

ELPM BUILDING BLOCKS

Building a Future

A Quarterly publication for our partners, supporters, and friends

★ *The John W. Stephenson Media & Literacy Center* ★

In recognition of John W. Stephenson and his personal commitment to the early learning initiative, the Minnie Howell Early Childhood Development Center's Media & Literacy Center and the Parents Resource Room were dedicated in Mr. Stephenson's honor April 13, 2010.

Three Pre-K classes presented a Literacy Readiness Moment to the group by performing songs and animations from the book, *Walking Through the Jungle*. The new Media & Literacy Center's theme is based on Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. The guests had an opportunity to tour this NAEYC accredited, early learning facility and see first hand the positive influence this center brings to the young children and their families.

Mr. Stephenson was an early advisor to ELPM and continues to be a great friend and supporter through organized philanthropy. ELPM, the early learning initiative, and the Atlanta community greatly appreciate his continued advocacy and personal commitment to the education and wellbeing of the young children of Atlanta.

For Minnie Howell programs, please visit www.premier-academy.org

Kara Portnell, Executive Director—ELPM

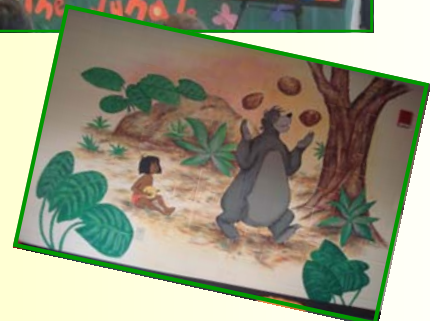
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ELPM •CENTERS MAP



For questions about child abuse, contact: tiffanys@gacfca.org or visit: www.georgiacenterforchildadvocacy.org



GEORGIA CENTER For CHILD ADVOCACY

On April 23, 2010, the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy celebrated the lives of Georgia's children who have been lost to child abuse with its first Children's Memorial flag raising on the Center's upper lawn. Dignitaries from the State of Georgia, the City of Atlanta, Fulton and DeKalb counties and Atlanta public schools attended the ceremony.

The Children's Memorial Flag Initiative began in 1998 by the Child Welfare League of America as a public awareness campaign to direct attention to the tragedy of violent child deaths as part of a national initiative to reduce child mortality. The flag honors each lost child and raises public awareness about the continuing problem of violence against children.

"This is something that all officials can come together and agree on. The need to protect our children from abuse." stated Tracy Reed from the Mayor's Office of Contract Compliance who made a passionate pledge, encouraging everyone to ensure the safety of our children. Mr. Reed also presented a special commendation on behalf of Mayor Kasim Reed.

"Georgia's first Children's Memorial Flag Day has received overwhelming support from mayors, director of social service agencies and hospitals, schools, district attorneys, police chiefs, and others. Today, we stand to remember Georgia's children in hopes that we never have to raise this flag again." says Nancy Chandler, CEO of the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy.

The Georgia Center for Child Advocacy is a private, non-profit agency championing the needs of sexually and severely physically abused children through intervention, therapy and intervention and collaboration. The Georgia Center is the largest child abuse prevention initiative in the state of Georgia.

For more information, please visit www.georgiacenterforchildadvocacy.org
678-904-2880 or contact Tiffany Sawyer at tiffanys@gacfca.org
Submitted by Jinaki Flint—GCCA



Jan Bennecke, Governor's office for Children and Families, reading Proclamation from Gov. Sonny Purdue



Tracy Reed, Atlanta Mayor's Office
Yvonne Bryant, GCCA Board Chairperson
Nancy Chandler, GCCA CEO
Margaret Kaiser, State Rep. Dist. 59



Isaac Blythers, GCCA Board
Yvonne Bryant Johnson, GCCA
Stephen Alford, Atlanta Public Schools, Director of Communications



Jerry Mason, DeKalb Co. Dist. Attorney
Javoyne Hicks White, DeKalb Co. Deputy District Attorney
Nancy Chandler, GCCA CEO
Peter Boehm, DeKalb Co. Dep. Chief Asst DA (heads Crimes Against Women & Children)

WHAT MANY DON'T KNOW ABOUT EARLY LITERACY

A poll from the Pearson Foundation found that three-quarters of Americans assume that even if children enter kindergarten not ready for school, they will acquire the necessary literacy skills in elementary school to catch up with their peers. However, research shows that children who enter kindergarten behind are three to four times more likely to drop out of school when they get older.

While a vast majority of those polled acknowledged that early childhood literacy is a problem, they did not recognize that reading to 3- to 5-year-olds can have significant impacts on children's academic success.

"It's common to under-estimate the importance of early literacy experiences for young children's later language and literacy development, especially those experiences before the age of 3," says Shannon Ayers, an assistant research professor at NIEER and a specialist on early literacy. "Experiences



of a caregiver cooing back at an infant provide the basis for conversation turn taking, and singing lullabies and silly rhyming songs provide experiences with the cadence of language," she adds. "Lap reading and talking about stories and personal experiences with children offers exposure to story structure, print, and language (vocabulary development) in a comfortable, loving way that will provide the foundation for later learning."

NIEER discusses literacy in the preschool classroom and its link to academic and lifelong achievement in the policy brief *Early Literacy: Policy and Practice in the Preschool Years*.

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PreSchool Matters
www.nieer.org

Economy Hurting Child Care in Georgia

The effects of the recession are trickling down to the youngest Georgians. A recent survey conducted by Quality Care for Children shows that the number of child care centers in Georgia declined sharply in 2009 with a net loss of approximately 600 centers while the number of national accredited centers dropped from 304 in 2008 to 221 in 2009. The QCC survey identified two main trends occurring during the recession: a substantial drop in the availability of licensed child care in Georgia and a decline in the number of high quality child care centers (Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children—NAEYC, the most widely recognized mark of quality for child care centers).

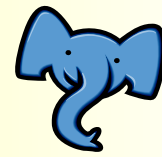


- Approximately 470,000 Georgia children spend as much as 10 hours in the care of someone other than a parent.
- Only 26,843 of those children are in high quality child care that meets national accreditation standards.
- More parents are unable to afford high-quality care and are opting for cheaper care for their children.
- As revenues decline, many centers are forced to cut back on teacher and staff training and need repairs and supplies.
- Enrollment is dropping putting programs at risk.

Please visit www.qualitycareforchildren.org for full report.
Printed with permission—Quality Care for Children

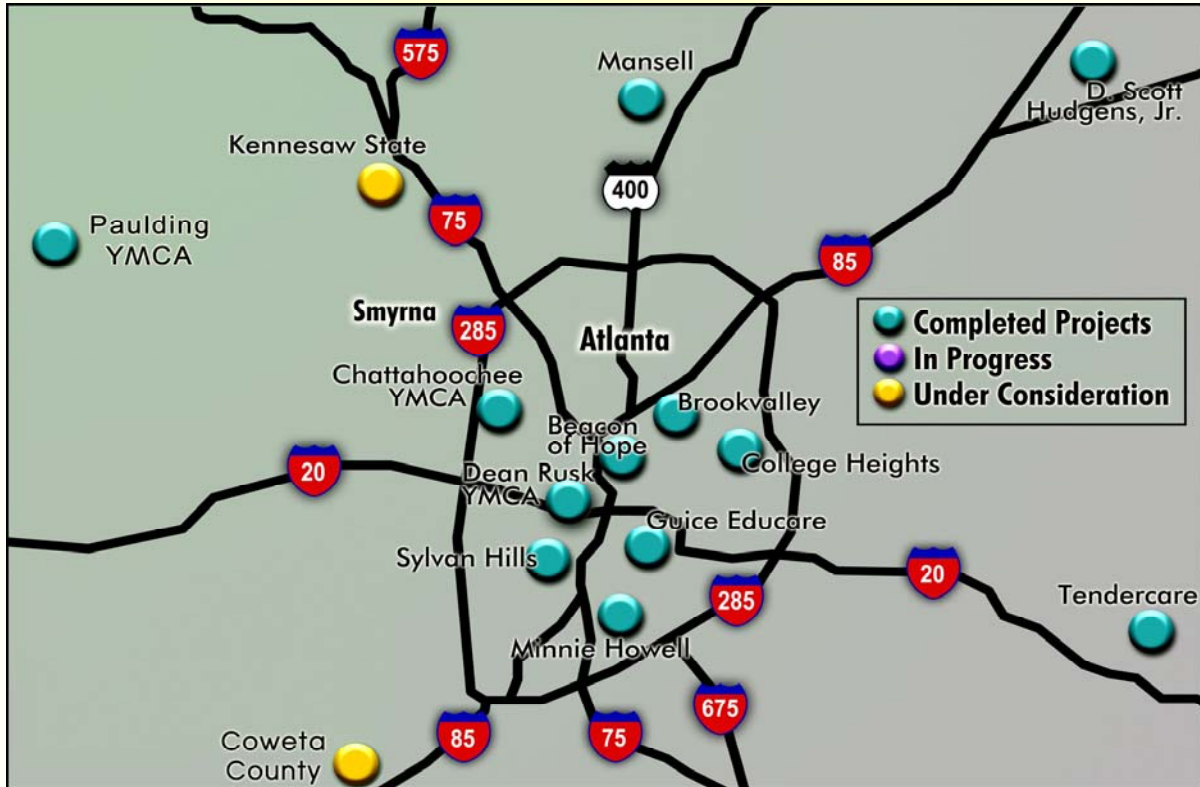


ZOO ATLANTA



Summer Fun & Learn!! Zoo Atlanta is collaborating with Bright from the Start by offering several programs this summer and during the course of the school year to engage educators and students to participate in its discounted professional development opportunities and programs. Zoo Atlanta understands the importance of providing young children with positive wildlife experiences. With their unique resources, Zoo Atlanta can help improve the quality of learning experiences available to Georgia's children.

For more information on educational programs, visiting options and special rates, please contact Laurel Askue, Manager of Education Marketing and Development at 404.624.5902 or Stacy Graison, Director of Education at 404.624.5890. www.zooatlanta.org



ELPM CENTER LOCATIONS

www.elpm.org

Mission Statement

To support and promote early childhood learning and development by providing safe and adequate facilities where early learning programs and activities can be conducted.



57 Executive Park
Suite 315
Atlanta, GA 30329

TO:

