

**APPENDIX D  
GEORGIA**

**Survey Results on the Status of State Implementation Efforts  
October 1, 2002 to May 31, 2003**



## Southern Regional Initiative on Child Care: Action Plan to Improve Access to Child Care Assistance for Low-Income Families in the South

**Survey on the Status of Implementation Efforts  
Current Report Period: October 1, 2002 to May 31, 2003**

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**Goal 1 - Federal, State, Local and Private Funds Should Be Sufficient to Meet 100% of Need for Direct Child Care Assistance, Based on Initial Eligibility Levels at 85% of the State Median Income. Redetermination Levels Should Allow Families to Retain Child Care Assistance Until They Reach 100% of State Median Income.**

***(Action Step 1.1) - Educate federal and state policymakers on the need for action.***

**2003 Response:**

Policy makers were informed that the need for child care continues to grow. Based on the current inquiry/waiting lists, the need for subsidized child care far exceeds current funding.

**2002 Response:**

Child care advocates, staff from the state's network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and providers converged at the state house on children's day during the legislative session to promote the children's agenda. Meetings were held with state legislators to inform them of child care issues in Georgia, including the need for expanding assistance to families eligible for subsidized child care.

The Georgia Success By 6 ® initiative has implemented a public awareness campaign addressing quality child care and has secured funding to implement quality child care activities in local communities. As a result of the public awareness campaign and available funding, state legislators requested their communities to be pilot sites for the quality child care activities.

**2001 Response:**

Increasing the number of families eligible for subsidies was a Georgia Early Learning Initiative recommendation which was given to the Governor in the fall of 2000. While it was not one of the recommendations chosen for implementation in 2001, it remains on the table.

***(Action Step 1.2) - Educate the business community on the need for leadership in achieving state, federal and community resources to meet 100% of need.***

**2003 Response:**

The newly named initiative Smart Start (formerly GELI, Georgia Early Learning Incentive) is revamping the way the business community is educated on the need for leadership in achieving state, federal and community resources to meet Georgia's child care needs.

**2002 Response:**

A GELI organizer facilitates the initial meeting to determine how the company can help the child care center, establish a volunteer plan and is available to assist the company liaison throughout the year. By adopting these centers, businesses make a visible contribution and lasting impression on their employees, the children, the community and the state. The Georgia Child Care Council has produced a free resource guide for businesses called, "Quality Child Care - The Business Connection." The contents include: Child Care Statistic;

The Case for Business Involvement; Child Care Options for Businesses; Georgia's Child Care Corporate Tax Credit (H.B. 610); Case Studies; How to Get Started; Consultants & Resource Information; Web Sites; and Information on Quality Child Care and Brain Research.

**2001 Response:**

The State Chamber of Commerce endorsed the Georgia Early Learning Initiative at its annual State Board Meeting.

***(Action Step 1.3) - Increase federal funding for the Child Care and Development Fund to fulfill current policy allowing federal matching funds for child care assistance up to 85% of the state median income.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Income eligibility for subsidized child care remains the same due to state budget constraints and limited federal funds.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 1.4) - Increase state funding to provide child care subsidies to all eligible families who seek child care assistance.***

**2003 Response:**

Subsidized child care funds were not increased this year.

**2002 Response:**

While state funds have been appropriated to increase quality child care, funds have not been appropriated to provide subsidized care to additional families.

**2001 Response:**

Please refer to action step 1.1.

***(Action Step 1.5) - Mobilize federal, state and community resources in support of families who need child care assistance.***

**2003 Response:**

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in Georgia continue to educate local leaders about the need for child care assistance for low income families through meetings, legislative luncheons, etc.

Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) continues to partner with other child care agencies such as Head Start and Pre-K to maximize child care funds by providing extended day and extended year for eligible families.

Tiered reimbursement is available in 14 counties. Tiered reimbursement payments are issued centers, group homes and family child care providers who meet increased quality standards and serve children in the CAPS program. The tiered reimbursement rate paid to providers is more than the standard rate paid for child care.

**2002 Response:**

The 14 Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in Georgia educate their local leaders about the need for child care assistance for low incomes families through one on one meetings, legislative luncheons and breakfasts, and during a special child care day during the legislative session.

Partnerships between the subsidized child care program, Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS), Georgia's Pre-K program and Head Start maximize child care funds by providing extended day/extended year care for eligible families whose children attend Pre-K and Head Start programs which operate the traditional "school year" (9 months, 6 hours per day).

The Georgia Early Learning Initiative is piloting Tiered Reimbursement in 11 counties in Georgia. Tiered reimbursement payments are issued by the CAPS program to centers, group homes, and family child care providers who meet increased quality standards AND who serve children subsidized through CAPS. The reimbursement is a percentage above the standard reimbursement rate for care furnished to the eligible child.

Governor Barnes successfully introduced and passed legislation that encourages businesses to provide on-site child care centers. The Governor's initiatives consist of two components: Increasing the current tax credit from 50 percent to 75 percent for employers that provide on-site child care or sponsor child care for their employees; and providing a new tax credit to businesses that construct on-site child care facilities for the children of their employees. The credit allows for 10 percent of the construction cost per year for 10 years.

**2001 Response:**

Georgians for Children, a statewide child advocacy organization, develops a children's agenda each year to be used by all child advocates during the Legislative session. The agenda for 2002, developed over the summer of 2001, contains three issues related to the availability of child care.

The 14 Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in Georgia educate their local leaders about the need for child care assistance for low incomes families through one on one meetings, legislative luncheons and breakfasts, and during a special child care day during the legislative session.

**Goal 2: States and Communities Should Broaden Their Child Care Eligibility and Subsidy Policies to Meet the Economic, Work and Education Needs of Families**

***(Action Step 2.1) - Establish co-payments not to exceed 10% of gross family income.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

No change.

**2001 Response:**

Families currently receiving child care subsidies do not have co-payments that exceed 10% of family income.

***(Action Step 2.2) - Provide child care assistance to students who qualify under the income guidelines.***

**2003 Response:**

Teen parents enrolled in high school or technical school may receive subsidized child care without being placed on a waiting list if the student is determined eligible.

**2002 Response:**

Subsidized child care is provided to students enrolled in high school or technical school. Teen parents attending high school or working to earn a General Equivalency Degree (GED) receive child care subsidies, if eligible, without being placed on a waiting list.

**2001 Response:**

High school and Tech school students are eligible at this time.

***(Action Step 2.3) - Explore broad use of income exemptions to address affordability of child care.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia determines eligibility based on “regular, predictable” income and does not include income from public assistance programs (TANF, SSI, adoption supplement, etc). By using “regular, predictable” income to determine eligibility, income from tax refunds, lump sum child support payments, annual bonuses, gifts, etc. are exempt. Income from any family unit member under the age of 18 is also exempt.

**2001 Response:**

Georgia does not count TANF, SSI, Food stamps, adoption supplements, tax refunds, relative subsidies, earnings of any child under 18, in determining income eligibility.

***(Action Step 2.4) - Eliminate asset testing (e.g. automobile or savings account) from criteria for child care assistance.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia does not include assets when determining eligibility. Families may own a car, home, etc., and receive subsidized child care.

**2001 Response:**

Georgia does not test for assets.

***(Action Step 2.5) - Index income eligibility levels for inflation.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Income eligibility levels are not indexed for inflation.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

**Goal 3: Outreach Initiatives Should Be Designed and Aggressively Implemented to Assure That Families Have Accessible and Easy-To-Understand Information on Child Care Assistance and Are Provided Assistance in Applying.**

***(Action Step 3.1) - Provide information on child care subsidies through multiple sources, venues and the media.***

**2003 Response:**

The local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and local county Departments of Family and Children Services are the primary sources for information about child care subsidies. The information is both written and verbal. The Georgia Pre-K program continues to refer all potentially eligible families to the CAPS program. Potentially eligible families may receive before and after school care as well as summer care.

**2002 Response:**

A primary source of information about subsidies comes from written and verbal information provided by the local CCR&R agencies and the county Departments of Family and Children Services. However, child care providers and health department staff frequently refer potentially eligible families to the subsidized child care program.

Georgia's Pre-Kindergarten program refers all potentially eligible families to CAPS. CAPS provides the before/after school and summer child care for children attending Pre-K who live in eligible families.

The Georgia Division of Family and Children Services web site includes a fact sheet on the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program. The CAPS program has a web site which allows individuals to search for contact information for their county department. Of course, other public assistance programs (TANF, Food Stamps and Medicaid) also refer families to CAPS.

**2001 Response:**

The main source of information about subsidies comes from written and verbal information provided by the local CCR&R agencies and the county Departments of Family and Children Services.

***(Action Step 3.2) - Ensure that information is accurate, family friendly, employer friendly, culturally sensitive and provided in multiple languages, as appropriate.***

**2003 Response:**

Local county Departments of Family and Children Services, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and child care providers through person to person contact, provide basic information about the CAPS program. The CAPS webmaster continues to receive and respond to approximately 75 e-mails per month.

**2002 Response:**

Individuals receive basic information about CAPS through person-to-person contact (R&Rs, providers, case workers, etc.). The CAPS web site encourages visitors to contact the web master if the visitor has questions. The web master receives and personally responds to an average of 75 e-mails per month.

These e-mails answer questions, provide specific information requested by the visitor and furnish additional resources. The average response time is less than 24 hours.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 3.3) - Present information in a manner that would remove the stigma associated with receiving subsidies.***

**2003 Response:**

Our Business Process Reengineering project team recommended families should be able to access child care services via a variety of avenues. Georgia's goal is to offer several ports of entry so that visiting the local Department of Family and Children Services is not the only way to access the subsidized child care program.

**2002 Response:**

CAPS is involved in a Business Process Reengineering project which has recommended changes to allow multiple ways to access the CAPS program so that families may access subsidized child care without having to apply at the local Department of Family and Children Services office. Though not in place yet, we are moving forward on this action step.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 3.4) - Provide literature and assistance to help parents make informed provider choices.***

**2003 Response:**

Case workers and Child care Resource and Referral agencies continue to assist parents/guardians with making informed child care choices by providing general child care information. Each of the 14 Child Care Resource and Referral agencies has a toll free telephone number.

**2002 Response:**

Multiple avenues are used to help parents make informed provider choices. The statewide network of CCR&Rs provide general child care information and offer help finding child care programs that meet each family's criteria. Each of the 14 CCR&Rs has a toll free phone number.

The public awareness campaign “Choose to Care,” distributed brochures through the state’s major supermarket chain. The brochures describe quality child care settings and how to find them.

The United Way’s Success By 6® partnership works with families and policymakers to ensure that children are healthy and developmentally ready to continue their learning process. The goals and strategies include: increasing public awareness of children and family issues by implementing a broad-based marketing and education plan and increasing access to services for young children and their families by coordinating existing service systems to create linkages between services.

Georgia’s various child care organization and advocacy groups, as well as CAPS, have information on their web sites about selecting quality child care programs.

**2001 Response:**

A statewide network of CCR&Rs provides this service.

***(Action Step 3.5) - Coordinate ongoing and strategic outreach activities among common organizations and providers.***

**2003 Response:**

Georgia continues it’s collaboration with Head Start grantees and Pre K (the Office of School Readiness to provide extended day/extended year child care to eligible families.

**2002 Response:**

In an effort to serve more eligible families, Georgia has transferred funds from the TANF grant to the CAPS program. The transferred funds are used for subsidies.

Collaboratives facilitate communication among organizations with common goals. Collaborating with Head Start grantees and the Office of School Readiness (Georgia’s Pre-K providers) allows CAPS to provide extended day/extended year child care to eligible families. The CAPS program has gained visibility by contributing to and participating in the Georgia Early Learning Initiative. CAPS is represented with Healthy Child Care Georgia, and the section director serves as ex-officio member of the Georgia Child Care Council.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 3.6) - Offer cross-training and information to providers, community organizations, faith organizations, and state agencies to inform them about child care assistance programs and how to assist families in filing applications.***

**2003 Response:**

Cross training was offered to case managers in the Employment Services/TANF programs, licensing surveyors in the Office of Regulatory Services, and child care providers.

**2002 Response:**

In 2002, cross-training was provided to coordinators in Georgia's Pre-K program, licensing surveyors in the Office of Regulatory Services and case managers in the Employment Services/TANF programs.

A series of meetings have been convened around the state with child care providers to discuss the GELI tiered reimbursement, TEACH™, Incentive\$, training and technical assistance. During these meetings, providers were encouraged to enroll children who receive subsidized child care if not already doing so. (Tiered reimbursement is available only to providers in the designated counties who care for children who receive subsidies.)

A separate series of meetings have been convened around the state with child care providers to listen to comments and answer questions regarding the automated child care payment system implemented in 26 of Georgia's largest counties.

CCR&R staff (who are well-versed in the subsidized child care program) regularly provide training and information to child care providers about CAPS.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

**Goal 4: The Child Care Application and Redetermination Processes Should Be Uncomplicated and Family Friendly.**

***(Action Step 4.1) - Simplify applications for child care assistance.***

**2003 Response:**

As the state works to implement the recommendations made by the Business Process Reengineering team, application simplification remains a priority. Elimination of the face-to-face interview also remains a priority so that parents will not need to take time away from work to meet with the child care case manager. Also in the future, families will have multiple ways to access the subsidized child care program.

**2002 Response:**

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project team has recommended streamlining the application and redetermination processes to make them more customer friendly. (For example: Eliminating the required face-to-face interview so that clients do not have to take time off from work to meet with a case manager). Multiple access points for families interested in CAPS have been recommended. Though not in place yet, we are moving forward on this action step.

**2001 Response:**

Applications are being amended at this time to use simpler language.

***(Action Step 4.2) - Allow filing by mail, phone, fax or internet.***

**2003 Response:**

The Business Process Reengineering team has recommended that the application review and redetermination processes be conducted via mail, phone and the internet.

**2002 Response:**

The BPR project team has recommended that the application, review and redetermination processes be conducted via mail, phone and internet. Pending administrative approval, the BPR change management plan will describe how and when this action step will be deployed.

**2001 Response:**

As a direct result of the Southern Institute's report, specifically the chart that shows alternative application processes in other states, the State agency managing subsidies is beginning to explore the possibility of alternative methods for receiving applications for subsidies in Georgia.

***(Action Step 4.3) - Minimize requests for documentation at initial application and utilize documents already on file.***

**2003 Response:**

The Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project team and the CAPS section has as a goal leveraging automation to interface with existing systems that have client information so that clients are not asked for the same information repeatedly.

**2002 Response:**

The BPR project team has recommended leveraging automation to interface with existing systems that have client information so that clients do not have to submit redundant information. Pending administrative approval, the BPR change management plan will describe how and when this action step will be deployed.

**2001 Response:**

Under study at this time.

***(Action Step 4.4) - Provide applications at multiple sites.***

**2003 Response:**

The call, click or come by recommendation by Business Process Reengineering team for the application process will facilitate applications being available at multiple sites.

**2002 Response:**

The BPR project team has recommended a “call, click or come-by” approach to make applications for child care subsidies more accessible. This would allow potential clients to “call” to request an application via mail, “click” to access an internet site and complete an application, or “come-by” to pick up an application. Pending administrative approval, the BPR change management plan will describe how and when this action step will be deployed.

**2001 Response:**

Applications are only provided at 159 county DFACs offices at this time.

***(Action Step 4.5) - Offer non-conventional hours of operation for eligibility offices and provide toll-free phone lines to include evening and weekend hours.***

**2003 Response:**

Some DFCS county offices continue to open early in the morning and stay late in the evening to accommodate their clients. This not a state requirement but an effort to meet the needs of the client.

**2002 Response:**

Some county offices are open early in the morning, late in the evening and/or on Saturdays. This is not a state requirement. A centralized toll-free phone line has been recommended by the BPR project team.

**2001 Response:**

Some county offices are opened during non-traditional hours but it is not a state requirement. There are no toll free phone lines.

***(Action Step 4.6) - Explore presumptive eligibility or otherwise provide immediate eligibility contingent upon final approval.***

**2003 Response:**

In collaboration with Head Start grantees, children who attend Head Start are presumed to be eligible for extended day/extended year child care subsidies through DFCS. Head Start families are not required to apply for subsidies at the local DFCS office.

**2002 Response:**

In collaboration with Head Start grantees, children who attend Head Start are presumed to be eligible for extended day/extended year child care subsidies if parents are working, in school or in training. These families do not have to apply for subsidies at the local DFCS office; the Head Start program screens to ensure eligibility.

**2001 Response:**

Under study at this time.

***(Action Step 4.7) - Eliminate requirements for a face-to-face interview both for initial application and for redetermination.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project team has recommended eliminating the required face-to-face interview so that clients do not have to take time off from work to meet with a case manager.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 4.8) - Provide consultation on making appropriate choices when excessive requests for provider changes are filed.***

**2003 Response:**

Case managers are required to consult with clients and provide them enough information to make wise child care choices.

**2002 Response:**

Case managers are required to consult with clients to assess the client's child care needs and to offer information about child care choices when the clients request excessive provider changes.

**2001 Response:**

Georgia already requires that local child care eligibility staff offer consultation to parents regarding appropriate choices when excessive provider changes are requested.

***(Action Step 4.9) - Establish a 12-month redetermination period where there are no changes in income or job status.***

**2003 Response:**

CAPS clients are currently certified eligible for one year.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia has a 12-month redetermination process. CAPS clients are certified eligible for one year.

**2001 Response:**

This is current Georgia policy.

***(Action Step 4.10) - Continue eligibility for full subsidy for 12 weeks if family loses employment but can document that a job search is underway.***

**2003 Response:**

Clients who are receiving child care and lose their job, will receive ten days notification before child care is terminated. If employment is found within the ten day notification period and the client remains income eligible, child care is not interrupted.

**2002 Response:**

Clients who lose their jobs and receive subsidized child care currently receive at least 10 days notice before the child care case closes; many use this notice period to search for employment. If employment is found within the notice period and client remains income eligible, then the case may stay open.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

**Goal 5: Establish a Coordinated, Seamless Eligibility System So That Funding Sources Are Invisible to Families and Support Continuity of Child Care.**

***(Action Step 5.1) - Eliminate the need for families to reapply when eligibility categories change by automatically searching to exhaust all eligibility categories before closing cases.***

**2003 Response:**

Families receive seamless child care services as long as they remain eligible for any child care program category. Similarly, there are no time limits on how long an eligible family may receive child care services.

**2002 Response:**

This is current Georgia policy. Families receive seamless services as long as they are eligible for any eligibility category. Similarly, there are no time limits on receipt of subsidized child care. Families may continue to receive services as long as they are eligible.

**2001 Response:**

This is current Georgia policy.

***(Action Step 5.2) - Explore the potential for policy and procedural changes to achieve linkages with or combined applications for child care assistance, Head Start, Pre-K and Title I.***

**2003 Response:**

At this time applications for CAPS, Head Start and Pre-K programs are not combined. However there are good linkages among the subsidy programs to provide wrap around services for low-income families in Georgia.

**2002 Response:**

No change.

**2001 Response:**

While applications are not combined, there are good linkages between Pre-K, Head Start, and the subsidy program to provide wrap around services for low income families in Georgia.

***(Action Step 5.3) - Continue eligibility in programs with multiple funding sources to assure continuity of care in the event that eligibility has expired or terminated in one program.***

**2003 Response:**

Georgia provides seamless subsidized child care to eligible clients without time limits. When necessary, clients are moved from one eligibility category to another without an interruption in their child care service.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia provides subsidized child care to eligible without time limits and seamlessly “moves” clients from one category to another as eligible. This “move” is transparent to the client.

**2001 Response:**

See action step 5.2.

***(Action Step 5.4) - Work collaboratively with all public and private programs and funding sources to assure that children receive stable and consistent early child care services.***

**2003 Response:**

The CAPS program, Head Start and Georgia's Pre-K program continue to work together to ensure that Georgia's children receive stable and consistent early child care services. When requested, families may receive both expanded day and extended year services.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia's Pre-K program, the CAPS program and Head Start have been working closely together over the past three years to insure maximization of resources.

**2001 Response:**

The voluntary, statewide Pre-K program, the Subsidy program and Head Start have been working closely together over the past three years to insure maximization of resources.

**Goal 6: Establish Customer Service Outcome Goals and Set Standards to Ensure that All Families are Treated With Dignity and Respect and Are Served in an Efficient Manner.**

***(Action Step 6.1) - Provide professional and well-trained eligibility staff who are culturally and linguistically sensitive.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Training has been provided to all county DFCS staff in modifying policies, practices and procedures to ensure equal opportunity. Each county office developed and implemented procedures for dealing with customers who speak other languages. New employees attend customer service training.

**2001 Response:**

This varies based on the county DFACS office.

***(Action Step 6.2) - Facilitate quick eligibility determination through reasonable caseloads and/or administrative structure.***

**2003 Response:**

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project team made recommendations for standardizing and streamlining the program, leveraging automation and out-sourcing some functions so that case managers will have more time to focus on the clients. The plan is to follow the recommendation.

**2002 Response:**

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project team has made extensive recommendations for standardizing and streamlining the program, leveraging automation, and out-sourcing some functions so that case managers have more time to focus on the clients. Pending administrative approval, the BPR change management plan will describe how and when this action step will be deployed.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 6.3) - Conduct periodic, independent and thorough consumer satisfaction assessments, assuring the confidentiality of information collected.***

**2003 Response:**

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering team included consumer satisfaction assessments in the new business model.

**2002 Response:**

The study of families on the waiting list for child care subsidies provided information on the types of alternative (non-subsidized) child care used by the families.

The CAPS Business Process Reengineering team included consumer satisfaction assessments in the new business model. Though still below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile, reimbursement rates were increased for child care providers in July 2002. After a successful six month pilot in 5 counties, tiered reimbursement has expanded to an additional 6 counties.

**2001 Response:**

This fall, the subsidy program began focus groups with parents on the child care subsidy waiting list to determine how not having a child care subsidy has affected their family.

***(Action Step 6.4) - Provide adequate support for child care resource and referral services.***

**2003 Response:**

The Child Care Resource and Referral agencies received funds for quality improvement in family day care and group homes. Training was also made available for informal child care providers.

**2002 Response:**

The network of CCR&Rs receive sufficient funds for operations and personnel. The CCR&R inclusion staff is well-established in each R&R. Funds were allocated last year for the inclusion lending/equipment library. The CCR&Rs also receive funds to administer contracts. These contracts fund materials and equipment for family and group home child care providers to improve quality.

**2001 Response:**

Investments in the CCR&R system have tripled in the past year with the addition of funds for an inclusion project and funds to improve and expand family child care.

**Goal 7: Design the Subsidy System So That Rate Structures Assure That Families Receiving Child Care Assistance Have Access to All Types of Child Care and Disallow Charges Above Established Co-Payments.**

***(Action Step 7.1) - States should cap reimbursement rates at no less than the 75th percentile based on a market rate survey conducted every two years that accurately reflects the price of all types of care in communities across the state.***

**2003 Response:**

Reimbursement rates remain below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile. After a successful six-month pilot in 5 counties, tiered reimbursement is being expanded to a total 14 counties July 1, 2003.

**2002 Response:**

Though still below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile, reimbursement rates were increased for child care providers in July 2002. After a successful six month pilot in 5 counties, tiered reimbursement has expanded to an additional 6 counties.

**2001 Response:**

Most recent market rate survey was completed in January 2001 but rates fall well below the 75% percentile. However, as part of the Georgia Early Learning Initiative, 5 pilot counties were selected to receive tiered reimbursements based on increased quality, up to 150% of the current rate.

***(Action Step 7.2) - Establish and evaluate reimbursement policies that encourage provider participation and are responsive to family needs.***

**2003 Response:**

Supports continue to be offered through Smart Start (formerly Georgia Early Learning Initiative), ACT initiatives (training, technical assistance, Incentive\$, TEACH and tiered reimbursement).

**2002 Response:**

The provider supports offered through the GELI and ACT initiatives (training, technical assistance, Incentive\$, TEACH®, and tiered reimbursement) have been well received by providers. There has been an increase in the number of child care providers who are recruiting families receiving subsidies because of the tiered reimbursement program.

**2001 Response:**

See action step 7.1.

***(Action Step 7.3) - Prohibit providers from charging above the established co-payments.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

Georgia is concerned that prohibiting providers from charging above the established co-payments will reduce parental choice. Providers may choose not to serve families who receive subsidies if the providers are unable to charge their customary fees.

**2001 Response:**

N/A

**Goal 8: Create Partnerships With Employers to Expand Child Care Assistance for Working Families.**

***(Action Step 8.1) - Educate employers about the bottom line benefits associated with public and private child care assistance.***

**2003 Response:**

The presentation developed by the Georgia Child Care Council continues to be used by child care resource and referral agencies to encourage businesses to support child care assistance. That presentation is currently being revised. Smart Start, has decided to revise the presentation developed for businesses which explains the importance of quality a quality child care environment.

The child care resource and referral agencies offer assistance to businesses on ways to meet the child care needs of their employers.

**2002 Response:**

The Georgia Child Care Council has developed a presentation for businesses which have been used by CCR&Rs to encourage business support for child care assistance in many forms. GELI has developed a presentation for businesses that explains the importance of a quality early childhood environment for all children.

The CCR&Rs offer businesses assistance in meeting the child care needs of their employees through parent educational opportunities and consultation on developing child care programs. They offer information on developing community resources to increase the availability of child care services, offer data on child care supply and demand and work to increase public awareness of child care needs in their communities.

**2001 Response:**

The Georgia Child Care Council has developed a presentation for businesses which can be used by CCR&Rs or any community organization to make the case for business support for child care assistance in many forms. Also, GELI has developed a presentation, also easily adapted for use with businesses, which explains the importance of a quality early childhood environment for all children.

***(Action Step 8.2) - Enlist business leaders to champion the involvement of southern businesses and to serve as mentors to other businesses.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 8.3) - Provide information to employers on all available tax benefits related to child care assistance, including deductions for donations to tax-exempt child care organizations, capital costs for constructing a child care center and establishing a pre-tax dependent care assistance plan.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

No change.

**2001 Response:**

See action steps 8.1 and 8.5.

***(Action Step 8.4) - Facilitate collaborative initiatives that enable employers to share ideas as well as pool their resources to address child care needs.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 8.5) - Provide matching funds or other tax or financial incentives for employers to invest in child care.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

No change.

**2001 Response:**

Georgia has a substantial state corporate tax credit for employers who provide on site care or help pay child care costs for their employees.

***(Action Step 8.6) - Establish incentives for employers to create child care benefit programs for their employees or to contribute to child care purchasing pools in their state or community.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 8.7) - Reduce the administrative burden on employers participating in any joint public/private child care assistance program.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

**Goal 9: Provide Child Care Assistance to Working Families Through Federal and State Tax Laws.**

***(Action Step 9.1) - Make the federal child dependent care tax credit refundable.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 9.2) - Establish refundable child and dependent care tax credits in states with income taxes.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 9.3) - Raise federal and state child care tax credit expense limits to accurately reflect the price of quality care.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 9.4) - Index for inflation the state and federal child and dependent care tax credit income eligibility and expense limits.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 9.5) - Ensure that child and dependent care tax credits are clearly identified and easy to claim by filers using either the short or long form.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A

***(Action Step 9.6) - Encourage the use of effective state tax strategies to provide financial support for child care.***

**2003 Response:**

No change.

**2002 Response:**

No change.

**2001 Response:**

See action step 8.5.

**Goal 10: States Should Have Effective, Coordinated Systems to Guide Child Care and Early Childhood Policy Decisions and Direct Use of Resources.**

***(Action Step 10.1) - Facilitate greater coordination in eligibility policies across child care and early childhood education programs at state and local levels.***

**2003 Response:**

The need for subsidized child care services still exceeds the abilities of the early child care programs to serve the eligible families. CAPS partners with other agencies and organizations that serve similar families to increase capacity. These linkages maximize our child care dollars.

**2002 Response:**

Child care services exceed the abilities of each of the child care and early education programs to serve all eligible families. Therefore, CAPS partners with other agencies and organizations that serve similar client populations to build capacity. These linkages promote comprehensive services to families and stretch child care dollars. Funds for these programs are blended to maximize services.

**2001 Response:**

Any parent eligible for Head Start is eligible for wrap around services financed by the subsidy program. Pre-K has no eligibility policies other than age of the child.

***(Action Step 10.2) - All southern states and the District of Columbia should participate in a collaborative effort to develop and collect common data elements across states.***

**2003 Response:**

Not applicable.

**2002 Response:**

N/A

**2001 Response:**

N/A