



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: 7/9/2025 **VisitType:** Complaint Investigation & Licensing Study **Arrival:** 9:35 AM **Departure:** 12:45 PM

CCLC-46772
Stepping Stones Academy
1108 Bear Creek Blvd Hampton, GA 30228 Henry County
(770) 707-3955 hamptonssa@gmail.com

Child Care Services Manager
Rukiya Thomas
Phone: (770) 357-7046
Fax: (770) 357-7045
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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.
07/09/2025	Complaint Investigation & Licensing Study	Deficient	
07/09/2025	Complaint Closure	Good Standing	
05/22/2025	Complaint Closure	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	A- Infants-1st Right		0	0	C	11	C	NA	NA	
Main	B- 2's 2nd Right		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	
Main	C- PreK 3rd Right	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	3	17	C	19	C	NA	NA	Circle Time
Main	D- PreK 4th Right		0	0	C	26	C	NA	NA	
Main	E- School age-5th Right	Five Year Olds and Six Year Olds and Over	2	15	C	27	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	F- Toddlers- 2nd Left	One Year Olds	1	5	C	10	C	NA	NA	Circle Time
Main	G- 3's 3rd Left		0	0	C	15	C	NA	NA	
Main	H- 3's 4th Left	Three Year Olds	2	10	C	15	C	NA	NA	Circle Time
Main	I- PreK 5th Left	Two Year Olds	1	8	C	20	C	NA	NA	Circle Time
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 163			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Total # Children this Date: 55			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 163			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground C (back right)	99	C
Main	Playground D (right front)	47	C
Main	Plgd A - Infants left side of Bldg	20	C

Main	Plgd B- Toddler	46	C
Main	Plgd E- School age	86	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
3	12	19	29	27	0	26

Comments

An exit conference was conducted on this date to discuss the rule violations and technical assistance with supervision and staff files.

Plan of Improvement: To Be Submitted 07/23/2025

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.dec.state.ga.us/CCS/Regulations.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 CI/LS:

Activities and Equipment

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

591-1-1-.03 Activities

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.03(2) requires the Center to keep current lesson plans on site that reflect appropriate instruction practices and activities to support children's development The Center shall have sufficient and varied play and learning equipment and materials to support the above program of activities in all developmental areas. It was determined based on observation that Room C, Room E, Room F, and Room I did not have current lesson plans on site.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Prior Visits: 11/29/2023

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

Met

Correction Deadline: 6/20/2025

Prior Visits: 05/23/2023

Corrected on 7/9/2025

.12(6) - The previous rule violation was observed to be corrected on this date.

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

Comment

Pool not in use at this time, gates observed locked.

Children's Records**Records Reviewed: 18****Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1**

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

Records Reviewed: 7**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 7**

Child # 1

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Number Missing,.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing,.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities

Child # 2

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(3)-Name of Release Person Missing,.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities

Child # 3

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing,.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities

Child # 4

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities,.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing

Child # 5

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Number Missing

Child # 6

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 7

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing,.08(1)-Allergies and Disabilities

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 a review of records that seven of seven children's records did not include work address, the address for the release person(s), and known allergies.

Prior Visits: 11/29/2023

591-1-1-.08(1)(b) requires Center Staff to maintain a file for each child that includes parental authorizations, including, but not limited to, written authorization for the Center to obtain emergency medical care for the child when the Parent is not available. It was determined based on a review of records that one of seven records did not include parental authorization for the child when the Parent is not available.

Facility

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Not Met

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

Not Met

591-1-1-.06(7) requires Center Staff to ensure bathrooms are cleaned daily with a disinfectant. It was determined based on observation that Room B's restroom had standing urine in two of two toilets and a smell of urine.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

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(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 children had access to chipped white paint on the bathroom safety bars in the restrooms in Room E and Room I.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Prior Visits: 10/04/2022

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

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.26(7) requires that climbing and swinging equipment be anchored. It was determined based on observation that a yellow and red sliding/climbing structure was not anchored.

Correction Deadline: 7/19/2025

Prior Visits: 11/20/2024

Food Service

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

Finding

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. It was determined based on a review of records that three of three feeding plans had not been updated regularly as new foods were added or other dietary changes were made. The three infant feeding plans had not been updated since 2/10/25, 3/5/25, and 2/21/24.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Prior Visits: 10/04/2022

Finding

591-1-1-.15(3) requires baby bottles and formula to be labeled with the individual child's name; supplied by the Parent daily in bottles; and refrigerated at a temperature of forty (40) degrees Fahrenheit or less. Only the current day's formula or breast milk shall be served. If formula must be provided by the Center, only commercially prepared, ready-to-feed formula shall be used. Refrigerated or frozen breast milk shall only be heated or thawed under warm running water or in a container of warm water. It was determined based on observation that three of three bottles were not labeled and did not have bottle tops.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

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 observation and the director's statement that there was no posted menu.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Finding

591-1-1-.18(8) requires that containers of food be stored above the floor on clean surfaces protected from splash and other contamination. Containers for food storage other than the original container or package in which the food was obtained shall be impervious and non-absorbent, have a tight-fitting lids or covers and labeled as to contents. It was determined based on observation that repackaging of biscuits, bagels, waffles, and beef patties were not labeled as to its contents.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Health and Hygiene

Records Reviewed: 18	Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1
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Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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

Proper diapering procedures observed.

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

Correction Deadline: 5/21/2025

Prior Visits: 05/21/2025

Corrected on 7/9/2025

.17(7) - Appropriate hand washing was observed on this date.

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

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Policies and Procedures

Records Reviewed: 18	Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1
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Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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

Correction Deadline: 5/22/2025

Prior Visits: 05/21/2025

Corrected on 7/9/2025

.29(3) - The previous rule violation was observed to be corrected on this date.

Safety

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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

Met

Comment

Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)

Met

Comment

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)

Met

Comment

Center does not provide routine transportation.

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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

Met

Comment

Please ensure that cribs/cots are labeled for individual use.

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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

Met

Comment

Director provided 4 files for employees hired since last visit.

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 first aid kit was missing antibacterial ointment(expired 2023) and a triangular bandage.

Correction Deadline: 7/19/2025

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

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.31- Consultant discussed ensuring that all employees have complete files and applications.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Staffing and Supervision

Records Reviewed: 18

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 1

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/16/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Address Missing,.24(1)-DOB Missing,.24(1)-Education Experience Missing

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)

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, 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 an adult was not seated within an arm's length away from children thirty-six (36) months of age and younger in Room I during lunch. The teacher was observed standing/walking and providing lunch to other children.

Correction Deadline: 7/9/2025

Prior Visits: 11/29/2023, 11/15/2023