCLC Indicator Manual

For additional information regarding any licensing topics discussed during this visit, please consult the Rules and Regulations Indicator Manual. This manual provides comprehensive clarification of each rule, including evaluation indicators, related best practices, and relevant considerations to support your program's continued and sustained compliance.

To access the Indicator Manual, please scan the QR code below or visit our website at https://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx.

Compliance at a Glance

For additional information regarding the full compliance inspection results of this program or any licensed program in the state, access the Child Care Services Compliance-at-a Glance website by scanning this QR code or visiting: https://families.decal.ga.gov.

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 Licensing Study:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.03 Activities **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
Please ensure that all lesson plans are current and posted.
Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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

Technical Assistance
Consultant discussed the large rug in Room B (2L) was in need of being cleaned.
Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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: 3**

Child # 1 Not Met
"Missing/Incomplete Components"
.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 2 Not Met
"Missing/Incomplete Components"
.08(3)-Name of Release Person Missing

Child # 4 Not Met
"Missing/Incomplete Components"
.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities,.08(1)-Parent Names, Work Numbers

591-1-1-.08 Children's Records **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
Please ensure that information is listed for the parents and relationships and full addresses are listed for emergency contacts.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

Facility

591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.19(1) requires a Center to provide 35 square feet of usable space per child, which will determine the Center's License capacity. It was determined based on observation that the 1R classroom had 21 children in a space that was licensed for 10 children.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will limit the number of children in this space to the licensed capacity.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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 following hazards were accessible to children in care:
Room B:
broom dust pan

Room D:
staff bag

Room E:
broom and dust pan in the restroom
plunger, toilet brush, plastic bag in unlocked cabinet of the restroom

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: 1/6/2026

Recited on 1/6/2026

591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR) **Not Met**

Technical Assistance
Consultant discussed that one of three cozy coupe cars was missing the steering wheel.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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 fencing throughout was not meeting the 4 feet height requirement in that it was measuring to be approximately 3 feet in height.

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: 1/6/2026

Food Service

591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
Consultant discussed that food outside the ordinal containers should be labeled.

Consultant discussed to ensure infant plans have the type of formula listed.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

Health and Hygiene

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

Comment
Proper diapering procedures observed.

Technical Assistance
requires that Center Staff with diaper changing responsibilities to not be simultaneously assigned to kitchen food preparation duties.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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

Comment
Please ensure lids remain on trash containing organic waste.

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

Comment
The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.21(1)(r) requires Center policies and procedures include 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. It was determined based on a review of records that the center did not implement a new policy to reflect how 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.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will write or revise policies and procedures to include the required description of the Center's practices used to prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma in children up to five years or age.

Correction Deadline: 1/11/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.21(3) requires that the Center conduct drills for fire, tornado and other emergency situations. The fire drills will be conducted monthly and tornado and other emergency situation drills will be conducted every six months. The Center shall maintain documentation of the dates and times of these drills for two years. It was determined based on a review of records the center did not have emergency drill for the 2025 year.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will hold the drills as required and keep the documentation of the drills on file for two years.

Correction Deadline: 1/11/2026

591-1-1-.29 Required Reporting **Met**

Correction Deadline: 9/5/2025

Corrected on 1/6/2026
.29(4) - Citation corrected.

Safety

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

Comment
Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

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) **Met**

Comment
Discussed SIDS and infant sleeping position.

Comment
The correct number of mats, sheets and blankets were observed on this date. Cleaning and disinfecting of mats was discussed with the director on this date.

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 8 **Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 6**

Staff # 1 Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/01/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 2 Not Met

Date of Hire: 07/07/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 4 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/15/2021

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 5 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/03/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 6 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/30/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-First Aid Missing,.14(2)-CPR missing,.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate

Staff # 8 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/28/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate,.14(2)-First Aid Missing,.14(2)-CPR missing

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

Comment
Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

Correction Deadline: 9/5/2025

Corrected on 1/6/2026
.09(1)(l)1. - Citation corrected.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR) **Not Met**

Correction Deadline: 9/19/2025

Corrected on 1/6/2026
.14(1) - Citation corrected see new citation.

Finding
591-1-1-.14(1)(a) requires all Staff who provide direct care to children must obtain certification in a biennial training program in pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a triennial training program in pediatric first aid within the first 45 days of employment. Current and valid evidence of the successful completion of such training shall be maintained on the Center's premises. The hours obtained completing this certification will not count towards the required annual training hours. It was determined based on a review of records that staff member #7 was over 45 days of hire date and did not have first aid and CPR on file.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
All caregiver Staff will complete the required training. The Director will send copies via email verification of completed CPR/First Aid certification to the Consultant upon completion and will develop a plan to ensure all caregiver Staff have completed this training within the first 45 days of employment and that evidence of successful completion of the training is on file available for inspection.

Correction Deadline: 2/5/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.14(1)(b) requires the training must be done by certified or licensed health care professionals or trainers and must deal with the provision of emergency care to infants and children. It was determined based on a review of records the staff member in Room B had first aid and CPR on file, but it did not list if the trainings were for infant/child.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
All caregiver Staff must successfully complete a biennial training program in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a triennial training program in first aid taught by certified or licensed health care professionals or trainers and must deal with the provision of emergency care to infants and children. The Director will send copies via email of verification of completed CPR/First Aid certification to the Consultant upon completion.

Correction Deadline: 2/5/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.14(2)(b) requires that there must always be one staff person present in each classroom where children are present that has current and valid pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and pediatric first aid training. It was determined based on observation that the staff member in Room A was alone and did not have first aid and CPR on file.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Director will schedule and/or position caregiver Staff throughout the Center to ensure at least one currently pediatric CPR and First Aid trained Staff person is present in each classroom where children are present.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.33(3)(a)-(k) requires each Staff member with direct care responsibilities to complete health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment. The state-approved training hours obtained will count toward required first year training hours. The training must address the following health and safety topics: a)prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations); b) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices; c) administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent; d) prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions; e) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic; f) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma and child maltreatment; g) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility); h) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants; i) precautions in transporting children; j) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and k) child development to include all major domains:cognitive; social and emotional; physical development and motor skills; communication, language, and literacy; and approaches to play and learning. It was determined based on a review of records that staff member's #6 and #7 were over 90 days of hire did not have health and safety orientation on file.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will develop and implement a plan to schedule and track this training for all employees based on their hire dates and will ensure that the training includes all required components as required.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

Recited on 1/6/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.33(5)(b)1. requires the annual ten (10) clock hours of training shall include at least two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices. It was determined based on a review of records that staff members #1, #2, #4 and #5 did not meet the language and literacy requirements for training.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will plan and schedule the required 10 hours of annual training each year to include a least two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices and follow up to ensure the training is completed.

Correction Deadline: 2/5/2026

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.

Staffing and Supervision

591-1-1-.32 Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.32(2) requires the Center maintain Staff:child ratios in mixed-age groups based on the age of the youngest group of children that includes more than twenty percent of the total number of children in the mixed-age group. It was determined based on observation that Room A had five 4-year-old children, and 16 6-year-old and older children present with a ratio of one staff member to 21 children when a ratio of one staff member to 18 children should have been maintained.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will provide adequate staff when there is a mixed-age group.

Correction Deadline: 1/6/2026

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

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, mealtime, nap time, 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 a school-age child walked to the front lobby without supervision to get water.

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: 1/6/2026