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Early Education Commission Research Report



Children and Early Care and Education in Georgia and Metropolitan Atlanta



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**Prepared by Care Solutions, Inc., in consultation with the Early Education Commission's
Research Subcommittee**

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Executive Summary

This report presents information and trends regarding population, demographics, and child care providers and services as well as student achievement in the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta's 13-county service area and the state of Georgia, particularly as they relate to children ages zero to five. These targeted data were compiled from a variety of sources – federal and state government online and program databases, state government agencies, websites of national organizations related to early care and education, and research articles.

The purpose of the report is to assist members of the Early Education Commission – including leaders from Atlanta's business, foundation, government, criminal justice, education, media, entertainment, and faith communities – as they develop both a broad directional agenda and concrete action recommendations to improve early childhood education in metro Atlanta.

This report is designed as a reference tool, and does not include analysis or evaluation. Selected findings from each of the five major areas of research are presented below.

Population

- Georgia had an estimated population of 9,685,744 as of July 2008; 47 percent resided in the UW 13-county metro area.
- Six of the 13 UW metro area counties ranked in the top 100 fastest-growing counties in the nation in 2008; two – Paulding and Henry – were in the top ten.
- Children ages 0-4 make up eight percent of the UW metro area population.
- In 2008, there were an estimated 740,521 children under five statewide, with 351,693 (48 percent) in the UW metro area.
- In the metro UW metro area over the past five years, the percentage of children under age five who are black and the percentage who are Hispanic have increased steadily over the past five years.
- The percentage of children under five who are Hispanic is 21 percent for Atlanta metro, compared to 16 percent statewide.

Early Care and Education Providers

Child Care

- Early care and education providers in Georgia include child care centers, family child care providers, informal child care providers (unlicensed/unregistered family, friend, and neighbor care, which may not be known to the state), preschools, and Georgia Pre-K programs.
- Many of the state's licensed and registered child care providers are located in the UW metro area, which has 44 percent of the state's licensed centers and 54 percent of its registered family child care providers.
- The estimated licensed capacity of licensed and registered child care providers in the UW metro area is 190,513.
- The numbers of licensed and registered providers has declined slightly over the past two years, although capacity increased slightly during the same period.

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- It is estimated nationally that as many as one-third to one-half of children under age five are in family member, friend, or neighbor informal care.

Georgia Pre-K

- There are more than 79,000 lottery-funded Georgia Pre-K slots statewide; 43 percent of these slots are in the UW metro area.
- More than 4,000 children in the UW metro area and more than 7,000 statewide are on the Georgia Pre-K waiting list.
- Nearly half (47 percent) of the children served in Georgia Pre-K are economically disadvantaged.

Head Start

- There are more than 23,000 children enrolled in more than 300 Head Start programs statewide in Georgia; just over 1,500 are enrolled in Early Head Start (metro data was not available).
- Some Georgia Pre-K program classrooms are blended with Head Start.

Early Interventions

- The UWMA has federally and privately funded grants to improve early care and education in its metro service area:
 - Early Reading First, a program that supports literacy in early learning classrooms
 - Get Ready to Read!, a tool that allows parents and teachers to screen children for early literacy skills and provide literacy development activities
 - SPARK – Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids, a school readiness and transition program that operates out of existing community-based organizations
 - Community-Based Partnerships, a locally funded program based on the SPARK model

Child Care Quality

Accreditation

- Fewer than ten percent of the state's licensed child care centers and fewer than two percent of registered family child care providers are nationally accredited.
- More than 65 percent of the state's nationally-accredited centers and homes are in the UW metro area.
- Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (Bright from the Start) and Smart Start, the Early Learning Division of the UW of Metropolitan Atlanta, provide/fund training and technical assistance to support providers seeking to improve quality and obtain accreditation.

Teacher Credentials

- In Georgia, forty percent of teachers in child care centers have a technical college diploma or college degree; 62 percent have received training in a specific early education curriculum or in early care and education generally.

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- Most Georgia Pre-K lead teachers (81 percent) have at least a bachelor's degree and/or a teaching certificate; those in public school settings are more likely to have a bachelor's degree than are those in private centers.
- Bright from the Start supports increasing teacher credentials through improved standards and the following programs:
 - The Professional Development Registry, which lists and tracks training for early education teachers
 - SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES, which support and reward teachers for pursuing and completing early care and education credentials and degrees

Child Care Costs

- Market rates for child care are higher in metro Atlanta than they are in other parts of the state.
- Quality child care, as provided by nationally accredited child care centers, is more expensive to supply/purchase based on a comparison of accredited center rates to market rates.

Educational Indicators

- Georgia's high school graduation rate has increased from 65 to 75 percent over the past five years.
- Thirty-nine percent of the high school graduate transcripts evaluated for the state's HOPE Scholarship met the requirements for participation.
- Fewer than 10 percent of third grade students did not meet state reading achievement test standards; more than a quarter of third grade students did not meet math achievement standards. Performance varies by county.

General Findings

- Demographic data provide a picture of a growing and an increasingly diverse population, with variations among the metro area counties;
- Information and data on early care and education providers describe the current landscape in the metro area as well as the state, showing a wide variety of options in the metro area and decreases in the number of licensed and registered providers between 2006 and 2008 statewide;
- Information and data on accreditation, as a proxy for overall quality, and on teacher credentials and education, a key factor in quality, indicate there is room for increasing quality in early care and education, with Georgia Pre-K and Head Start moving in that direction by increasing standards;
- Data on child care costs suggest that it costs more to provide/purchase accredited – quality – child care; and
- Data on student achievement and student participation in learning support and compensatory programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels indicate there is room for improvement, especially when comparing Georgia to the nation as a whole.

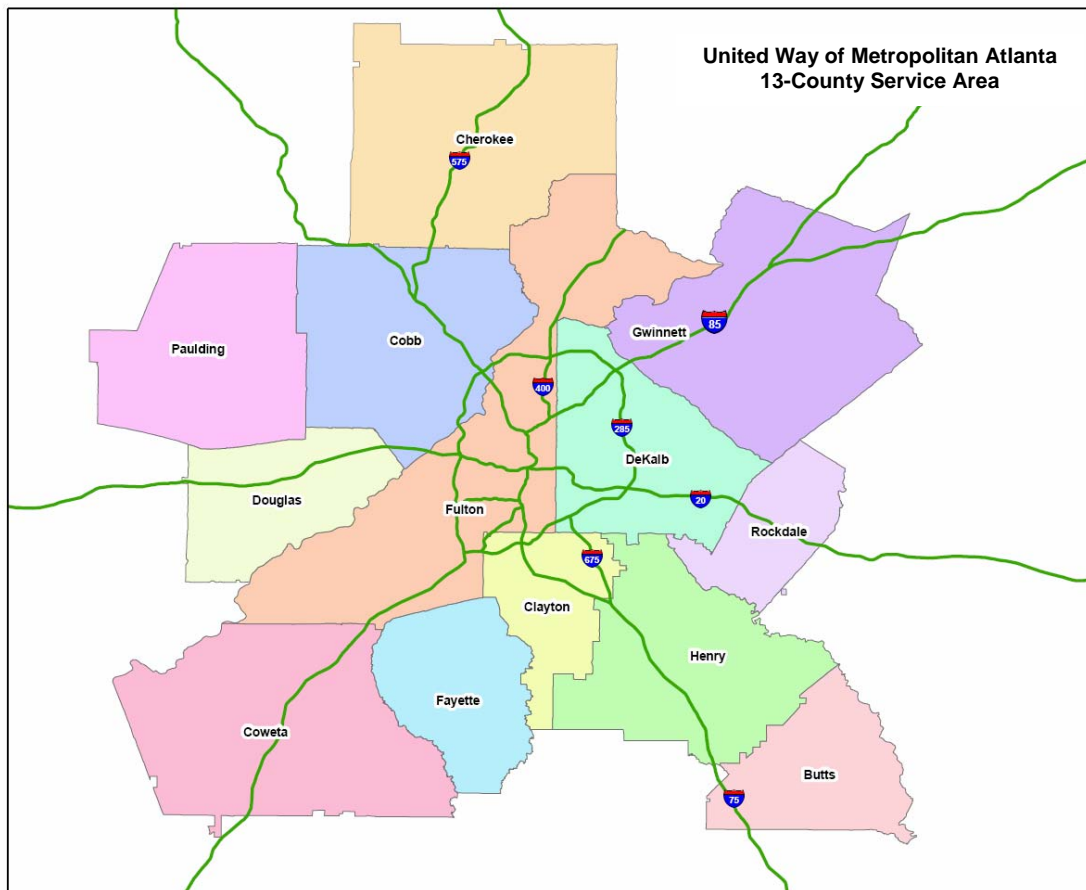
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Introduction

United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta (UWMA) convened an Early Education Commission comprised of leaders of Atlanta's business, foundation, government, criminal justice, education, media, entertainment, and faith communities in Fall 2008. The purpose was to develop a broad directional agenda and concrete action recommendations for stakeholders in the early childhood community to improve early childhood education in metro Atlanta. The commission approached early childhood education as an economic development issue as well as an education and social policy issue.

The commission's research included focused presentations and discussions led by renowned specialists in the area of early education, tours of early education facilities, and meetings with local early education professionals.

This report is a compilation of information and data related to early care and education, and to children ages zero to five, in the state of Georgia and United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta's 13-county service area (UW metro area).



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This report was designed to serve as a reference tool for Early Education Commission members during their deliberation process, and is not intended as an analysis or evaluation. It is divided into five major sections, each of which plays a role in planning for early care and education:

- Metro Atlanta and Georgia Population Trends – this section describes metro area growth in terms of overall population as well as demographic characteristics of children ages 0-4; these are relevant to the number and capacity of facilities as well as the nature of programs and specialized interventions
- Child Care and Early Education Providers in Georgia – this section describes the existing early care and education landscape, which varies by county and region
- Child Care Quality – this section discusses meaningful definitions of quality and provides data on early childhood teacher education and credentials
- Child Care Costs – this section provides cost data for early childhood providers across the region as well as individual providers
- Educational Indicators – this section provides data on key educational progress indicators, including achievement tests, high school graduation, and SAT scores; it also provides some data on remedial program participation at different educational levels

Metro Atlanta and Georgia Population Trends¹

Population trends bear on planning for early care and education in two primary ways. First, population growth affects the demand for early care and education capacity, including child care and preschool, Georgia Pre-K, and early intervention programs such as Head Start. Second, the population characteristics affect the nature of early care and education programs and interventions.

According to U.S. Census population estimates for 2008, Georgia had a total population of 9,685,744, and 47 percent of that population – 4,516,395 individuals – resided in the 13-county UW metro area. There were an estimated 740,521 children under five statewide, with 351,693 (48 percent) in the UW metro area in 2008.

The Atlanta metro area is home to some of the largest counties and fastest-growing counties in the United States in terms of population. Four Georgia counties – all in the metro area – rank in the top 100 for size of population in 2008: Fulton (39th), Gwinnett (66th), DeKalb (75th), and Cobb (85th), according to U.S. Census population estimates for July 2008.

Georgia Counties in 100 Largest Counties in the U.S., 2008		
National Rank - Largest Counties	Georgia Counties	Population Estimates
		July 1, 2008
39 th	Fulton	1,014,932
66 th	Gwinnett	789,499
75 th	DeKalb	739,956
85 th	Cobb	698,158

Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

¹ All population data are based on U.S. Census population estimates from the website www.census.gov, accessed May and June, 2009, unless otherwise specified.

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Six of the 17 Georgia counties on the U.S. Census list of the 100 fastest-growing counties between 2000 and 2008 are in the Atlanta metro area: Cherokee, Coweta, Douglas, Gwinnett, Henry, and Paulding; two (Henry and Paulding) are within the top ten.

Georgia Counties in Fastest Growing Counties with 10K+ Population in the U.S., 2000-2008			
National Rank	Georgia County	Population Estimate	Percent Change
		July 1, 2008	2000-2008
6	Forsyth	168,060	70.8%
8	Paulding	133,135	63.2%
9	Henry	191,502	60.5%
11	Newton	98,542	58.9%
19	Barrow	70,073	51.9%
22	Cherokee	210,529	48.4%
23	Jackson	61,620	48.2%
36	Walton	85,813	41.4%
45	Effingham	52,060	38.7%
46	Douglas	127,932	38.7%
52	Coweta	122,924	37.8%
55	Dawson	22,006	37.5%
60	Lee	33,761	36.4%
65	Pickens	31,176	35.6%
76	Gwinnett	789,499	34.2%
79	Bryan	31,173	33.1%
85	Hall	184,814	32.7%

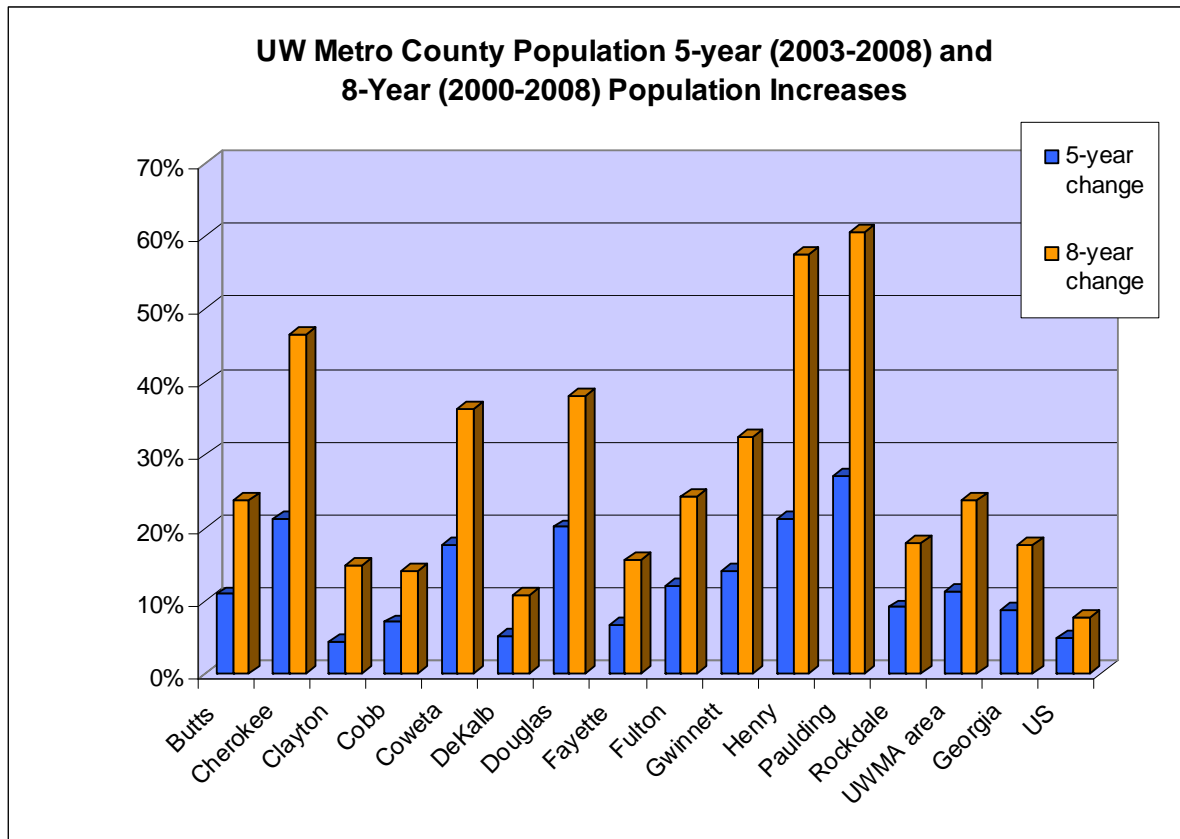
Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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UW Metro Area Population Trends

Growth

All of the 13 metro counties have increased in population since 2000, with Cherokee, Henry, and Paulding counties having the largest increases, and Clayton, Cobb, and DeKalb counties having the smallest increases.



Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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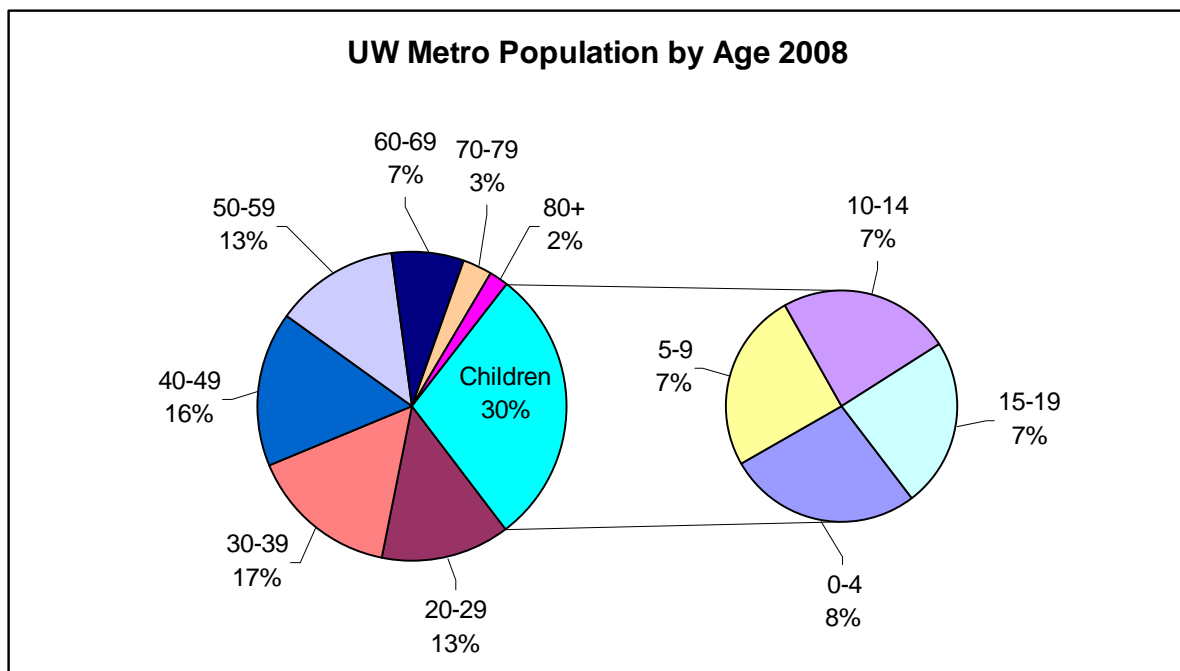
Gender and Age

While the proportion of males and females in the population is nearly equal, there are slightly more males in the 0-4 age group and slightly more females in the total population.

UW Metro Population by Gender, Total and Ages 0-4		
Age	Male	Female
All Ages	49.4%	50.6%
0 to 4	51.3%	48.7%

Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

Children under age 20 make up 30 percent of the UW metro area population, and children under age five make up eight percent of the UW metro area population. There were an estimated 351,693 children under age five in the UW metro area in 2008.

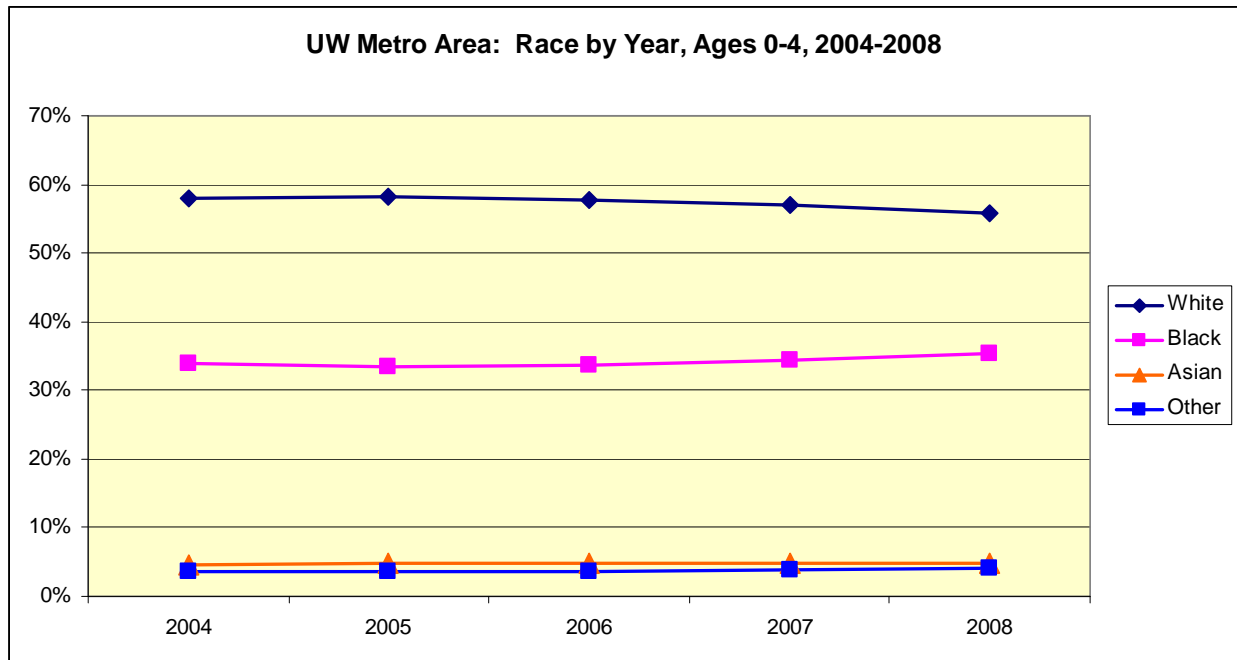


Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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Diversity

The metro and state populations are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of race/ethnicity. The proportion of whites has decreased and the proportions of other races and of Hispanics have increased over time, with proportions of Hispanics higher among children ages zero to four.² While whites remain the largest racial group, the percentage of whites is decreasing in the UW metro area, with the numbers of blacks and other races increasing in all age groups, including children ages birth to four.

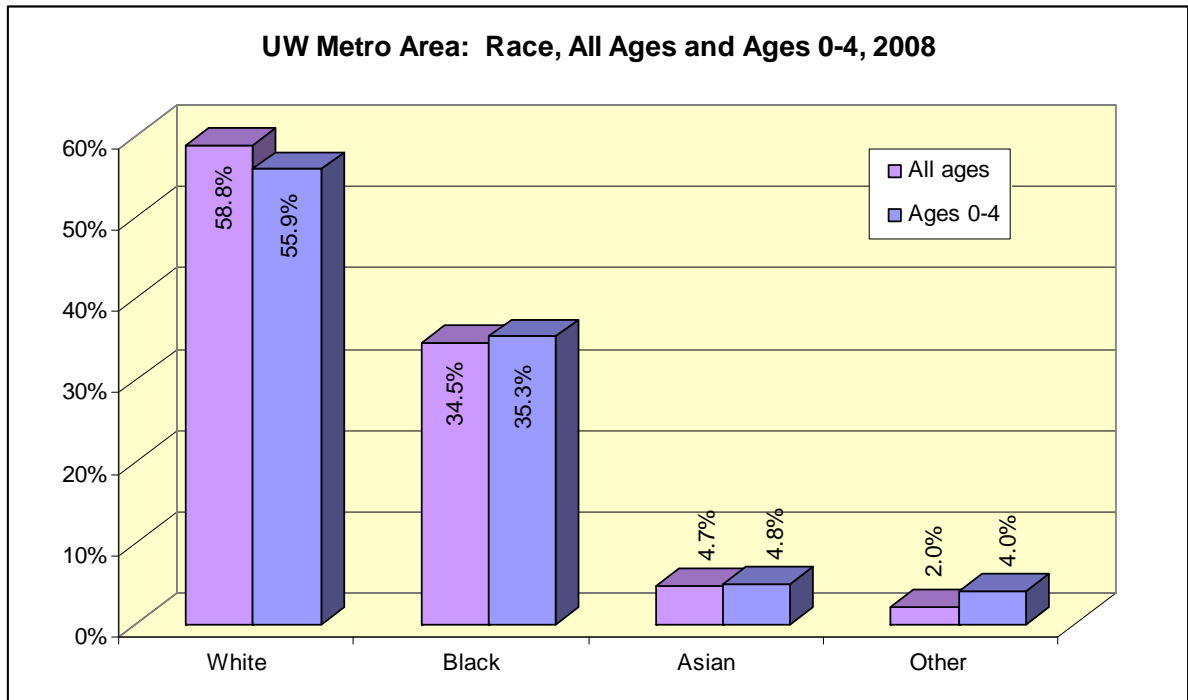


Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

² The U.S. Census categorizes race separately from Hispanic origin; an individual may be of Hispanic origin and any race (for example, black and Hispanic or white and non-Hispanic).

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The racial proportions are similar for children ages zero to four and the population in general, although the younger population is slightly more diverse.

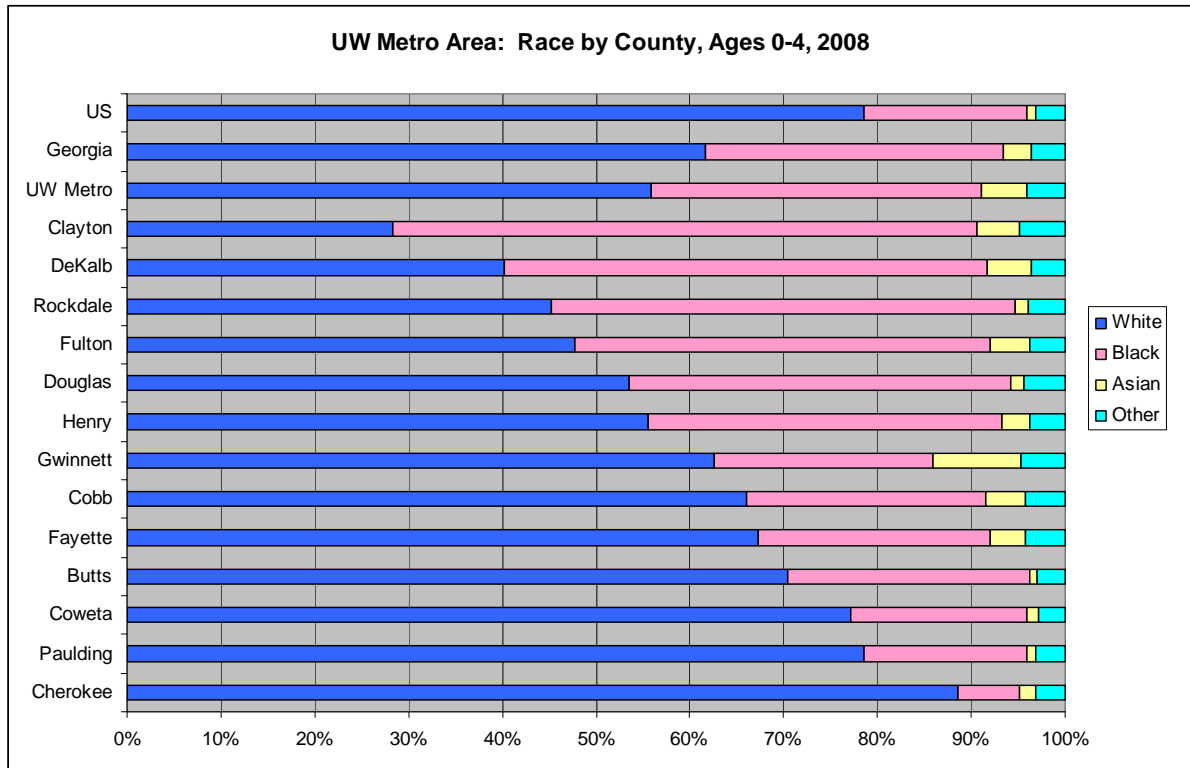


Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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Racial proportions among children ages 0-4 (as well as the total population) vary widely among the UW metro area counties:

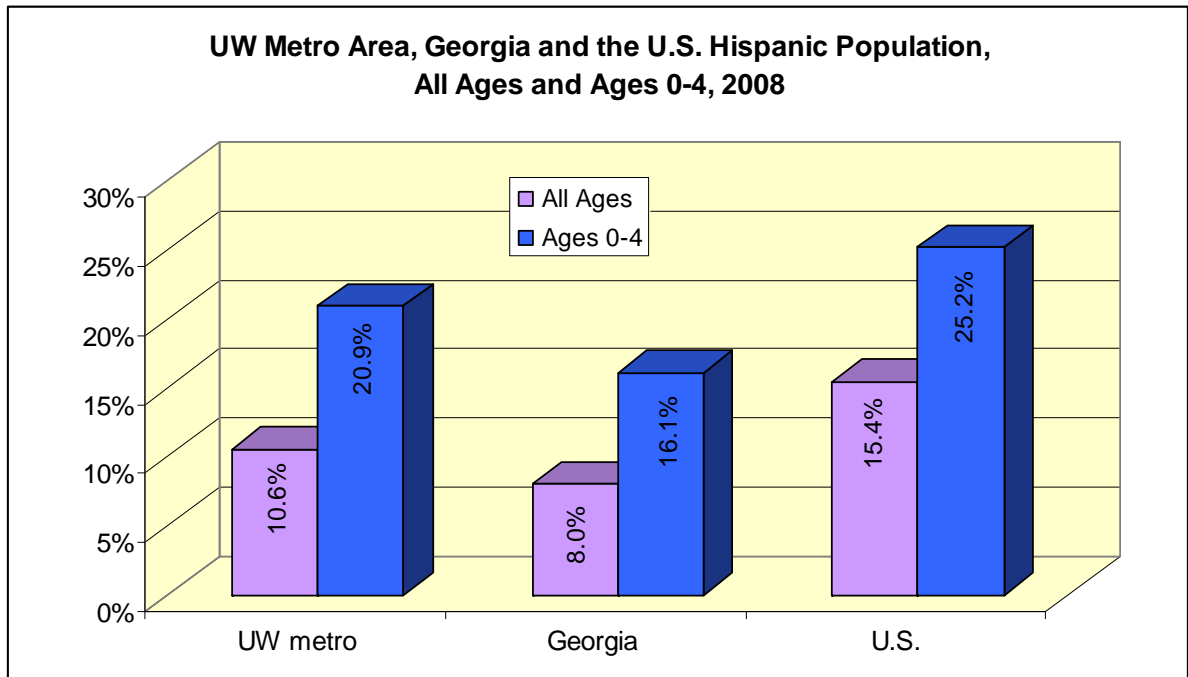
- Clayton and DeKalb have the highest proportions of blacks and the lowest proportions of whites.
- Gwinnett has the highest proportion of Asians.
- The UW metro area as a whole has a higher proportion of Asians and blacks compared to the state.
- Cherokee, Paulding and Coweta counties have the highest proportions of whites.



Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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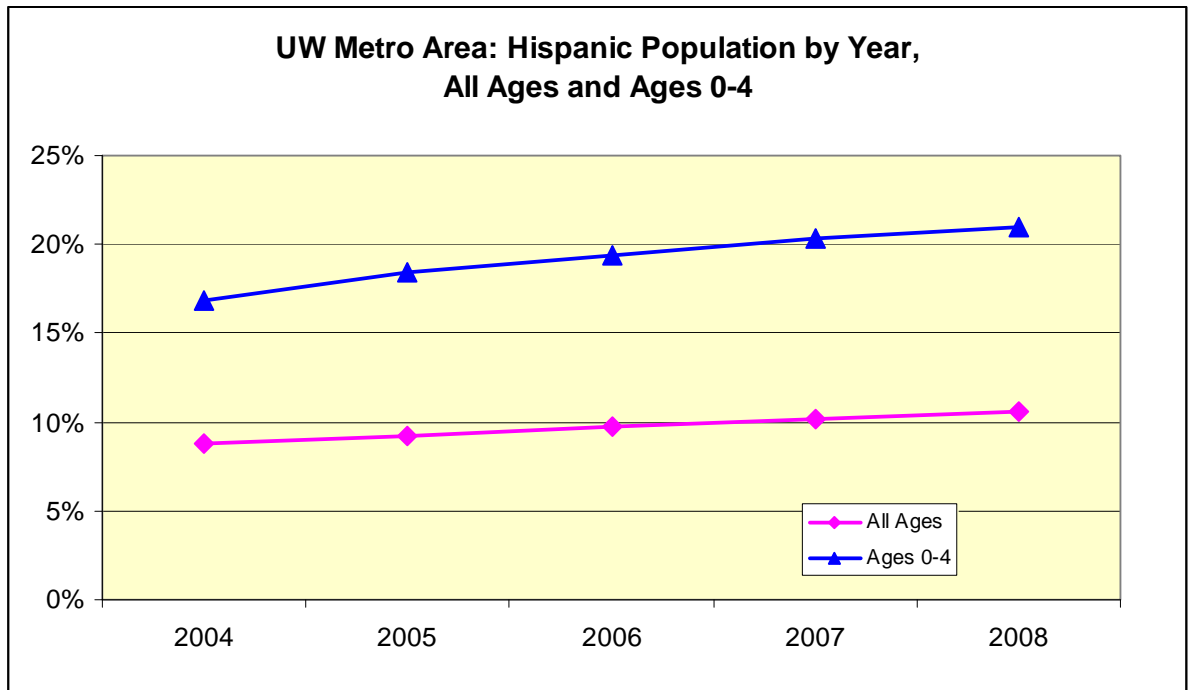
Whereas children ages zero to four show racial proportions similar to the total population, the picture for Hispanic origin is quite different. The proportion of Hispanics is significantly greater for children ages zero to four than for the population as a whole – in the UW metro area, the state, and the nation. Nationwide, an estimated 25 percent of the children under age five are of Hispanic origin, although Hispanics make up less than 16 percent of the total population. In both Georgia and the UW metro area, Hispanics are roughly twice as prevalent in the population ages zero to four as in the total population.



Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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The proportion of Hispanics in the UW metro area has steadily increased over the past five years, with more than 20 percent of the under five population being Hispanic in 2008.

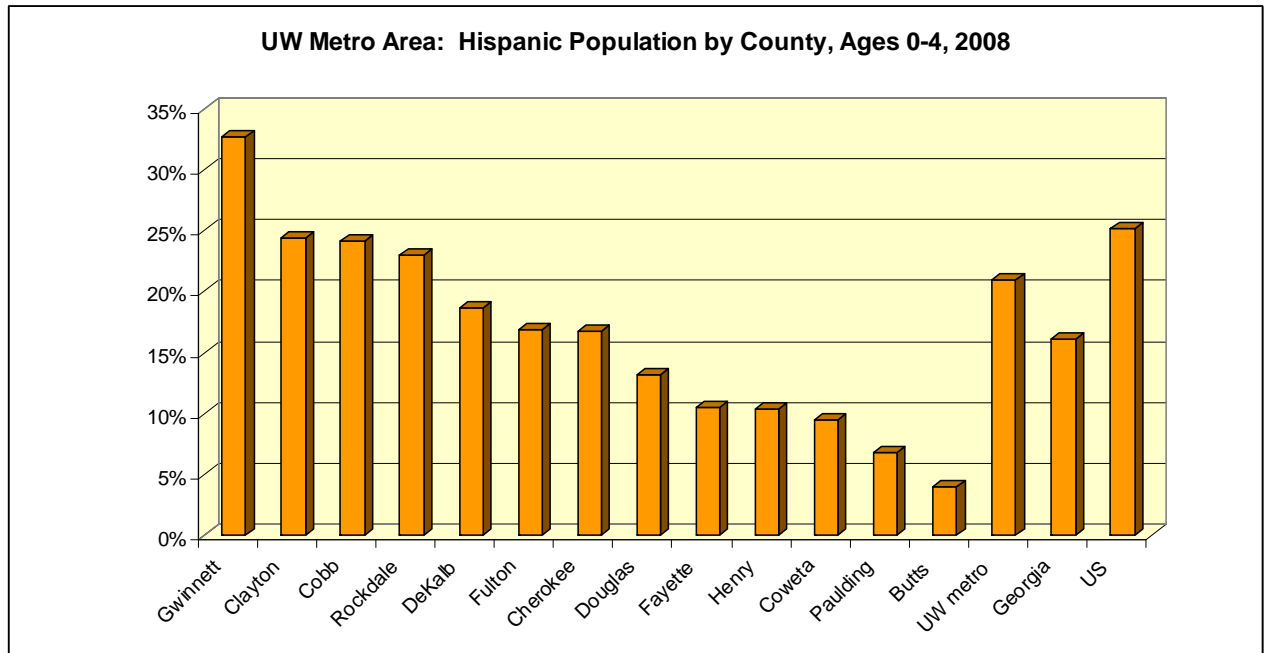


Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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Although Georgia as a whole has a lower proportion of Hispanics among children ages zero to four than the nation, the UW metro area has a higher percentage of Hispanic children in that age range than the rest of the state. The proportion of Hispanics also varies from county to county.

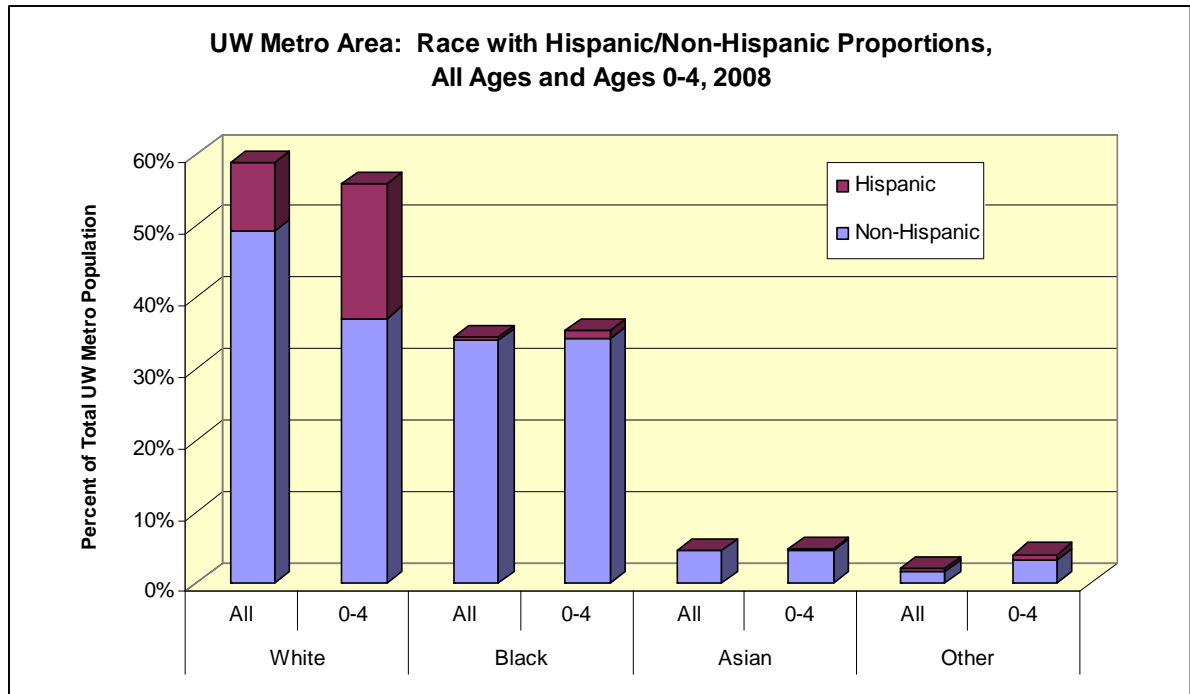
- Gwinnett County has the highest Hispanic percentage, followed by Cobb, Clayton, and Rockdale counties.
- Butts and Paulding counties have the smallest proportion of Hispanics among children ages zero to four.



Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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The U.S. Census categorizes race separately from Hispanic origin; an individual may be of Hispanic origin and any race (for example, black and Hispanic or white and non-Hispanic). In the UW metro area, most of the Hispanic population is white. The following chart shows the proportion of Hispanics within each of the major race categories for the UW metro area.

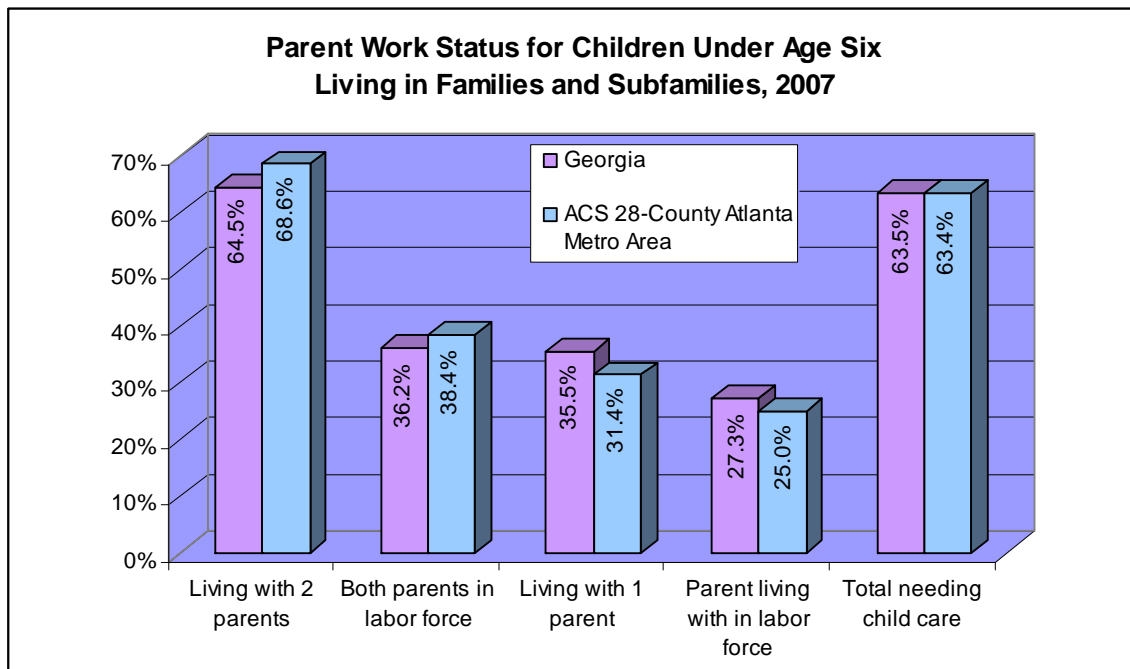


Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates, July 2008

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Parent Work Status

Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's national American Community Survey (ACS) for 2007, an estimated 522,063 children under six in families and subfamilies (families that do not maintain their own household, but live in the home of someone else) are in need of child care, either because they are living with two parents who both work or living with one parent who works. The following chart shows the percentage of children in each category for both the state and for the ACS's 28-county Atlanta metro area.

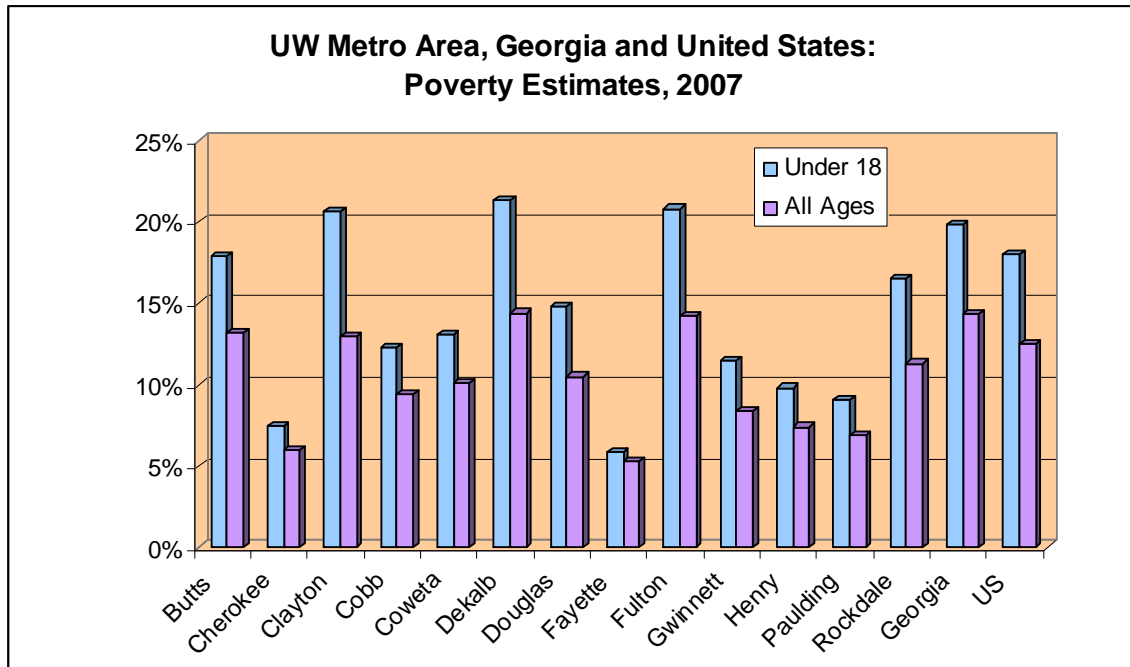


Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2007

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Poverty

In Georgia, 20 percent of children under age 18 are living below the poverty level, compared to 14 percent of the state's total population. In the UW metro area, the percentages in poverty vary by county, with Clayton, DeKalb, and Fulton counties each having 21 percent of children in poverty, followed by Butts County, with 18 percent.



Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2007

Child Care and Early Education Providers in Georgia

Types of Early Childhood (0-5) Care and Education Providers

Regulation of child care providers varies from state to state. Georgia child care falls into three basic sectors:

- **Regulated:** licensed centers and group child care homes and registered family child care providers
- **Exempt:** certain school-based programs, faith-based programs, and others legally exempt from licensing
- **Informal, or unregulated:** family, friend, and neighbor caregivers who care for three or fewer children (not their own) in their home or in the child's home; these caregivers are not required to be licensed or registered, although some informal caregivers choose to meet state requirements in order to receive child care subsidy payments

*Regulated Child Care*³

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (BFTS) is responsible for licensing/registering child care providers and determines the number of children that can be served (capacity):

- Licensed child care center – a facility operated by a person, society, agency, corporation, institution, or group that charges for child care, for fewer than 24 hours per day for 19 or more children under 18 years of age (may include Head Start Centers)
- Group child care home – a place or home operated by a person, partnership, association, or corporation that charges for child care for fewer than 24 hours per day for seven to 18 children under age 18
- Registered family child care home – a private residence operated by a person who charges for child care for fewer than 24 hours per day for three to six children under age 18 who are not related to him or her and whose parents or guardians are not residents in the same private residence
- Georgia Pre-K programs – in public schools or private centers; limited to 20 students per class

For accredited centers, the class size/ratio of children to teachers that is required for accreditation may be lower than licensing ratios, resulting in an actual capacity lower than the licensed capacity.

³ Information on regulated providers based on definitions on the Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning website, www.dec.state.ga.us, accessed May 2009.

Exempt Child Care

Some early education and child care providers may be granted an exemption from state child care licensing but may be monitored and regulated by the state; they may also choose to be licensed. These include:

- Half-day (no more than four hours per day) programs
- Programs that do not charge for child care
- Faith-based child care and preschool programs
- Military child care centers
- Approved, specialized day care centers for mentally handicapped individuals

Informal/Unregulated Child Care (Family, Friend and Neighbor Care)

A caregiver who cares for fewer than three children unrelated (or six children related) to himself/herself is exempt from licensing. Care may be provided in the caregiver's home, the child's home, or the home of a relative, friend, or neighbor. These caregivers are not known to the state unless they are receiving subsidized child care or food program payments; therefore, there are no verifiable totals for this type of care within Georgia or the UW metro area.

According to Susman-Stillman and Banghart (2008), family, friend, and neighbor care "is the most common form of non-parental care in the U.S., with estimates of the proportion of children with employed parents using this care ranging from one-third to over one-half (33-53 percent for children under 5, and 48-59 percent for school-age children)."⁴ At the lowest end of that range (33 percent), more than 100,000 children ages 0-5 in the UW metro area would be expected to be receiving this type of care; at the highest end (53 percent), the estimated number of children in this type of care would be over 180,000.

⁴ Susman-Stillman and Patti Banghart, "Demographics of Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care in the United States," *Child Care and Early Education Research Connections*, August 2008.

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Licensed and Registered Child Care Providers

A significant proportion of the state's child care providers and child care capacity are in the UW metro area:

- 54 percent of registered family child care providers
- 44 percent of licensed centers and 54 percent of center capacity

In contrast, 31 percent of the state's identified informal child care providers (those receiving child care subsidy payments) are in the UW metro area.

Following is a data snapshot of child care providers in the UW metro area and state.

Number and Capacity of Child Care Providers, 2008							
County	Informal Child Care Providers (providing subsidized child care)*		Registered Family Child Care Homes		Licensed Child Care Centers and Group Child Care Homes		Total Licensed/Registered Capacity
	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	
Butts	3	6	5	30	8	935	965
Cherokee	15	30	60	360	49	7,287	7,647
Clayton	223	446	369	2,214	93	10,876	13,090
Cobb	33	66	339	2,034	183	22,817	24,851
Coweta	26	52	28	168	28	3,898	4,066
DeKalb	447	894	689	4,134	233	25,460	29,594
Douglas	62	124	91	546	42	5,876	6,422
Fayette	20	40	24	144	29	4,658	4,802
Fulton	486	972	464	2,784	329	41,150	43,934
Gwinnett	165	330	467	2,802	203	32,874	35,676
Henry	77	154	157	942	57	9,482	10,424
Paulding	5	10	53	318	27	4,033	4,351
Rockdale	33	66	56	336	32	4,355	4,691
UW metro area	1,595	3,190	2,802	16,812	1,313	173,701	190,513
Georgia	5,099	10,198	5,146	30,876	2,998	324,272	355,148

* The total informal child care sector is, of course, much larger than those receiving subsidy payments.

Source: Informal providers – list provided by DHR Child Care Unit March 2009; licensed and registered providers – lists provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, December 2008

As noted previously, as many as one-third to one-half of children under age five are in informal care, frequently with providers not known to the state, making it an important but difficult target for quality improvement.

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Overall, the number of licensed and registered child care providers declined slightly from December 2006 to December 2008, although child care center capacity increased by four percent. However, the number of informal child care providers receiving child care subsidy payments increased by half during that two-year period. (See following chart as well as provider maps included in appendices.)

Changes in Number and Capacity of Child Care Providers, 2006-2008			
	2006	2008	Percent Change
Licensed child care centers and group homes	3,028	2,998	-1.0%
Licensed center capacity	311,616	324,272	4.1%
Registered family child care homes	5,340	5,146	-3.6%
Informal child care providers receiving subsidy payments	3,306	5,099	54.2%

Source: Informal providers – list provided by DHR Child Care Unit, March 2009; licensed and registered providers – lists provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, December 2006 and December 2008

Changes may be due in part to the weakened economy and/or the increased efforts of Bright from the Start to ensure providers are meeting state standards and requirements. A January 2009 survey of licensed and regulated providers in 36 counties in northwest and central Georgia, including metro Atlanta, suggests some support for the economic downturn reasoning. The survey found that among the 133 centers and 228 family child care homes responding, enrollments were down for most (86 percent of centers and 68 percent of family providers). Many (38 percent of centers and 24 percent of family providers) were worried about having to close, and six percent of family providers were making preparations to close.⁵

⁵ Quality Care for Children, “The Impact of the Economic Downturn on Child Care in Georgia” on the Child and Adult Food Care website, <http://www.cacfpforum.org/docs/ImpactGA.pdf>, accessed May 2009. The article did not report the number of surveys distributed or the response rate, so results may or may not be representative of the population surveyed. In the 13-county UW metro area there were 1,313 licensed centers and 2,802 registered family child care providers, suggesting response rates of less than ten percent.

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Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

CACFP is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Program that reimburses child care providers, including center-based, home-based, and school-based providers, for nutritious meals served to children in their care. Providers may be public, private non-profit, or private for-profit. Private for-profit centers must have at least 25 percent children in subsidized care or have at least 25 percent of the children enrolled meeting the income eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.⁶

In Georgia, this nutrition program is administered by Bright from the Start. The following chart shows the numbers of providers participating in the state's nutrition program in March 2008.

Early Care and Education Provider Participation in the Child and Adult Food Care Program, 2009						
County	Licensed Centers			Licensed Group Home	Registered Family Child Care Home	Informal
	BFTS	Head Start	Department of Defense	BFTS	BFTS	N/A
Butts	6	0	0	0	4	0
Cherokee	5	0	0	3	40	0
Clayton	84	2	0	5	253	5
Cobb	156	0	0	10	402	2
Coweta	14	0	0	0	17	0
DeKalb	352	6	0	22	990	8
Douglas	23	0	0	1	47	0
Fayette	13	0	0	1	8	0
Fulton	516	4	2	22	488	2
Gwinnett	188	0	0	8	608	2
Henry	30	0	0	0	73	0
Paulding	11	1	0	0	36	0
Rockdale	20	0	0	0	37	2
UW metro area	1,418	13	2	72	3,003	21
Georgia	1,794	114	28	291	3,441	53

Source: Lists from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, March 2009

⁶ Information obtained from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning website, www.decal.ga.gov, accessed May 2009.

Georgia Pre-K

Georgia has lottery-funded, voluntary, universal full-day Pre-K for four-year-olds throughout the state. Classes are located in a variety of public and private (for-profit as well as non-profit) settings, including public, private, and charter schools, child care centers, military bases, and Head Start Centers. The state has established comprehensive classroom standards, and family support is provided, including school transition and referrals.

Some Pre-K sites also have the support of a resource coordinator, provided under a separate grant to enhance the family support provided by the Pre-K program. The resource coordinators provide information and referral services for parents on workshops (job skills, kindergarten readiness, and other topics), literacy, education, employment, community resources, and services, including helping parents find assessment and treatment providers to address issues that might affect a child's learning in school.⁷

For the 2007-2008 academic year, 502 resource coordinators were employed in the Georgia Pre-K program; these resource coordinators served 48,840 children (62 percent of the Pre-K enrollment) at 1,030 sites.⁸ Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the children served by resource coordinators were "Category I" children, who are considered "at-risk" or "economically disadvantaged." These are children whose families qualify for some form of assistance, such as free or reduced lunch or child care subsidies; they reflect a range of incomes and do not necessarily meet federal poverty guidelines.⁹ Resource coordination was six percent of the Pre-K budget for the year.

⁷ Information from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning website, www.decal.ga.gov, accessed May 2009.

⁸ Data provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, May 2009.

⁹ Bright from the Start defines Category I child eligibility as the child's participation in one of the following: Food Stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Child and Parent Services (CAPS) program, or PeachCare for Kids. Documentation of the child's participation must be verified and kept on file for review. Children who participate in the free and reduced meal program through the center/school that they attend may also be counted if income eligibility is verified on each child and kept on file for review. From *2008-2009 Georgia's Pre-K Program Operating Guidelines*, on website, www.decal.ga.gov, accessed June 2009.

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Georgia had a total of 79,660 Pre-K slots for the 2008-2009 school year. The Georgia Pre-K program is “universal”, in that there are no income eligibility requirements for the Pre-K slots; however, at the current time demand exceeds capacity, and there are waiting lists of more than 4,000 in the UW metro area and 7,000 statewide. Forty-three percent of the state’s Pre-K slots are in the UW metro area, which contains 48 percent of the state's children ages zero to five.

Georgia Pre-K 2008-2009						
County	Providers	Sites	Classes	Slots	Percent of Georgia Slots	Number on Waiting List, May 2009
Butts	6	6	10	200	0.3%	2
Cherokee	28	36	81	1,620	2.0%	149
Clayton	42	69	124	2,480	3.1%	465
Cobb	77	98	214	4,280	5.4%	388
Coweta	15	28	55	1,100	1.4%	98
DeKalb	67	158	267	5,340	6.7%	1,271
Douglas	23	24	53	1,060	1.3%	104
Fayette	10	18	30	600	0.8%	45
Fulton	91	183	324	6,480	8.1%	522
Gwinnett	113	144	381	7,620	9.6%	649
Henry	27	31	74	1,480	1.9%	95
Paulding	21	24	59	1,180	1.5%	176
Rockdale	15	25	41	820	1.0%	56
UW metro area	535	844	1,713	34,260	43.0%	4,020
Georgia	945	1,845	3,983	79,660	100.0%	7,103

Source: Pre-K data by county provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, March 2009; waiting list counts provided May, 2009

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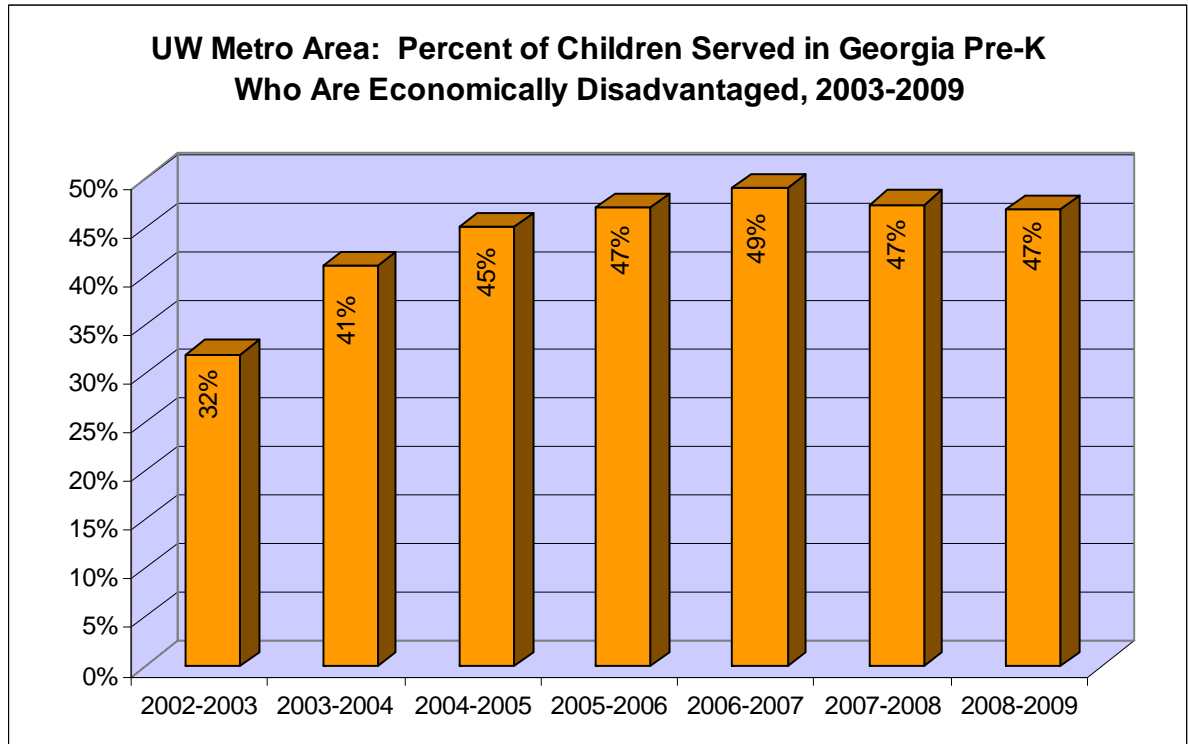
Georgia Pre-K settings include local public schools and other public settings as well as private settings (typically child care centers). In the UW metro area, 81 percent of the Pre-K slots are in private settings; statewide, 56 percent are in private settings.

Georgia Pre-K Slots by Type of Setting, 2009				
County	Local School System	Other Public Setting	Private Setting	Total Slots
Butts	20	0	180	200
Cherokee	100	0	1,520	1,620
Clayton	560	0	1,920	2,480
Cobb	0	0	4,280	4,280
Coweta	520	0	580	1,100
DeKalb	2,280	0	3,060	5,340
Douglas	0	0	1,060	1,060
Fayette	180	0	420	600
Fulton	2,360	80	4,040	6,480
Gwinnett	20	60	7,540	7,620
Henry	0	0	1,480	1,480
Paulding	0	20	1,160	1,180
Rockdale	180	0	640	820
UW metro area	6,220	160	27,880	34,260
Georgia	34,020	840	44,780	79,640

Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning data provided May 2009 (20 slots, or one classroom, less than indicated in March 2009 data).

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Georgia Pre-K serves a significant number of children who are considered at risk (Category I, or economically disadvantaged), and the proportion of children served who are at risk has grown over the past five years, from nearly one-third to nearly half of the children served.



Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Cards for 2003-2008, and data provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning for 2009

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The proportion of children served who are economically disadvantaged varies greatly from county to county within the UW metro area. For the 2007-2008 academic year:

- In Clayton and DeKalb counties, more than three-fifths of the children served are economically disadvantaged.
- In Cherokee, Fayette and Coweta counties, less than a third are economically disadvantaged.

The following chart shows, for the UW metro counties and the state, the percentage of estimated four-year-olds served and proportion of those served who are economically disadvantaged.

Georgia Pre-K Report Card, 2007-2008 ¹⁰					
County	Estimated Population of 4-Year-Olds	Total Number 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in GA Pre-K	Percentage of Estimated 4-Year-Olds Served	Number of At-Risk Children Served *	Percentage of Children Served Who Are At-Risk *
Butts	269	216	80%	106	49%
Cherokee	2,907	1,506	52%	366	24%
Clayton	4,638	2,364	51%	1,496	63%
Cobb	9,945	4,229	43%	1,808	43%
Coweta	1,668	1,114	67%	360	32%
DeKalb	9,674	4,926	51%	2,986	61%
Douglas	1,542	1,032	67%	371	36%
Fayette	1,172	591	50%	158	27%
Fulton	13,176	6,248	47%	3,425	55%
Gwinnett	12,443	7,353	59%	3,156	43%
Henry	2,735	1,469	54%	576	39%
Paulding	2,159	1,189	55%	404	34%
Rockdale	1,210	747	62%	375	50%
UW metro area	63,538	32,984	52%	15,587	47%
Georgia	134,247	76,491	57%	40,836	53%

* At-risk children are those who are economically disadvantaged; no estimates are provided for the percentage of the population that is at-risk/economically disadvantaged or the percentage of the at-risk/economically disadvantaged that is served.

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Card, 2007-2008

¹⁰ Education Report Card Data are from the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement website (www.gaosa.org), accessed May and June, 2009.

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Head Start/Early Head Start

Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) are federally-funded early care and education programs targeting disadvantaged families and young children.

Head Start

- Half or full-day preschool education
- Comprehensive, center-based services:
 - Child medical, dental, mental health
 - Nutrition and social services
 - Parent involvement
- Targets disadvantaged children ages 3-4
- Approximately 5,500 slots in metro Atlanta (March 2008)

Early Head Start

- Extension of Head Start
- Center and home-based services:
 - Pre-natal health
 - Infant-toddler social/emotional development and well-being
 - Cognitive and language development
- Targets low-income pregnant women and families with children under age 3
- Approximately 500 slots in metro Atlanta (March 2008)

Head Start and Early Head Start data for 2009:

- 337 programs, including programs in 198 licensed centers, with 129 being accredited¹¹

The following chart provides statewide Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment data.

Georgia Head Start Enrollment, 2009 ¹²						
HS-Funded Enrollment in Georgia	Early HS-Funded Enrollment	4-Year-Olds Enrolled	Blended Head Start/Pre-K Classrooms *	4-Year-Olds in Blended Classrooms	3-Year-Old Classrooms	3-Year-Olds Enrolled
23,144	1,548	10,149	169	1,897	380	9,885

* Blended programs with braided funding.¹³

Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, March 2009

¹¹ Head Start is exempt from required licensing; however, some programs choose to seek licensing, as that is a requirement for accreditation.

¹² Enrollment data were not available by county.

¹³ In braided funding, funding sources remain visible while they are used in common to produce greater strength, efficiency, and/or effectiveness. The key difference between braided funds and blended funds is that braided funds are tracked both collectively and separately. "Blended and Braided Funding," National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (PACT Financing Module 3 handout), on website www.nccic.acf.hhs.gov, accessed May 2009.

Child Care Quality

There is much discussion in the literature on what constitutes quality child care and early education, and its impact on child outcomes. In research literature a variety of factors are recognized as contributing to the quality of care and child outcomes. According to Espinosa (2002):

“Preschool programs are typically rated on two dimensions of quality – process and structure. The interactions, activities, materials, learning opportunities, and health and safety routines are observed and rated as a measure of *process quality*. The second dimension, *structural quality*, includes the size of each group of children, the adult-child ratio, and the education and training of the teachers and staff.”¹⁴

In this section of the report, two indicators of quality are addressed: national accreditation and teacher qualifications. National accreditation for child care providers is a strong indicator of quality, as the accreditation process takes all of the above factors into account. Teacher credentials are another commonly-cited indicator of quality: “In general, higher levels of teacher education are associated with higher overall classroom quality, more positive teacher behaviors in the classroom, and greater gains in cognitive and social development in children.”¹⁵

Accreditation

The primary accrediting bodies for early care & education include:

- National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- Others include:
 - National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
 - Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS)
 - National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)
 - Montessori

¹⁴ Espinosa, Linda M., “High Quality Preschool and What it Looks Like,” *Preschool Policy Matters*, National Institute for Early Education Research, Issue 1, November 2002.

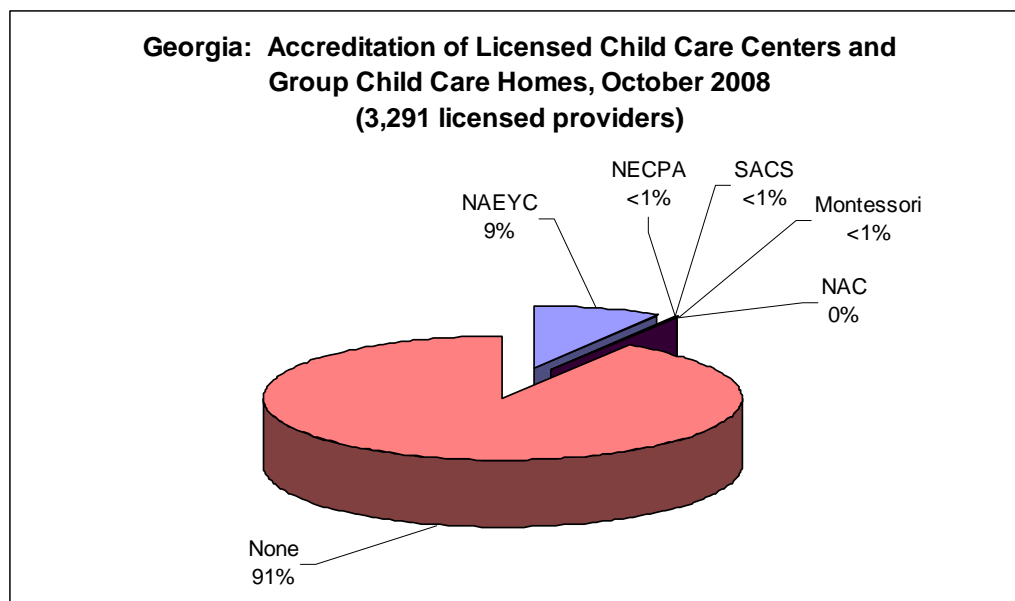
¹⁵ Kelley, Pamela, and Gregory Camilli, “The Impact of Teacher Education on Outcomes in Center-Based Early Childhood Education Programs: A Meta-Analysis,” report partially sponsored by National Institute for Early Education Research and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2007.

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In early 2009, NAEYC had more than 9,000 accredited centers nationwide.¹⁶ Nationally, there were 73,755 child care establishments in 2006.¹⁷ In the previous two years, there was one to two percent growth per year. Assuming conservatively one percent per year growth since 2006, there would be an estimated 75,990 such establishments in 2009, suggesting a national accreditation rate of approximately 12 percent.

As of May 2009, there were 255 NAEYC-accredited child care centers in Georgia – fewer than 10 percent of the state’s licensed child care centers. Accreditation of registered family child care providers is even lower, with fewer than two percent accredited.¹⁸

Of Georgia’s 225 NAEYC-accredited centers, 167 (65 percent) were in the UW metro area. Of the 65 NAFCC accredited homes, 44 (68 percent) were in the UW metro area.



Source: Accrediting organization websites, accessed October 2008

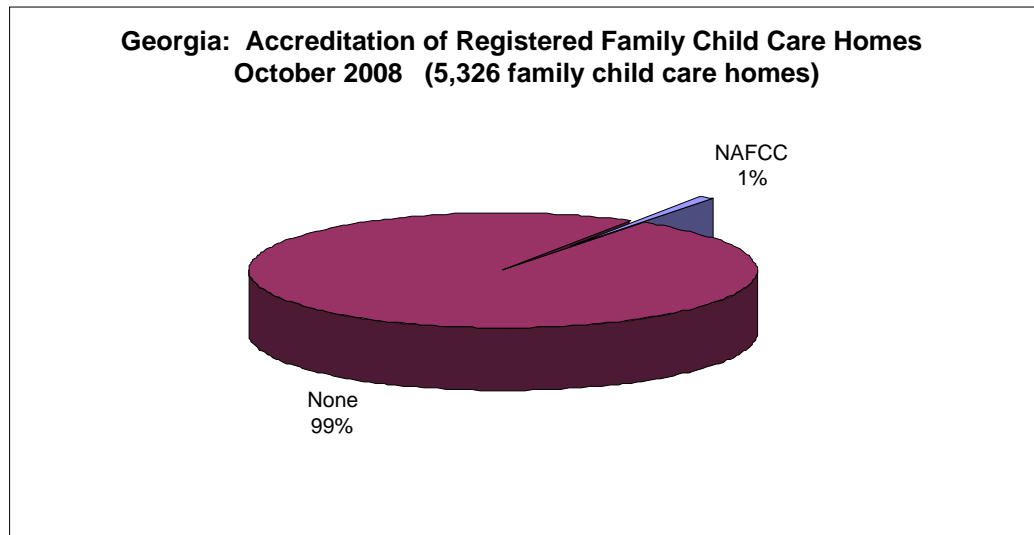
¹⁶ Presentation by Mark Ginsberg, Ph.D., NAEYC, at UW of Metropolitan Atlanta Early Education meeting, February 2009.

¹⁷ Most recent data released at time report was written; U.S. Census County Business Patterns 2006 on website, www.census.gov, accessed June 2009.

¹⁸ Lists of licensed and registered child care providers were obtained from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Accreditation counts were obtained from the websites or offices of the respective accrediting organizations.

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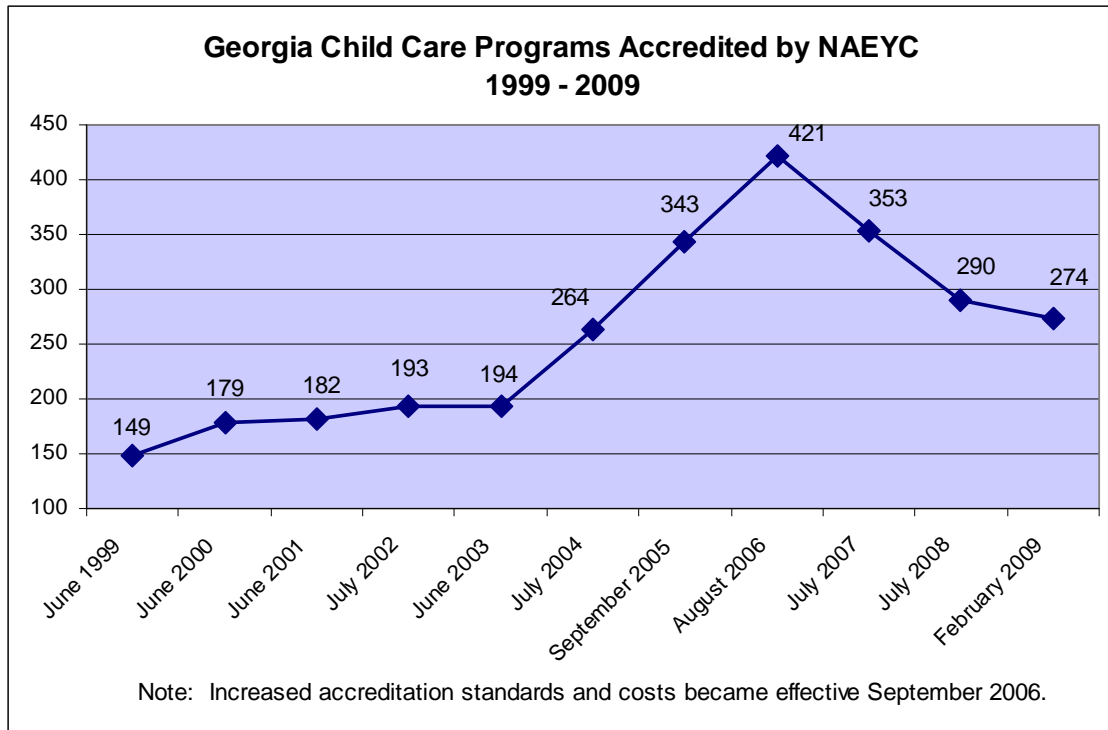
An even smaller proportion of registered family child care homes is nationally accredited.



Source: Accrediting organization websites, accessed October 2008

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The number of licensed centers in Georgia accredited by NAEYC rose between 2003 and 2006; this rise coincided with increased technical assistance and training to support providers in seeking national accreditation provided under the Georgia Early Learning Initiative, subsequently named Smart Start, of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta. The number of participating centers peaked in 2006 and then fell, following implementation of increased accreditation standards and costs.¹⁹



Source: Lists acquired from NAEYC's website and emails from NAEYC staff collected over time

¹⁹ Historical counts provided by the National Association on the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accreditation is for a period of 5 years, based on the month and year accreditation was awarded, so the number of accredited centers varies somewhat from month-to-month as well as from year-to-year.

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The majority of the accredited centers and homes – approximately two-thirds – are located in the UW metro area.

Nationally-Accredited Child Care Providers in Georgia and the UW Metro Area, 2008					
	Georgia		UW Metro Area		
	NAEYC- or NAFCC-Accredited May 2008	Licensed Centers/ Registered Homes March 2008	NAEYC- or NAFCC-Accredited May 2008	Licensed Centers/ Registered Homes March 2008	Percent of Georgia's Accredited Providers Located in UW Metro Area
Child Care Centers	304	3,153	205	1,499	67%
Family Child Care Homes	72	5,410	47	2,911	65%

Source: Accreditation counts – accrediting body websites; licensing/registration counts: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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Support for Quality and National Accreditation

Child care providers may receive training and technical assistance as well as financial support to improve quality and pursue accreditation. The primary technical assistance providers include:

- Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
 - Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- Smart Start, the Early Learning Division of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta

Bright from the Start provides funding for training and for the Georgia Professional Development Registry, which includes a calendar of upcoming training events. In addition, Bright from the Start funds the SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs, which provide financial support and incentives for early education teachers to pursue and complete a credential or degree in the field.

Through a competitive bid process, Bright from the Start awards and manages contracts with resource and referral agencies. These agencies provide technical assistance, teacher education, and parent resources for specific geographic areas. Beginning July 2009 there will be six resource and referral agencies across the state. Quality Care for Children, Inc., is the resource and referral agency providing services in metro Atlanta; it also operates the statewide call center and website where consumers can access information online. The statewide referral center assists parents who are seeking child care for typically developing children as well as inclusive environments for children with special needs.

Bright from the Start also awards grants to organizations to provide accreditation facilitation services to help child care programs meet national standards of quality, including NAEYC and other comparable national accrediting organizations. Accreditation facilitation services include site visits to assess the program's readiness to participate; assistance to help each program develop an improvement plan; on-site technical assistance; and coaching to guide program staff in developing skills to achieve and sustain program improvement goals. Bright from the Start has awarded grants to the following organizations to provide accreditation facilitation services: Black Child Development Institute, Inc., Atlanta affiliate; Georgia Association on Young Children; and organizations that serve as child care resource and referral agencies.²⁰

For the past eight years, Smart Start (formerly the Georgia Early Learning Initiative) has worked in partnership with both public and private organizations to fund and provide training and technical assistance to licensed centers and registered family child care homes seeking accreditation. In that time, approximately 280 child care centers and 40 family child care homes achieved national accreditation with Smart Start support. Smart Start currently partners with Quality Assist, Inc.; Black Child Development Institute, Inc., Atlanta affiliate; and Quality Care for Children, Inc., to provide training and technical assistance to child care providers.²¹

²⁰ Information obtained from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning staff and website, www.decal.ga.gov, accessed May and June, 2009.

²¹ Information obtained from Smart Start, May 2009.

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Georgia Early Care Teacher Education

According to a 2008 report on the economic impact study of the child care industry in Georgia,²² significant proportions of Georgia child care teachers have no education beyond high school:

- 41% of center-based teachers
- 35% of family child care providers
- 50% of paid assistant caregivers (in family child care homes)

The study found that center-based teachers are more likely than family child care providers to have a college diploma or degree. Registered family child care providers in metro Atlanta are somewhat more likely to have a college degree than are those statewide.

Child Care Teachers with a College Diploma or Degree*		
Child Care Setting	Metro Atlanta	State
Family child care home owners	31%	27%
Center-based teachers	42%	40%

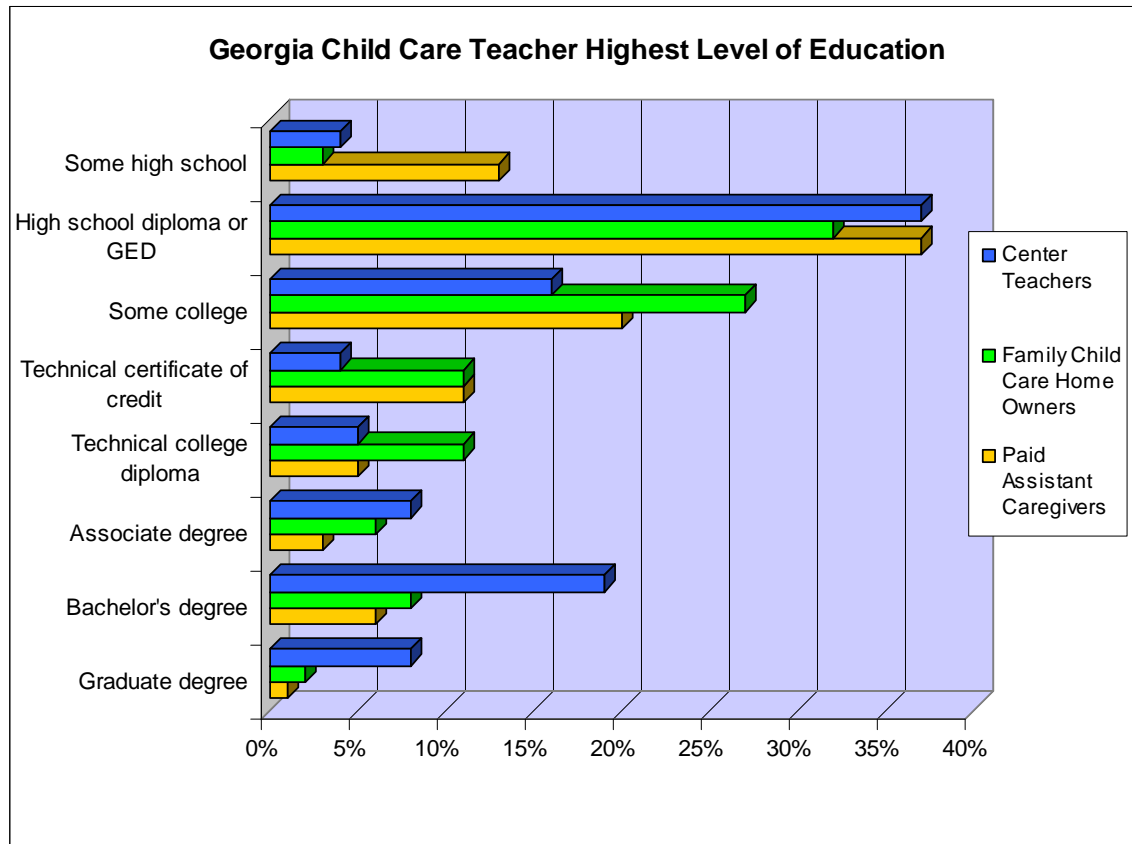
* Technical college diploma, associate degree, bachelor's degree or higher.

Source: Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia," Child Policy Partnership, 2008

²² "Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia," Child Policy Partnership, 2008 (funded by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning).

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The following chart shows the highest level of education for center teachers and for owners and paid assistant caregivers in family child care homes, statewide.



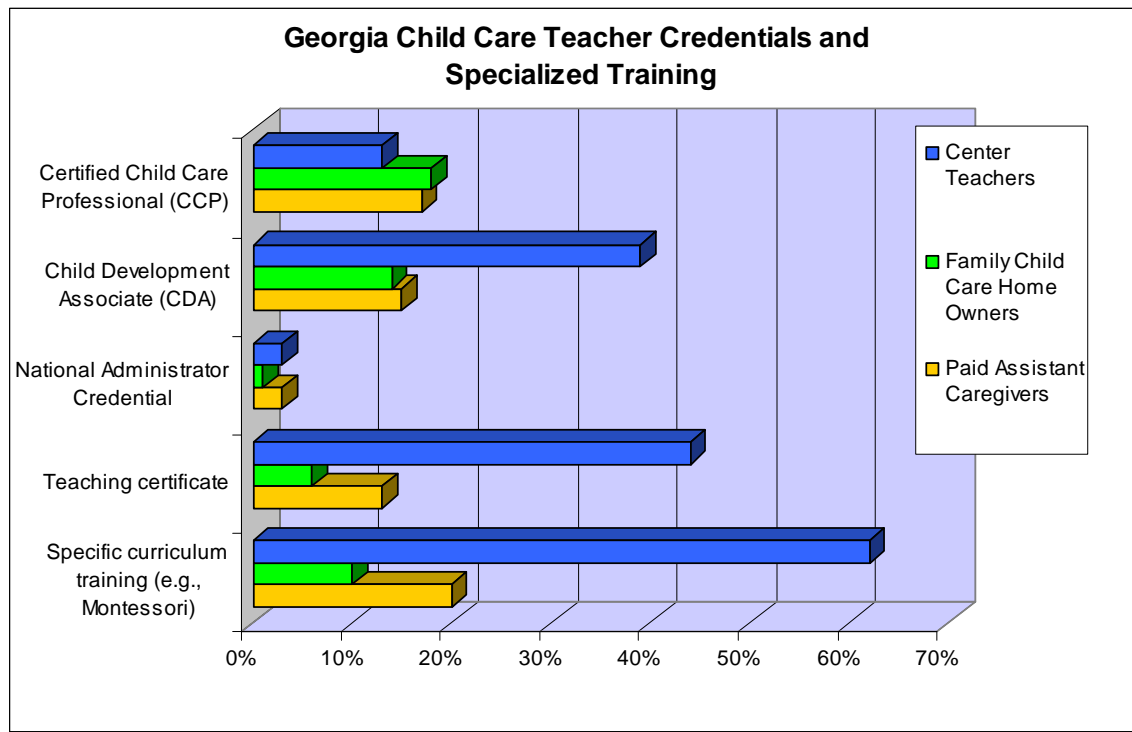
Source: Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia Report, 2008

Many center-based child care teachers had specialized training in early care and education:

- 62% had training in a specific early education curriculum, such as Montessori, Creative Curriculum, High/Scope, or West Ed.
- 39% had a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and/or a teaching certificate.
- 36% had a teaching certificate from Georgia; 8% had a certificate from another state.

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The following chart shows the specialized training and teacher credentials held by the same three groups of child care providers, again statewide.



Source: Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia Report, 2008

The Child Development Associate (CDA) is a credential awarded by the national Council for Professional Recognition based in Washington, DC. CDA requirements include 120 clock hours of education in the following areas: planning a safe, healthy, learning environment; advancing children's physical and intellectual development; positive ways to support children's social and emotional development; establishing productive relationships with families; managing an effective program operation; maintaining a commitment to professionalism; observing and recording children's behavior; and principles of child development and learning.

Also required are an application to the council, a resource portfolio, and a parent survey; the council then conducts a review of materials, a written exam, a classroom observation, and an oral interview. Costs include the coursework as well as an \$18 application fee and a \$325 assessment fee.

Effective July 1, 2009, new family child care providers will be required to have at least one of the following credentials:

- Child Development Associate (CDA)
- Technical College Certificate of Credit or Diploma (TCC or TCD) in Early Care and Education (ECE)
- Valid paraprofessional certificate (issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission)
- Associate, bachelor's or higher degree in ECE

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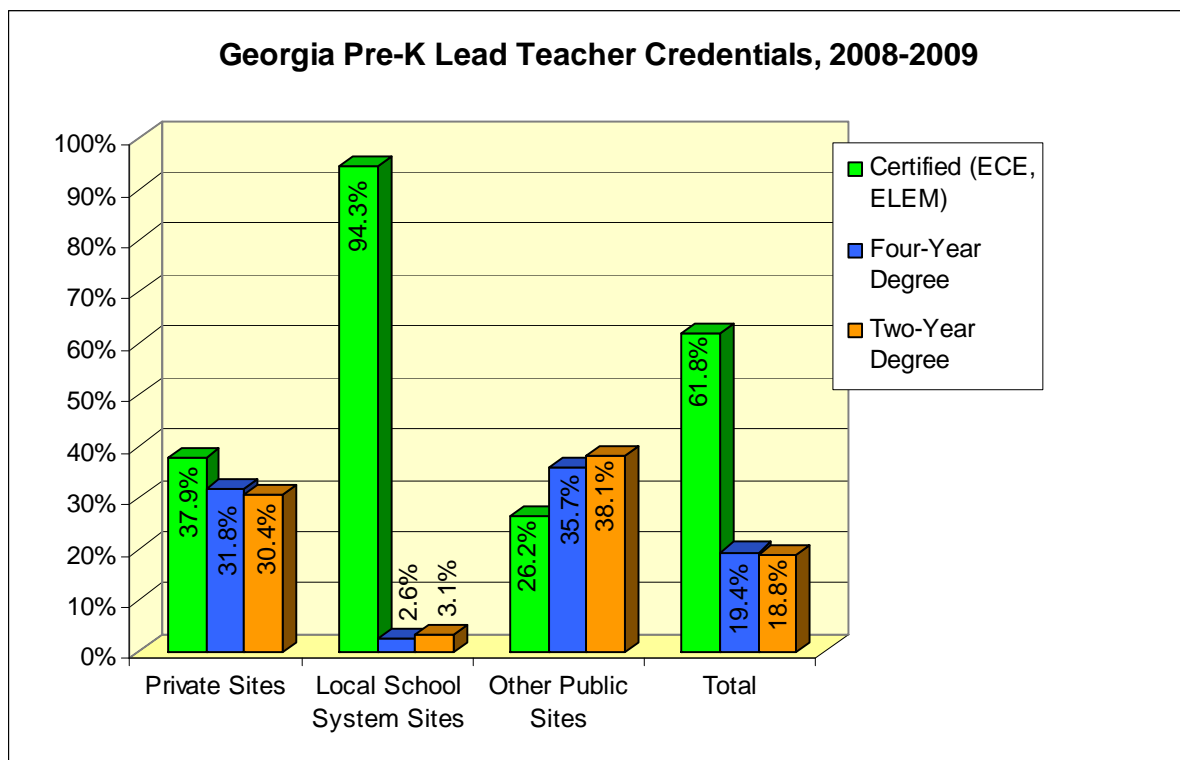
Georgia Pre-K Teacher Credentials and Degrees

Lead Teacher Credential/Certification Requirements

All lead teachers must hold a minimum of an associate degree with one of the following certificates or credentials (valid/current) from an approved institution:

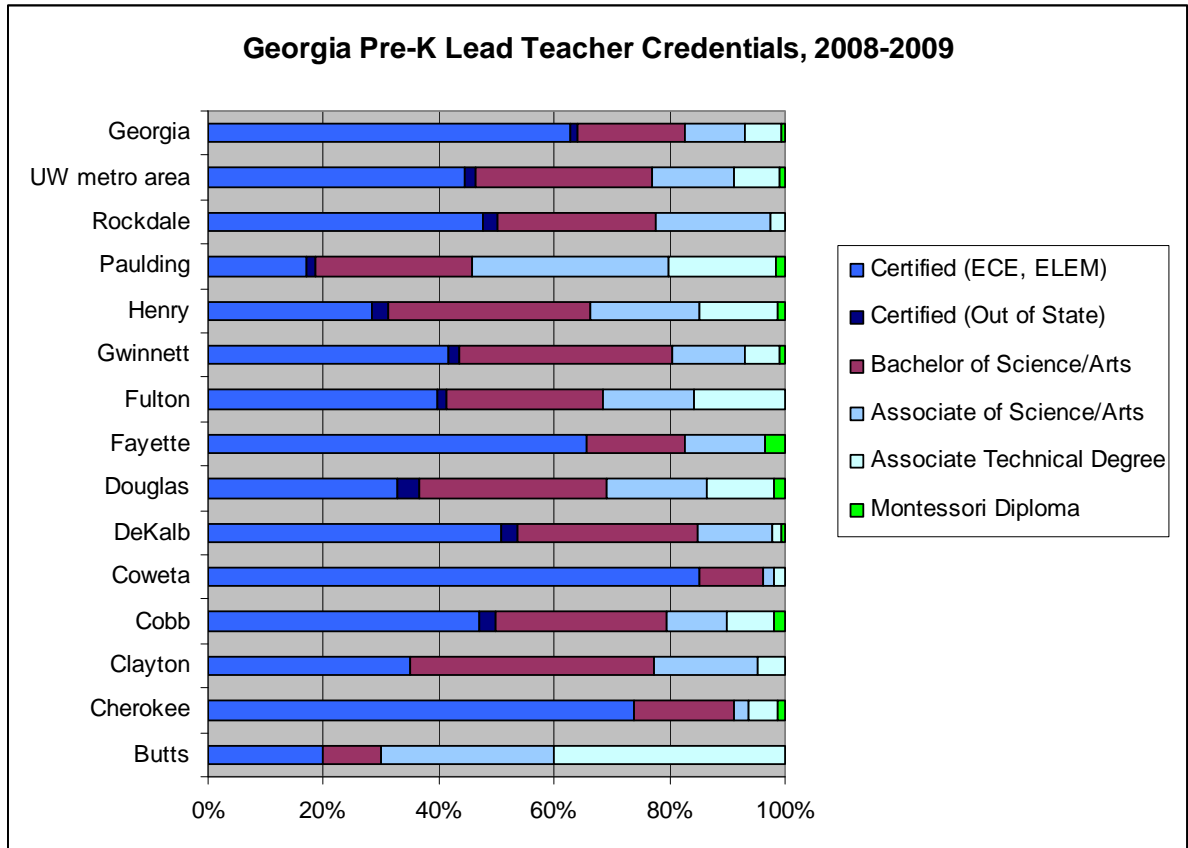
- Georgia Teaching certificate issued by Professional Standards Commission in early childhood education (grades P-5)
- Birth-to-Five certification
- P-12 Certificate *and* Special Education Preschool Endorsement (ages 3-5)
- Special Education General Curriculum Consultative/Early Childhood Education (grades P-5)
- Out-of-state, valid, and current official teaching certificates in Early Childhood or Elementary Education (conditionally acceptable during the teacher's first Georgia's Pre-K school year)

Overall, 81 percent of Georgia Pre-K lead teachers have four-year degrees; 62 percent are certified in early care and education or elementary education. Those in public school settings are much more likely to hold a four-year degree (97 percent) than are those in private settings (70 percent).



Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning data, March 2009

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Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning data, March 2009

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As noted previously, Georgia Pre-K in public school settings are somewhat more likely than those in private settings to hold a bachelor's degree. The percentage in private settings who hold a bachelor's degree varies widely by county within the UW metro area, ranging from 22 percent in Butts County to 93 percent in Coweta County.

Georgia Pre-K Teacher Credential by Pre-K Setting						
Area	Setting	County	Total Certified* and Bachelor of Science/Arts	Associate of Science/Arts	Associate Technical Degree	Montessori Diploma
UW Metro Area	Public School	Butts	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Cherokee	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Clayton	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Coweta	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		DeKalb	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Fayette	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Fulton **	72.9%	7.6%	19.5%	0.0%
		Gwinnett	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Rockdale	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		UW metro	89.7%	2.9%	7.4%	0.0%
	Other Public	Fulton	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Gwinnett	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		Paulding	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		UW metro	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Private	Butts	22.2%	33.3%	44.4%	0.0%
		Cherokee	90.7%	2.7%	5.3%	1.3%
		Clayton	70.5%	23.2%	6.3%	0.0%
		Cobb	79.7%	10.4%	8.1%	1.9%
		Coweta	92.9%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
		DeKalb	73.5%	22.5%	2.6%	1.3%
		Douglas	69.2%	17.3%	11.5%	1.9%
		Fayette	75.0%	20.0%	0.0%	5.0%
		Fulton	65.7%	20.5%	13.8%	0.0%
		Gwinnett	80.3%	12.7%	6.2%	0.8%
		Henry	66.4%	18.9%	13.5%	1.4%
		Paulding	46.6%	32.8%	19.0%	1.7%
Rockdale		71.0%	25.8%	3.2%	0.0%	
UW metro	74.2%	16.4%	8.3%	1.0%		
All Providers	UW metro	77.1%	14.0%	8.1%	0.8%	
Georgia	Public School	Georgia	97.4%	1.0%	1.6%	0.0%
	Other Public	Georgia	68.3%	31.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Private	Georgia	71.7%	16.9%	10.3%	1.0%
	All Providers	Georgia	82.8%	10.2%	6.5%	0.6%

* Certified (ECE, ELEM, National Board, Out-of-State)

** Includes Atlanta City schools

Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning data, May 2009

Assistant Teacher Credential/Certification Requirements

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, Georgia's Pre-K Program requires assistant teachers to hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or higher. This new requirement is being phased in over a three-year period for current Pre-K assistant teachers. All Pre-K assistant teachers must have earned a CDA credential or higher-level degree by the 2010-2011 school year.

To meet the new requirement, assistant teachers must hold one of the following credentials/degrees (valid/current):

- Child Development Associate (CDA) credential
- Technical Certificate of Credit or Diploma (TCC or TCD) in early childhood education
- Associate (or higher) degree in early childhood education
- Valid paraprofessional certificate (issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission)

Waivers are being granted on a case-by-case basis where there is difficulty in meeting this requirement.

Head Start Teacher Education²³

Currently, each Head Start classroom in a center-based program must have a teacher who has at least one of the following qualifications:

1. A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential appropriate to the age of the children being served;
2. A state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential;
3. An associate, bachelor's or advanced degree in early childhood education;
4. An associate degree in a field related to early childhood education and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching preschool-age children;
5. A bachelor's or advanced degree in any field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching preschool-age children; or,
6. A bachelor's degree in any field, provided the teacher has been admitted into the Teach For America program; passed a rigorous early childhood content exam, such as the Praxis III; participated in a Teach For America summer training institute that includes teaching preschool children; and is receiving ongoing professional development and support from Teach For America's professional staff.

By October 1, 2011, each Head Start classroom in center-based programs must have a teacher who has at least one of the following:

1. An associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree in early childhood education;
2. An associate degree in a field related to early childhood education and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching preschool-age children;
3. A bachelor's or advanced degree in any field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching preschool-age children; or,
4. A bachelor's in any field, provided the teacher has been admitted into the Teach For America program, passed a rigorous early childhood content exam, such as the Praxis II, participated in a Teach For America summer training institute that includes teaching preschool children and is receiving ongoing professional development and support from Teach For America's professional staff.

By September 30, 2013, at least 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide must have a bachelor's or advanced degree in Early Childhood Education, or a bachelor's or advanced degree in any subject plus coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education and experience teaching preschool-age children.²⁴

²³ Information provided by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, March 2009.

²⁴ Information from the Administration for Children and Families website, www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov, accessed April 2009.

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The following chart shows the credentials and degrees for teachers in Georgia Head Start classrooms in 2008.

Head Start Teacher Education in Georgia, 2008				
Number of Lead Teachers with BA in ECE or related field or higher	Number of Assistant Teachers with BA in ECE or related field or higher	Number of Lead Teachers with AA or AS	Number of Assistant Teachers with AA or AS	Number of Classroom Staff with CDA, TCC or TCD*
243	18	436	78	584

* CDA = Child Development Associate; TCC = Technical Certificate of Credit; TCD = Technical College Diploma

Source: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning data, May 2009

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Support for Teacher Education

Various scholarships and grants are available to help those in the early care and education field further their own education.

Financial Assistance for Pursuing Credential or Degree in Early Care and Education	
Credential/Degree	Available Federal & State Financial Aid
Technical Certificate of Credit	HOPE Grant Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS
Technical College Diploma	HOPE Grant Pell Grant Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS
Associate or Bachelor's Degree	
<i>At a public institution</i>	HOPE Scholarship Pell Grant Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS
<i>At a private institution</i>	HOPE Scholarship Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant Pell Grant Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS

Federal Pell Grants

Federally-funded Pell Grants are need-based awards to students who meet eligibility requirements. The maximum Pell Grant award is \$4,731 for the 2008-2009 award year. Each recipient's award amount varies, depending upon the expected family contribution compared to the cost of attendance, and the number of hours for which the student is enrolled.

Georgia HOPE Scholarships and Grants

Georgia's lottery-funded HOPE grants and scholarships are available for students who meet eligibility requirements in terms of residency, program of study (HOPE grant), and/or academic performance (HOPE scholarship). HOPE awards cover tuition, HOPE-approved mandatory fees, and a book allowance for students attending a public institution. Students enrolling in a Georgia private institution may be eligible for a scholarship of \$3,500 per academic year for full-time study or \$1,750 for half-time study.

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Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES Programs

The SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES programs, funded by Bright from the Start, are specific to early care and education professionals.

To be eligible for SCHOLARSHIPS support, teachers must:

- Work in a licensed center, a registered family child care home or a group child care home;
- Work at least 25 hours a week as a teacher/assistant teacher or 40 hours per week as a director/assistant director;
- Earn less than \$14.45 per hour;
- Enroll in an eligible institution (HOPE-eligible, SACS-accredited institutions or any of Georgia's technical colleges) in an approved program of study in the field; and
- Apply for available funds from HOPE and PELL (students do not have to receive these funds to be eligible for SCHOLARSHIPS).

SCHOLARSHIPS awards:

- Students enrolled in public colleges or universities receive 80% of tuition and fees not covered by HOPE or PELL.
- Students enrolled in private institutions receive funds up to a maximum of \$1000 per semester, or \$750 per quarter, toward the cost of tuition and fees not covered by HOPE or PELL.

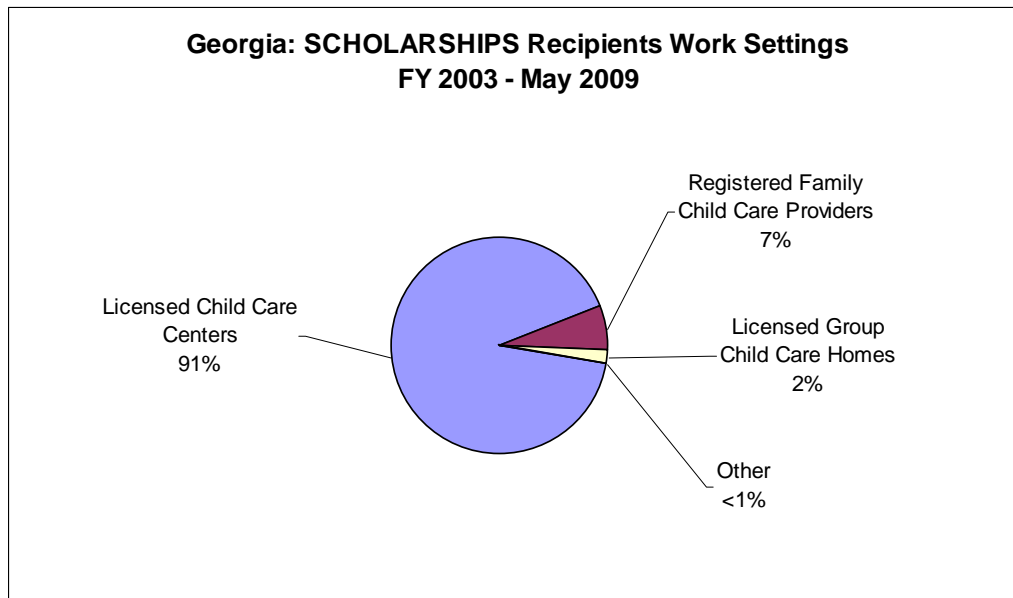
In FY 2008, SCHOLARSHIPS supported 736 early care and education teachers throughout the state with awards totaling \$482,510.51. The following chart shows recipients and awards for the UW metro area and the state.

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Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS Recipients, FY 2008			
Residential County	Number of Recipients	Amount Distributed	Percent of Distributions
Butts	2	\$552.50	0.1%
Cherokee	6	\$4,003.00	0.8%
Clayton	42	\$33,844.55	7.0%
Cobb	29	\$25,688.42	5.3%
Coweta	2	\$150.00	0.0%
DeKalb	83	\$68,520.60	14.2%
Douglas	17	\$19,230.00	4.0%
Fayette	3	\$198.75	0.0%
Fulton	145	\$78,308.55	16.2%
Gwinnett	49	\$25,390.34	5.3%
Henry	13	\$14,767.80	3.1%
Paulding	6	\$5,178.29	1.1%
Rockdale	10	\$10,023.45	2.1%
UW metro area	407	\$285,856.25	59.2%
Georgia	726	\$482,510.51	100.0%

Source: Care Solutions, Inc., program manager for the Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs, May 2009

Most of these SCHOLARSHIPS recipients have worked in child care centers (91 percent).



Source: Care Solutions, Inc., program manager for the Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs, May 2009

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The INCENTIVES program provides a financial award to early care and education teachers who meet specific credential and degree requirements. The original goals of this program were to encourage educational attainment for early care and education teachers, increase stability in what is traditionally a high-turnover child care workforce, and supplement the incomes of those working in a typically low-wage occupation. As long as a participant continued to meet the program's residency, work, tenure, and credential/degree requirements, he or she was able to receive twice-a-year wage supplements, with the amount based on the level of the ECE credential or degree held.

Beginning in January 2009, all new applicants for INCENTIVES are eligible to receive a maximum of two payments as long as they meet program requirements.²⁵

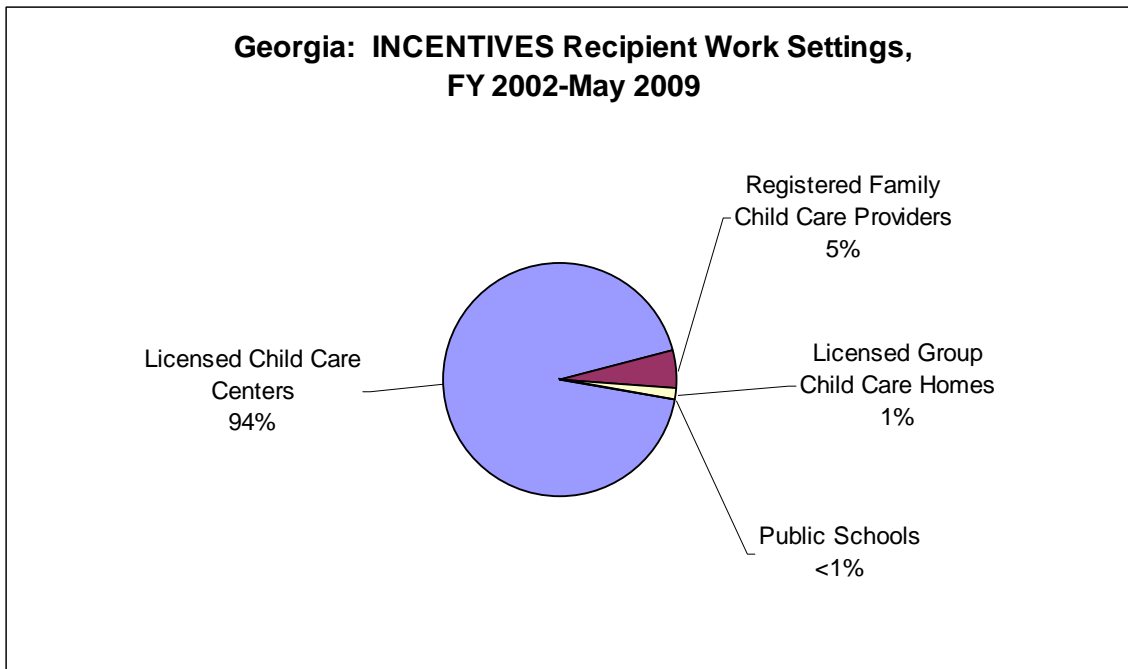
Bright from the Start INCENTIVES Recipients, FY 2008			
Residential County	Number of Recipients	Amount Distributed	Percent Distributed
Butts	15	\$17,550	0.7%
Cherokee	18	\$12,275	0.5%
Clayton	178	\$130,300	4.9%
Cobb	110	\$98,750	3.7%
Coweta	9	\$9,700	0.4%
DeKalb	305	\$230,975	8.7%
Douglas	42	\$34,275	1.3%
Fayette	14	\$8,800	0.3%
Fulton	462	\$346,950	13.1%
Gwinnett	148	\$128,375	4.9%
Henry	59	\$47,450	1.8%
Paulding	18	\$14,700	0.6%
Rockdale	36	\$31,900	1.2%
UW metro area	1,414	\$1,112,000	42.1%
Georgia	3,325	\$2,643,750	100.0%

Source: Care Solutions, Inc., program manager for the Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs, May 2009

²⁵ In November 2008, current INCENTIVES recipients were notified that they would be eligible for two additional INCENTIVES payments, with the November 2009 payment being their final payment.

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Similarly to SCHOLARSHIPS, most INCENTIVES recipients (94 percent) have worked in child care centers.



Source: Care Solutions, Inc., program manager for the Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs, May 2009

Examples of Early Interventions

The UWMA has three grant-funded early intervention programs that seek to improve child outcomes: Early Reading First, Get Ready to Read!, and SPARK. In addition, UWMA, because of the success of the SPARK program, has funded Community-Based Partnerships based on the SPARK model.

Early Reading First (ERF)

Early Reading First is focused on low-income preschool children in child care classrooms at risk for reading difficulties. The federally-funded program uses several assessment instruments to evaluate child skills and help teachers and literacy coaches modify instruction based on the assessments. More than 80 percent of children in ERF program areas qualify for free or reduced lunch (vs. state average of 50 percent); the program served 816 UW metro children in 2007-2008 at 14 sites in Fulton, DeKalb, and Cobb counties.

Early Reading First has three goals:

- Early Literacy Skills – to develop children’s oral language, alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, and print awareness to provide foundation for future reading and school success
- Classroom Environment – to implement and maintain scientifically-based reading research (SBRR) language and print-rich environment to provide abundant opportunities for children to use print and practice literacy skills
- Professional Development – to increase preschool teacher knowledge and use of SBRR to systematically address early literacy skills essential to future reading success

ERF Results

- 70 percent of ERF children had the necessary oral language skills to become successful readers as measured by their receptive vocabulary; this was an increase of 14 percentage points from the beginning of the school year.
- 78 percent of ERF children were able to recognize 16 or more letters of the alphabet and were on track for reading achievement; this was an increase of 38 percentage points from the beginning of the school year.

Get Ready to Read! Southeast Regional Center

Get Ready to Read! is a national initiative of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. The program provides a research-based screening tool that is easy for parents and teachers to use to identify child strengths and weaknesses and help them prepare to read. The tool includes both screening for child pre-reading skills and literacy skill-building activities that can be used by parents, caregivers or anyone working with young children.

In addition, the program provides information and training for parents and child care providers. The Get Ready to Read! screening tool is used in all United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta early education interventions.

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SPARK – Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids

SPARK is a five-year initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation targeting at-risk children ages three to six and their families. Its focus is on providing a smooth transition for children from early childhood settings to kindergarten and helping to ensure children are ready for school by creating partnerships among families, providers, community organizations, and schools. Services are provided through eight community-based hubs; hub coordinators are trained as parent educators and link families to local resources. Incorporated into SPARK are:

- Intensive Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visitation model and the less comprehensive “Light Touch” level of services
- Get Ready to Read! screenings and skill building activities

SPARK families are typically low-income; most have an annual household income of \$35,000 or less.

- 38 percent have three or more dependents in the home.
- 52 percent indicate Spanish is the primary language spoken at home.

The program has served nearly 800 children and their families in Central DeKalb and Gwinnett counties.

Community-Based Partnerships

Community-Based Partnerships is a United Way initiative that emerged from the SPARK model and was started with two sites (Cobb County and City of Atlanta) in 2008. It is also focused on school transition and getting children ready for school. Key program components include community hubs, developing parents as teachers and advocates for their children, and community advocacy for early care and education.

- Through community hub organizations, the program works to:
 - Mobilize parents and community partners as early learning advocates;
 - Link families and children to needed social services;
 - Create partnerships between the early learning community and feeder elementary schools through School Readiness & Transition Councils; and
 - Improve school readiness skills for parents and their child(ren).
- It uses Parents as Teachers training to actively engage parents in their child(ren)’s learning – this research-based program is designed to provide parents with child development knowledge and parenting support.
- It uses the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Leadership in Action Program model to build and sustain local leadership – this program delivers hands-on training and support to people from diverse fields and backgrounds in communities, public agencies, non-profit organizations and other groups to work collaboratively to improve results for vulnerable children and families.

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Child Care Costs

Child care costs vary depending on location, the type of child care provider, and the provision of subsidized care, with the highest market rates seen in the more urbanized counties such as in the Atlanta metro area (market rate Zone 1).

Every state that accepts federal funds for subsidized child care must complete a market rate study to determine local child care market rates; this information is used in setting state child care reimbursement rates. Child care subsidies are established and administered by the Georgia Department of Human Resources. Parents or guardians may qualify to receive subsidized child care if they have limited income and need child care to work, attend school, or attend training.

Following is a table showing local market rates statewide and by zone from the 2007 market rate survey.²⁶ Zone 1 counties are the more urbanized counties, typically metro Atlanta area. Zone 2 typically includes counties with medium-sized cities and towns, and Zone 3, more rural counties.

75th Percentile Weekly Rates for Weekday Child Care, 2007*						
Age of Children	Provider Type	Number of Responses	Statewide	Zone 1**	Zone 2	Zone 3
Infants (6 wks. – 1 yr.)	Centers	1,017	\$145.00	\$175.00	\$110.00	\$85.00
	Group Homes	32	\$100.00	\$125.00	\$100.00	\$85.00
	Family	1,996	\$125.00	\$135.00	\$95.00	\$75.00
	Informal	106	\$95.00	\$130.00	\$88.75	\$65.75
Toddlers (13 – 35 mos.)	Centers	1,100	\$135.00	\$167.00	\$105.00	\$85.00
	Group Homes	36	\$93.75	\$125.00	\$100.00	\$75.00
	Family	2,086	\$110.00	\$125.00	\$90.00	\$75.00
	Informal	152	\$83.75	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$60.00
Pre-school (3 – 5 yrs.)	Centers	1,152	\$125.00	\$150.00	\$100.00	\$80.25
	Group Homes	38	\$86.25	\$105.00	\$90.00	\$75.00
	Family	1,968	\$100.00	\$125.00	\$90.00	\$75.00
	Informal	140	\$74.75	\$95.00	\$70.00	\$53.75

* The 75th percentile rate is the rate at which 75 percent of providers charge the same or a lower amount and 25 percent charge more.

** In 2007 Zone 1 counties included: Camden, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding and Rockdale.

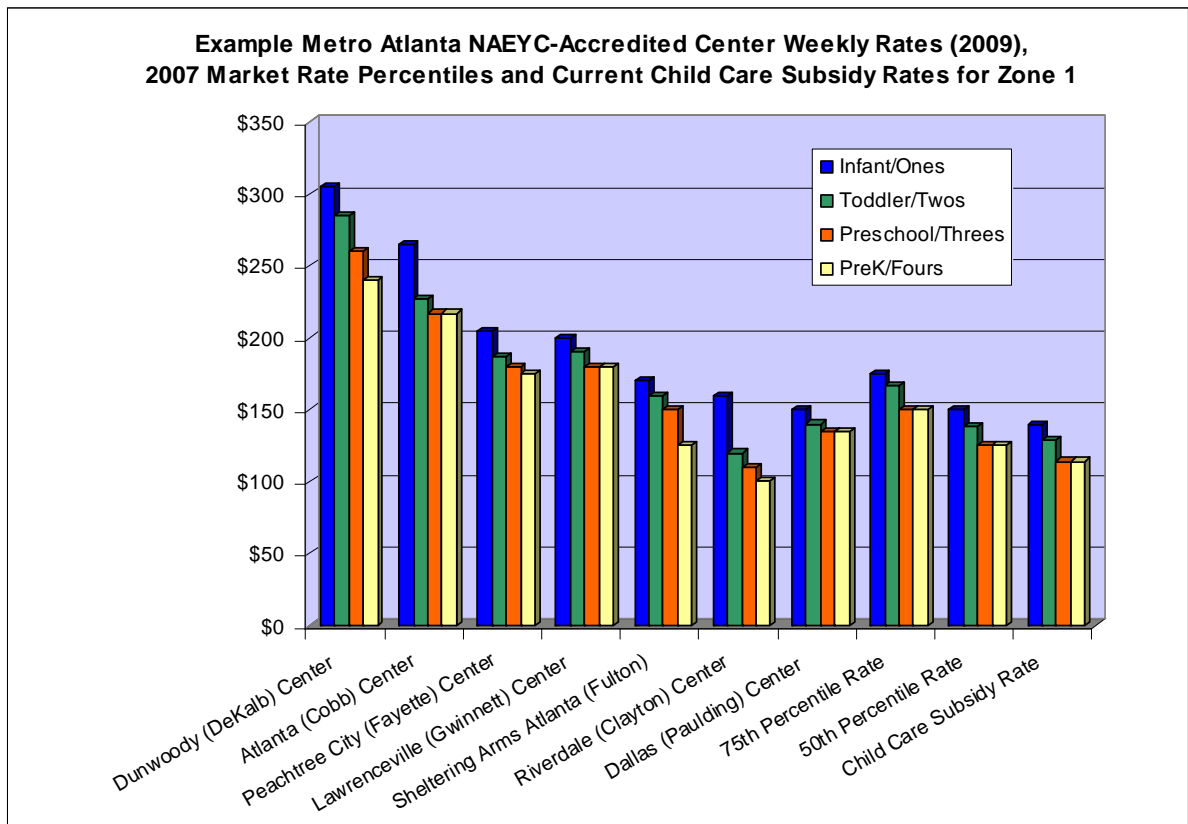
Source: 2007 Georgia Child Care Market Rate Survey Report

²⁶ The 2009 child care market rate survey results had not been released at the time this report was written.

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Quality Costs

The cost of child care at accredited centers varies widely within the UW metro area. The example 2009 rates below suggest that accredited centers in the larger, more densely populated counties charge more than those in the other metro counties and exceed the 2007 75th percentile market rates. (While child care market rates usually rise from one survey to the next, the downturn in the economy may lessen this effect.) Using these figures, child care reimbursement rates for Zone 1 do not cover the cost for accredited child care at six of the seven example centers.



* Sheltering Arms, although accredited and in a larger metro county, is able to provide care at a lower rate because only 21% of its funds come from tuition/fees. It subsidizes care through a variety of sources, including Head Start/Early Head Start, GA Pre-K, the United Way, grants and fundraising.

Source: Market rates -- 2007 Georgia Child Care Market Rate Survey Report; individual provider rate information obtained from calls to accredited providers in the spring of 2009; some providers would not provide rate information by telephone.

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Demonstrating quality through accreditation is costly for providers. Becoming accredited may include significant expenditures, such as improvement costs to meet more stringent requirements and training and technical assistance costs, as well as accreditation fees. The following chart shows the minimum cost of NAEYC accreditation (all phases) for child care centers by size of center.

Fees for NAEYC Accreditation, 2009					
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Every Additional 120 Children
	(10 to 60 children)	(61 to 120 children)	(121 to 240 children)	(241 to 360 children)	
Step 1 - Enrollment in Self-Study	\$425	\$525	\$650	\$775	\$100
Step 2 - Application and Self-Assessment	\$200	\$275	\$350	\$425	\$75
Steps 3 & 4 - Candidacy and Site Visit	\$650	\$775	\$950	\$1,150	\$100
Annual Report	\$300	\$350	\$400	\$450	\$100

Source: NAEYC website, www.naeyc.org, accessed April 2009

Educational Indicators

Early care and education programs have the potential to impact the later academic success of children and reduce the costs of negative long-term outcomes to society, such as welfare costs and those associated with crime (e.g., judicial system, penal system).

In its report, *America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline*, the Children's Defense Fund describes risk factors in early childhood that correlate with increased rates of incarceration later in life:

“At crucial points in their development, from birth through adulthood, more risks and disadvantages cumulate and converge that make a successful transition to productive adulthood significantly less likely and involvement in the criminal justice system significantly more likely. Lack of access to health and mental health care; child abuse and neglect; **lack of quality early childhood education to get ready for school**; educational disadvantages resulting from failing schools that don't expect or help them achieve or detect and correct early problems that impede learning; . . .” [emphasis added]²⁷

School performance data are an important indicator for child outcomes. Included in this section are several statewide and metro area indicators, including performance on Georgia's Criterion-Referenced Curriculum Tests (achievement tests), high school graduation rates, Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SATs), HOPE Scholarship eligibility, and enrollment in special and remedial programs.

²⁷ *America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline*, A Report of the Children's Defense Fund, October 2007 corrected printing.

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Georgia's Scorecard

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (OSA) publishes report cards with extensive data on each public school and school district in the state on its website.²⁸ It also publishes a state "scorecard" for the academic year comparing the state to the region and the nation. National achievement test percentages for elementary (4th grade) and middle school (8th grade) students clearly indicate there is room for improvement, as Georgia falls below the nation as a whole.²⁹

Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement Scorecard			
2007-2008 K-12 Scorecard	Georgia	SE States	Nation
Pre-K Participation: At-Risk Youth ³⁰	57%	n/a	n/a
4th Grade Math Achievement	32%	36%	39%
4th Grade Reading Achievement	28%	29%	32%
8th Grade Math Achievement	25%	29%	31%
8th Grade Reading Achievement	26%	27%	29%
Average ACT Composite Score	20.6	20.5	21.1
Average SAT Composite Score	1466	1490	1511
High School Graduation Rate	75.4%	n/a	n/a
Bachelor's Degree Holders	27.1%	25.4%	27.5%
2006-2007 K-12 Scorecard (not yet available for 2007-2008)			
Advanced HS Course Participation*	27.2%	26.2%	n/a
Advanced HS Course Achievement*	54.3%	54.7%	n/a
Technical Colleges Graduation Rate	35.0%	35.0%	n/a
University System Freshman Retention	79.2%	78.0%	78.0%
University System HOPE Survival Rate	24.0%	n/a	n/a
University System Graduation Rate - 6 year	49.3%	52.0%	56.0%
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Degrees	6,748	average of 5,044	average of 5,224

* Participation is enrollment in an Advanced Placement (AP) course; achievement is a score of three or higher on an AP exam, which is scored from one to five.

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Scorecards, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

²⁸ Education Report Cards and Scoreboard, Governor's Office of Student Achievement website, www.gaosa.org

²⁹ Achievement is scoring at proficient or advanced levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. State NAEP results are based on a representative sample of students at grades 4 and 8. Student test performance is rated as below basic, basic, proficient or advanced. Information from the website, nces.ed.gov/NATIONSREPORTCARD, accessed May 2009.

³⁰ Economically disadvantaged/Category I.

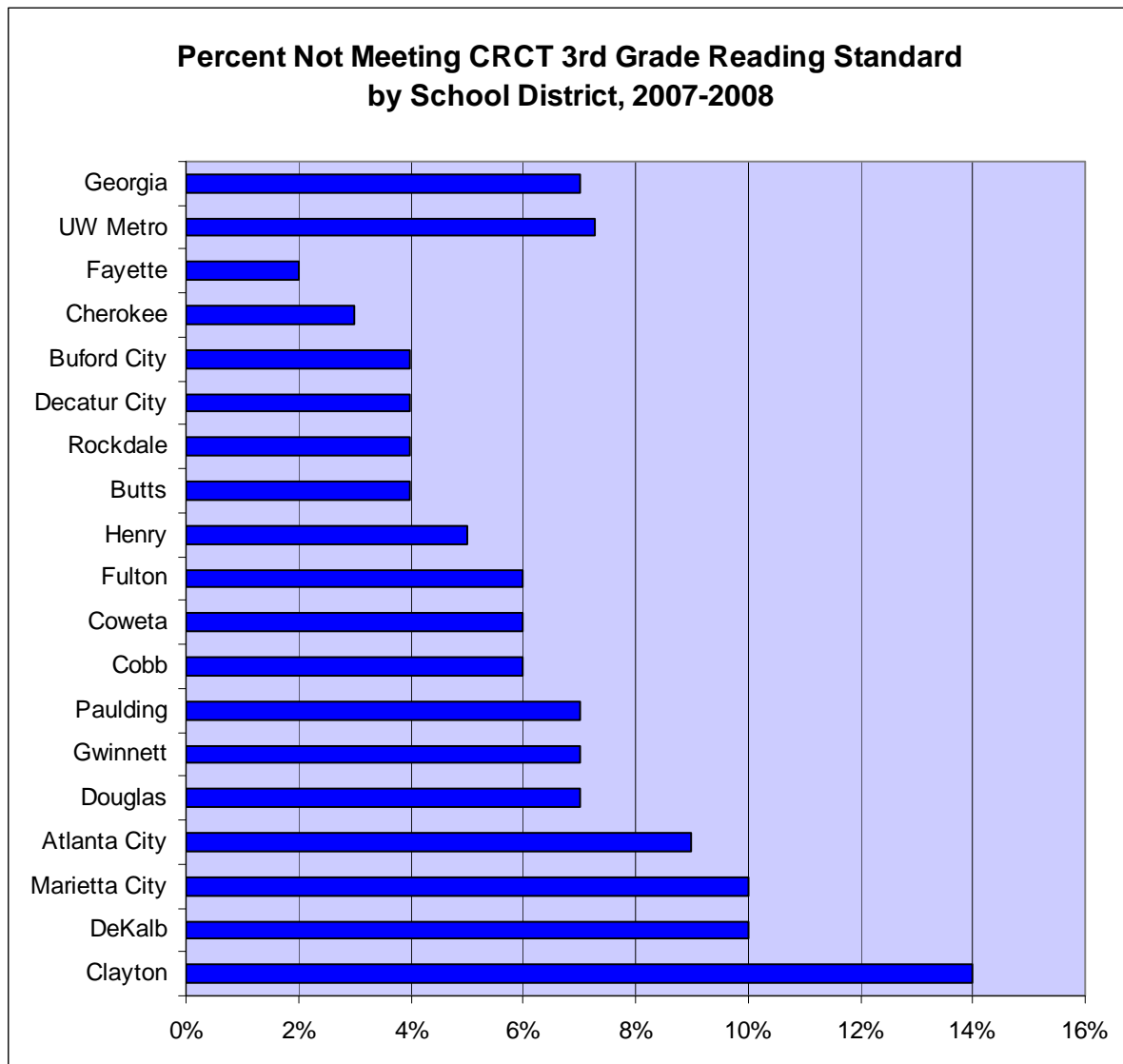
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Using the education report card data, following are graphs of some indicators of academic performance and success in the UW metro area and for the state:

- Third grade Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) results – the CRCT is an achievement test based on the Georgia Performance Standards
- High school graduation rates
- SAT scores
- HOPE scholarship eligibility – the HOPE scholarship is a Georgia scholarship; eligibility is determined by grade point average

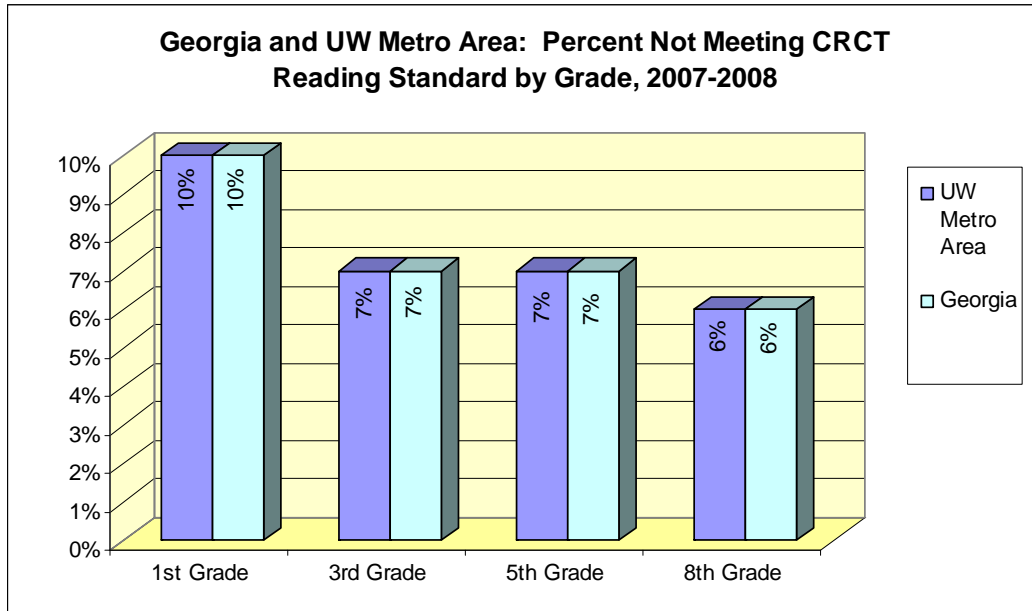
State Achievement Tests

Public school data are presented for the state, the UW metro area and the individual school districts within the metro area, which includes both city and county school systems. Performance on the CRCT varies widely by school district within the UW metro area, although performance for the metro area as a whole is similar to statewide figures.



Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Card, 2007-2008

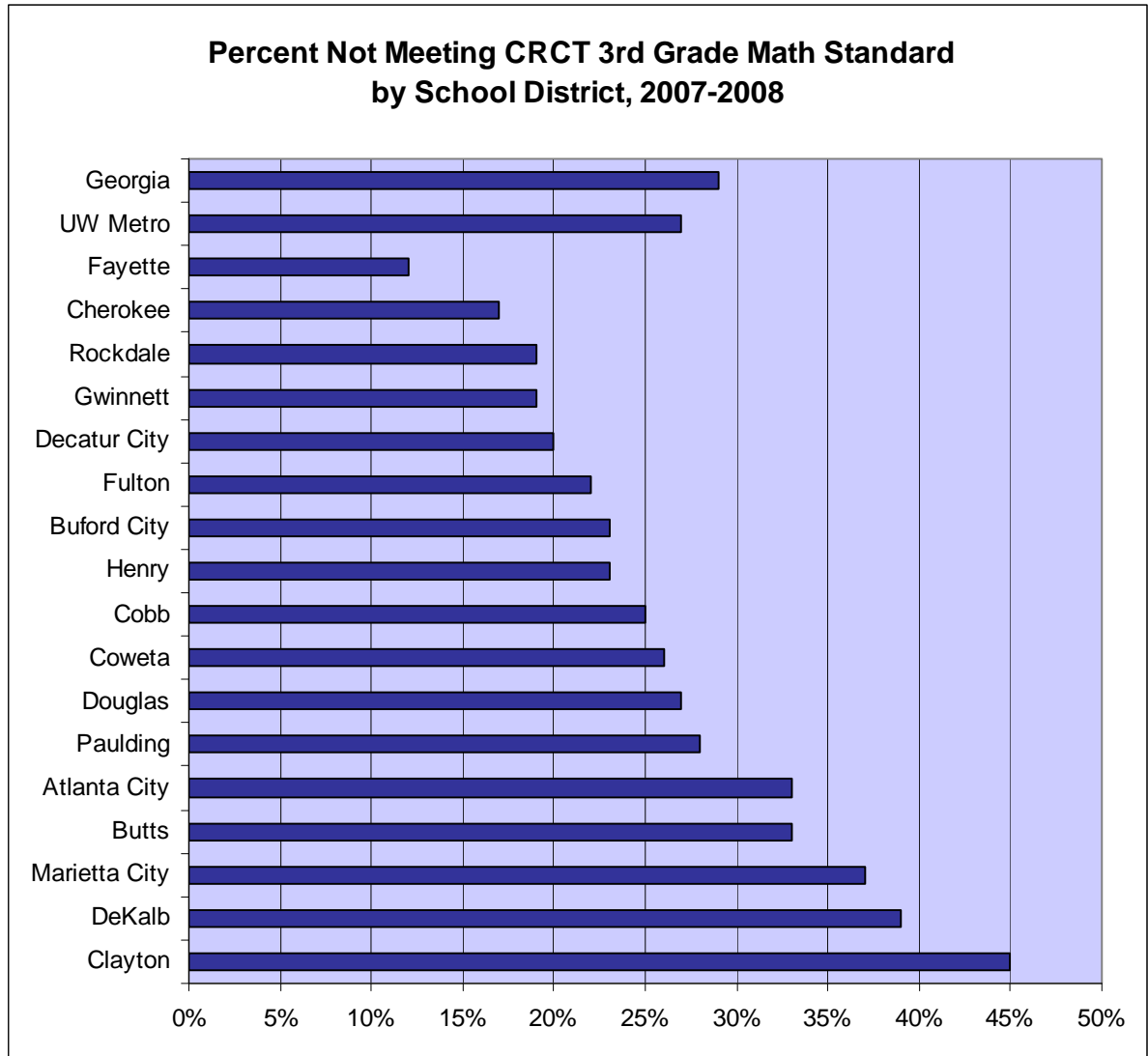
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Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Card, 2007-2008

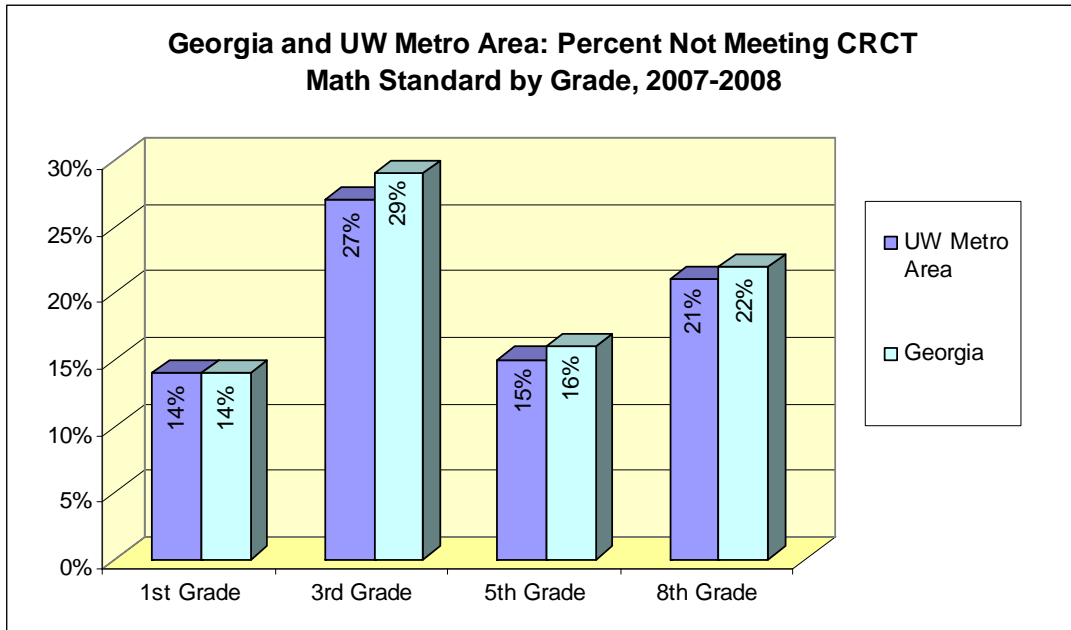
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Although the numbers of children not meeting the CRCT standard are higher for math than for reading, the overall pattern of data is similar: significant variation among counties, but a UW metro area proportion similar to the statewide proportion.



Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Card, 2007-2008

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Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Card, 2007-2008

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High School Indicators

High school graduation rates increased steadily over the five years ending in 2008 for both Georgia and the UW metro area. For the 2007-2008 school year, UW metro area graduation rates met or exceeded the state rate in each district except four: Butts County, Atlanta City, Douglas County, and DeKalb County.

High School Graduation Rate by School District, 2004 through 2008					
School District	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Butts	60.3%	72.8%	73.3%	74.6%	67.6%
Cherokee	74.8%	76.4%	75.1%	76.9%	80.3%
Clayton	62.5%	64.0%	69.3%	71.8%	76.5%
Cobb	77.4%	80.6%	81.5%	81.3%	84.2%
Coweta	69.4%	74.6%	73.6%	76.0%	82.2%
DeKalb	72.0%	62.8%	64.6%	72.5%	75.3%
Douglas	66.8%	68.3%	71.7%	70.0%	73.9%
Fayette	88.3%	91.0%	91.9%	91.5%	92.0%
Fulton	72.9%	75.1%	78.8%	79.6%	83.8%
Gwinnett	71.9%	74.8%	73.8%	77.3%	79.1%
Henry	71.3%	75.5%	73.8%	73.9%	77.2%
Paulding	69.5%	73.8%	73.3%	74.5%	75.5%
Rockdale	77.7%	80.0%	77.4%	77.3%	77.6%
Atlanta City	54.3%	71.9%	68.8%	68.3%	71.7%
Buford City	66.3%	88.8%	88.0%	89.2%	90.9%
Decatur City	67.1%	78.4%	88.8%	89.3%	81.6%
Marietta City	64.6%	72.0%	72.7%	78.8%	77.6%
Georgia	65.4%	69.4%	70.8%	72.3%	75.4%

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Cards

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Scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) are a component of most college applications. Completion of the SAT is voluntary; therefore the test-taking population is somewhat self-selected, due to the cost of the test and the link to college planning. Seven school districts (six counties and one city) in the UW metro area scored below the state average in 2008.

SAT Scores by District, 2004 through 2008 ³¹					
School District	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Butts	898	907	918	924	896
Cherokee	1031	1048	1051	1040	1062
Clayton	901	891	878	866	850
Cobb	1039	1046	1034	1032	1024
Coweta	1001	1011	1013	1017	1023
DeKalb	923	922	913	900	894
Douglas	973	969	948	925	913
Fayette	1060	1078	1050	1044	1046
Fulton	1056	1057	1059	1067	1065
Gwinnett	1037	1043	1040	1031	1026
Henry	975	979	977	952	944
Paulding	964	967	960	952	939
Rockdale	1012	1005	998	975	982
Atlanta City	847	873	860	859	860
Marietta City	1012	1018	1013	1024	989
Decatur City	1069	1050	1032	1064	1043
Buford City	1015	1000	999	1010	995
Georgia	981	989	985	980	976

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Cards

³¹ These scores are based on the math and verbal sections only (with a possible score of 1600) and do not include the writing section, which was added in March 2005 (total possible score of 2400). (The 2007-2008 scoreboard reports the total for all three sections.)

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As noted in the previous section on supports for teacher education, the HOPE scholarship has a minimum grade point average requirement for eligibility. The following table breaks out the percents of high school transcripts evaluated for the HOPE scholarship that met that eligibility requirement.

HOPE Eligibility Determinations, 2007						
School District	Percent Meeting College Preparatory Requirements	Total 2007 Transcripts Calculated	Percent Meeting HOPE Eligibility by Diploma Type			
			All Diplomas	College Prep	Dual	Career-Technical
Butts	64.6%	195	40.5%	61.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Cherokee	79.5%	1,638	33.3%	41.7%	40.2%	1.2%
Clayton	87.6%	1,826	34.6%	37.9%	44.0%	2.2%
Cobb	89.8%	6,119	47.4%	54.1%	47.4%	2.9%
Coweta	73.5%	1,031	41.3%	59.6%	48.7%	2.9%
DeKalb	88.9%	4,734	36.2%	42.5%	33.7%	1.1%
Douglas	76.8%	1,162	34.9%	46.8%	44.6%	0.4%
Fayette	86.4%	1,686	59.7%	69.3%	63.4%	2.6%
Fulton	92.4%	4,289	47.6%	54.2%	34.3%	2.4%
Gwinnett	82.9%	7,476	41.8%	50.4%	41.7%	2.6%
Henry	78.7%	1,834	32.3%	40.6%	40.1%	2.1%
Paulding	67.3%	1,078	33.7%	46.4%	56.1%	1.7%
Rockdale	76.7%	734	38.7%	55.6%	42.4%	2.9%
Atlanta City	93.9%	1,802	32.2%	36.2%	24.4%	1.8%
Buford City	79.9%	149	51.7%	72.3%	44.4%	3.3%
Decatur City	98.8%	160	49.4%	66.7%	44.0%	0.0%
Marietta City	74.6%	323	35.0%	52.2%	42.1%	0.0%
Georgia		75,223	39.4%	51.6%	48.6%	4.3%

Source: Georgia Student Finance Commission website, www.gsfc.org, accessed April 2009

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Need for Learning Supports

Many children require learning supports because of special needs, coming from a non-English-speaking home, or a lack of appropriate educational foundations due to poverty, negligence or lack of access.

Enrollment in Public School Compensatory Education Programs

The following chart provides a five-year overview of enrollment in special programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Enrollment in the Early Intervention Program has decreased over the past five years.

Enrollment in Public School Compensatory Programs, 2004 - 2008						
Year	Total Georgia Enrollment	Special Education	ESOL	Early Intervention Program	Remedial Education	
	All Grades	K-12th	K-12th	K-5th	6th-8th	9th-12th
2003-2004	1,486,125	12.1%	2.6%	25.9%	n/a	4.9%
2004-2005	1,515,646	12.2%	3.0%	20.7%	n/a	5.0%
2005-2006	1,559,828	11.9%	3.1%	19.0%	n/a	4.7%
2006-2007	1,589,839	11.7%	3.5%	18.3%	5.1%	4.4%
2007-2008	1,609,681	11.2%	3.7%	18.4%	7.1%	4.7%

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement Education Report Cards

In addition, more than 10,000 children ages three to five who have been evaluated and deemed in need of services due to developmental delays/disabilities in communication, cognition, social-emotional, adaptive behavior and/or motor arenas are enrolled in Department of Education (DOE) preschool in each of the above years.³²

³² Department of Education, *Special Education Implementation Rules Manual*, "Transition from Early Intervention to Public School," 2008.

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College and University Learning Support

For the 2007-2008 academic year, 41 percent of Georgia's technical college students participated in learning support programs. In the same year, 21.5 percent of students who had participated in learning support programs graduated with a technical college certificate, diploma or degree.

Within the University System of Georgia, participation in learning support programs may be voluntary or required. Students attending regional, state, and research universities are less likely to require learning support than those attending state two- and four-year colleges.

University System of Georgia Participation in Learning Support Programs, 2008					
University System of Georgia Type of Institution	Total First-Time Freshmen (Fall 2008)	System Required Participation	Institution Required Participation	Voluntary Participation	No Learning Support Required
Research Universities	9,331	0.1%	0.0%	2.4%	97.6%
Regional Universities	4,541	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	99.8%
State Universities	12,472	8.8%	3.0%	1.2%	87.0%
State Colleges	7,476	43.6%	4.3%	1.4%	50.0%
Two-Year Colleges	6,401	54.7%	2.5%	1.3%	41.5%
Total System	40,221	19.6%	2.1%	1.4%	76.9%

Source: University System of Georgia Report (SRPT850, 12/11/2008) on website, www.usg.edu, accessed February 2009

In Closing

This research report was intended not to provide analysis but to serve as a reference tool and starting point for discussion and strategic planning. The report provides information and data in somewhat disparate areas, but all related to planning for early care and education in the UW metro area:

- Demographic data provide a picture of a growing and an increasingly diverse population, with variations among the metro area counties;
- Information and data on early care and education providers describe the current landscape in the metro area as well as the state, showing a wide variety of options in the metro area and decreases in the number of licensed and registered providers between 2006 and 2008 statewide;
- Information and data on accreditation, as a proxy for overall quality, and on teacher credentials and education, a key factor in quality, indicate there is room for increasing quality in early care and education, with Georgia Pre-K and Head Start moving in that direction by increasing standards;
- Data on child care costs suggest that it costs more to provide/purchase accredited – quality – child care; and
- Data on student achievement and student participation in learning support and compensatory programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels indicate there is room for improvement, especially when comparing Georgia to the nation as a whole.