Subsidized Child Care in Georgia

Georgia State University | Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Child & Family Policy Lab

Georgia Policy Labs

Subsidized Child Care in Georgia:
Analysis of the CAPS Program, 2014-17

July 2020

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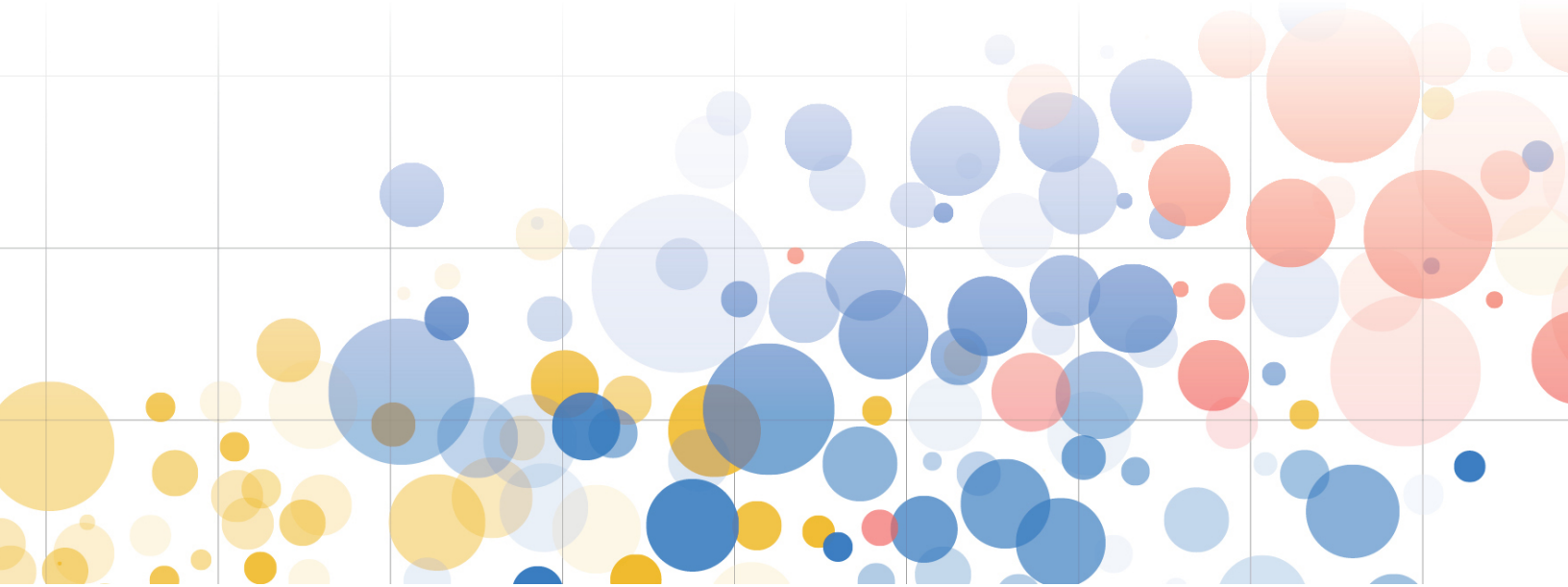


Contents

HIGHLIGHTS

- Between January 2014 and December 2017, Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program made child care more affordable for families. It also reduced the month-to-month variation in families' child care costs—prompted by changes among different types of care—that families faced.
- The number of children who had active CAPS program scholarships in Georgia fell from approximately 65,000 in January 2014 to 47,000 in December 2017.
- The average age of children who were receiving CAPS scholarships increased from 4.9 to 5.7 years between January 2014 to December 2017.
- The average assessed (i.e., required) fees participating families paid for their children's care declined from 2014 to 2017, mostly because a larger share participated on the basis of priority group status (for some priority groups family fees are not assessed) and on the basis of having lower incomes.
- The types of care that families used varied over the course of the year, with families using more before- and after-school care during school months and more all-day care during summer months.
- Families with children younger than age five predominantly used all-day child care, while families with school-aged children were more likely to use before- and after-school care.
- Nearly half of children who attended before- and after-school care in 2017 had received CAPS for three or more prior years, while more than 50 percent of children using all-day care had received CAPS for two years or less.
- Nearly half (46 percent) of children receiving CAPS scholarships attended child care in their ZIP Code of residence.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Child care is one of the largest expenses that families with children face. Paying for high-quality child care can be an impediment for parental employment and education, especially workers with low wages and single-parent families. The Economic Policy Institute (2019) estimates that the average cost of infant care in Georgia is approximately $8,500 per year (or just over $700 a month). For full-time workers earning the minimum wage, these costs account for more than half their paychecks. Because child care costs place such a large burden on family budgets, the expense can limit employment and other well-being outcomes of families experiencing low incomes (Blau & Tekin, 2007).

Child care subsidies reduce this burden. In addition to enabling work, child care subsidies can free up income for parents to spend on food, goods, and services that improve children's development (Herbst & Tekin, 2008). Child care itself can also help with children's development and may have lasting benefits later in life.

Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) child care subsidy program is administered by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). DECAL has administered all

components of the program since December 18, 2017. Before then, the program was administered by the Division of Families & Children Services (DFCS) in Georgia's Department of Human Services.

The CAPS program is a vital service for families who are experiencing various kinds of social and economic vulnerabilities. The CAPS program supports the state's early education goals by facilitating access to child care while family members work or prepare themselves for work through school or training. The CAPS program provides access to high-quality and affordable early learning environments for eligible children and support for families by connecting them with resources to help them increase self-sufficiency.

This report contributes to our understanding of trends and patterns in CAPS program use between January 2014 and December 2017, with analyses that are helpful for policymakers, researchers, and families. Moreover, this report examines elements that affect families' child care experiences in Georgia, including the cost of care, the proximity of child care sites, and the types and quality of care that families use. It also provides information on the characteristics and trends in child care use by child age, race, and geographic designation.

This is the first report on Georgia's CAPS program prepared by researchers in the Child & Family Policy Lab (CFPL) at the Georgia Policy Labs. Future research will look at the length of time that families use CAPS subsidies and link CAPS program participation with other early learning services, schooling, family services, and income-based benefit use. This research will support cross-agency analyses between DECAL and CFPL's other state agency partners: DFCS and the University System of Georgia (USG).

GEORGIA CAPS PROGRAM

Georgia's CAPS program, which is funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund and a state match, provides subsidies to families experiencing low incomes or who are experiencing other defined vulnerabilities to make child care more affordable and increase parents' ability to work or seek education and training.[1] In most cases, children must be 12 years or younger, but children ages 13 to 17 years may participate if they have a qualifying disability or case plan that requires child care. Beginning in October 2016, DECAL restricted initial eligibility to priority groups that include children in DFCS custody, children in or referred by Child Protective Services, families experiencing domestic violence, children with disabilities, children in Georgia's Pre-K Program, families in or transitioning from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, families experiencing housing instability, children in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program, parents under the age of 20, families with very low incomes, and families who have recently experienced a natural disaster. Once in the program, children can requalify based on their family's income and do not need to be part of a priority group. The program requires most parents to work or participate in work readiness activities, such as training, education, or job seeking; however, some caregivers, such as foster parents and grandparents, are exempt from the work requirements.

To obtain benefits, families complete an application through the Georgia Gateway system, have their application information verified, and participate in an interview. Within 30 days of applying, families get a determination of eligibility from the CAPS program. If the family is determined to be eligible, they are

[1] For families that are initially certified, the maximum allowable income for eligibility is set at 50 percent of the current state median income.

issued a scholarship, and the determination lasts for a year.[2] After one year, families can have their eligibility for a CAPS scholarship redetermined. Families can use their scholarship with any CAPS-qualified provider. To qualify for CAPS, providers go through a licensing process to ensure they meet health and safety standards.[3]

The CAPS program requires most families to contribute to their child care costs through a family fee—with the exception of children who are in DFCS custody, parents who are minors, and parents with incomes below 10 percent of the poverty guidelines—which is paid directly to the provider.[4] If the family's circumstances change, the family fee may be reduced but cannot increase during the 12-month eligibility period. Over the period we studied (2014-17), the family fee was based on a percentage of a family's annual gross applicable income and did not vary with the number of children. Since July 30, 2018, the family fee has been discounted if the care is provided by a Quality Rated provider. The CAPS program supplements the family fee with a subsidy or scholarship, up to a maximum amount, which depends on the type and location of the child care provider, the age of the child, and the type of care being provided (before- and after-school care, all-day care, night care, or part-time care). The family fee is subtracted from the CAPS reimbursement rate or "base rate" to determine the amount paid by the state. If the child care provider charges more than the base rate, the provider may hold the family responsible for the additional cost.

DATA

We analyzed weekly scholarship-level administrative data on all Georgia CAPS program scholarships issued between January 2014 and December 2017. The data include information on

- whether a subsidy was paid (i.e., whether the scholarship was used);
- characteristics of the child receiving the scholarship, including the child's sex, age, race, ethnicity, and ZIP Code of residence;[5]
- characteristics of the child care provider, including Quality Rated status, certification status, location, and the type of care; and
- the amounts of the family fee and CAPS program subsidy.

The data allowed us to analyze trends in the use of the CAPS program, how the number and composition of children using subsidies changed over time, what type of care they used, the proximity to child care services used, and the cost of these services to families. The data only include children whose applications were approved (i.e., determined eligible) and who were issued scholarships. We did not observe the set of all applicants to the CAPS program. Because of this, we only analyzed children who were offered subsidized child care and were unable to observe those who applied but were determined to be ineligible.

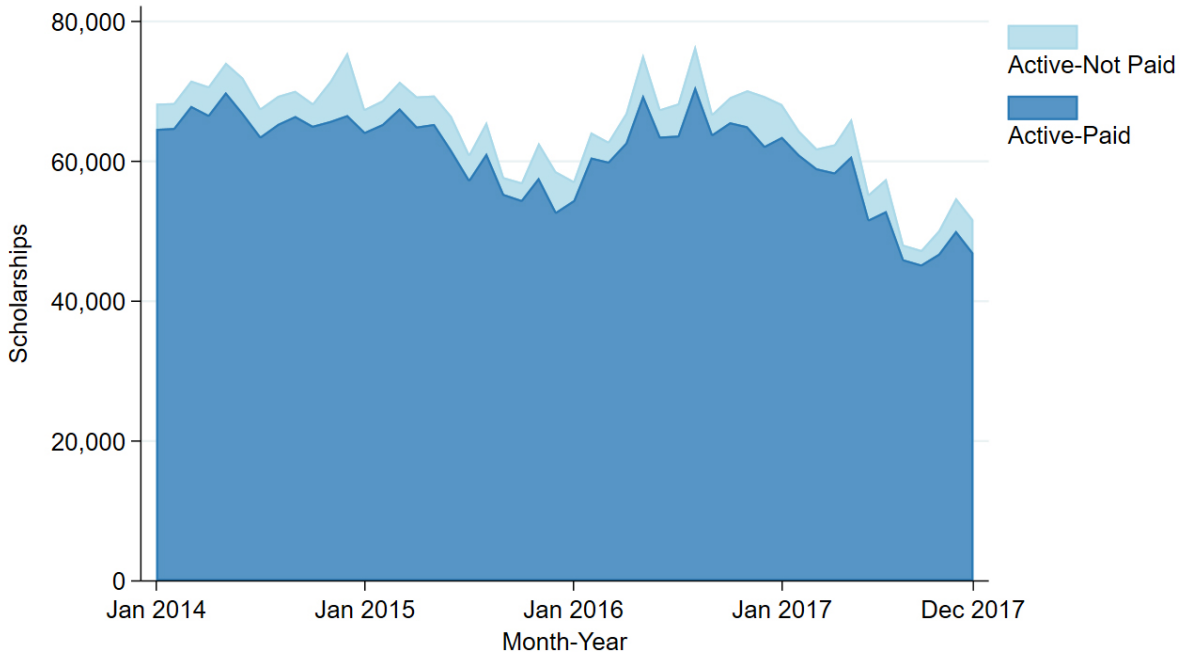
[2] Before 2017, determination could be for less than a year if there was a change in family circumstances such as changes in income or state approved activities.
[3] There are more exception categories from the licensing process under limited circumstances. For more details, review the CAPS policy and procedures manual at: caps.decal.ga.gov/en/Policy. In the future, providers will have to earn at least one star through the state's Quality Rated system to receive CAPS funding; however, this requirement has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
[4] Poverty guidelines are issued each year by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
[5] For further information on child characteristics and definitions used, see the Notes section of the Data Appendix.

FINDINGS

CAPS SCHOLARSHIPS OVER TIME

Figure 1 shows the number of active-paid and unpaid CAPS program scholarships for each month from January 2014 to December 2017. The numbers are calculated from all the unique scholarships that appear in the weekly data for the month. Active-paid scholarships or "CAPS recipients" indicate children who were eligible and utilized the CAPS program. Active-not paid scholarships indicate children who were eligible and offered CAPS program services but did not use them. Scholarships might not be used in a month if a family has just received a scholarship and is arranging child care, if a family is transitioning between care arrangements, or if a family has decided not to use child care. Scholarships might be used in some months and not used in others.

Figure 1. Scholarships in Georgia's CAPS Program, by Scholarship Payment Status and Month-Year



The number of active-paid scholarships for the CAPS program fell from approximately 65,000 in January 2014 to 47,000 by the end of 2017. Over this time period, there were two distinct drops in the number of scholarships—each appears to have occurred because of funding restrictions. In 2015, the CAPS program stopped issuing scholarships in some regions because of high enrollments and budgetary limitations.[6] The number of scholarships began rising at the end of 2015 as restrictions were lifted, and they returned to previous levels in the spring of 2016. In August 2016, new funding restrictions and a change in the definition of priority groups led to a second period of decline that continued through most of 2017.[7]

[6] This decline is consistent with the program limiting the number of scholarships in some DFCS regions in 2015, according to a conversation with DECAL staff on February 7, 2020.

[7] See more details about the 2016 changes at decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/fundingrestrictionsqa.pdf.

During 2017, the decline can also be partially explained by the transition to Georgia Gateway for program applications and eligibility transition from DFCS to DECAL in phases during this year.

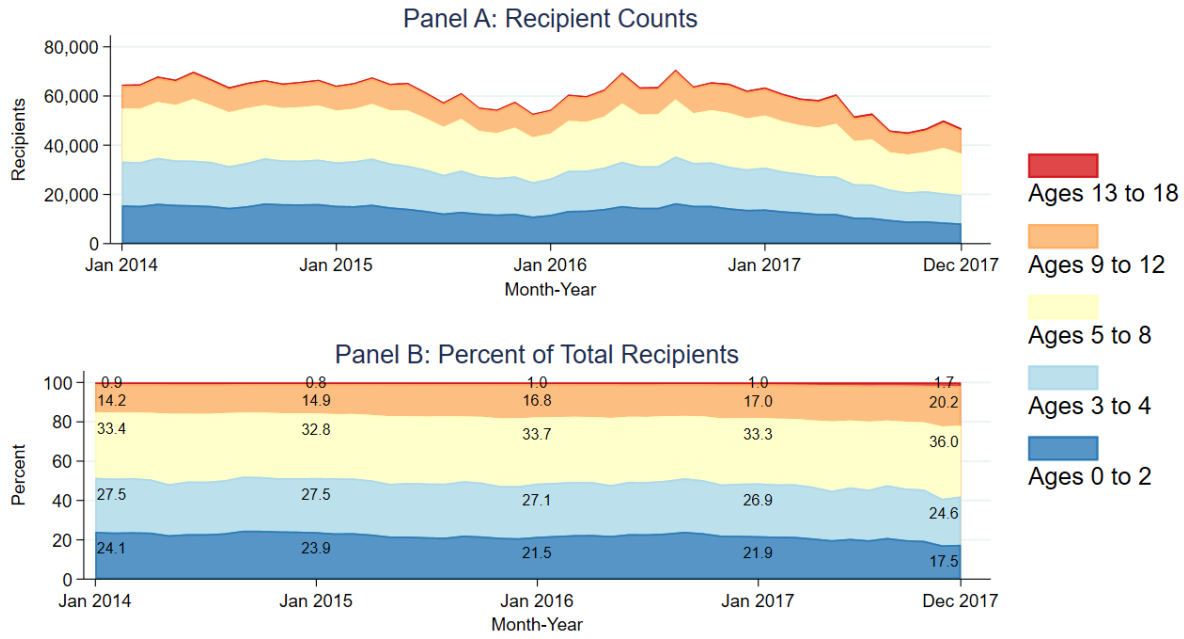
In contrast to the changes in active-paid scholarships, the number of active-not paid scholarships remained relatively constant over time. In January 2014, there were 3,600 active-not paid scholarships (equivalent to 5.1 percent of all scholarships), and by December 2017, there were 4,800 active-not paid scholarships, which represented 8.5 percent of all scholarships. Between 2014 and 2017, an average of 6 percent of scholarships were active but not paid each month by the CAPS program.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CAPS RECIPIENTS

Figures 2, 3, and 4 show the age, racial and ethnic, and geographic characteristics of children with active-paid CAPS scholarships, respectively, whom we describe as CAPS recipients. Panel A of Figure 2 shows the number of recipients by age group from January 2014 to December 2017, and Panel B shows the percentages. We distinguish between five age groups whose care needs are likely to differ:

- 0- to 2-year-old children who require infant or toddler care,
- 3- and 4-year-old children who require preschool care or attended Georgia's Pre-K Program,
- 5- to 8-year-old children who would have been kindergarten and young elementary school students,
- 9- to 12-year-old children who would have been older elementary and young middle school students, and
- 13- to 17-year-old children who would have qualified for the CAPS program under limited circumstances.

Figure 2. Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Age Group and Month-Year



From January 2014 to December 2017, just under half of CAPS recipients were younger than five years old, with the percentage of these children falling over time and the percentage of older children increasing. Over the time period, the number of recipients in each age group followed similar trends. The numbers were lower in December 2017 than in January 2014 for all groups except for those ages nine to 12 years. The largest decrease was among infants (children ages zero to two). In January 2014, there were approximately 15,600 children in this age group, while in December 2017 there were 8,200. The number of recipients ages three to four years declined from 17,800 to 11,500, and the number ages five to eight declined from 21,600 to 16,900.

In terms of percentages, children under five went from comprising 51.6 percent of all recipients in January 2014 to 42.1 percent in December 2017. By December 2017, one in five children were ages nine to 12, and approximately one in three were between five and eight years—this denotes increases in the percentage of school-aged children in the CAPS program. The age group with the lowest participation was that of children ages 13 to 18 years, for whom eligibility conditions are different compared to other ages. With these changes in the composition of recipients, the average age of children in the CAPS program rose from 4.9 years in January 2014 to 5.7 years in December 2017.

Figure 3 shows the number and percent of total CAPS recipients by race and ethnicity over time. Panel A shows that there have been decreases in the number of recipients for all racial and ethnic groups from 2014 to 2017. Panel B shows that, as a percentage, the changes over time have been relatively small. Black children went from representing 79.4 percent of all recipients in January 2014 to 77.1 percent in December 2017. The percentages of White and Hispanic children increased from 13.3 to 15.5 percent and 3.8 to 4.6 percent, respectively. These results highlight that even with the decline of recipient counts in the CAPS program over time, the racial and ethnic composition of recipients remained relatively unchanged.

Figure 3. Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Race and Ethnicity and by Month-Year

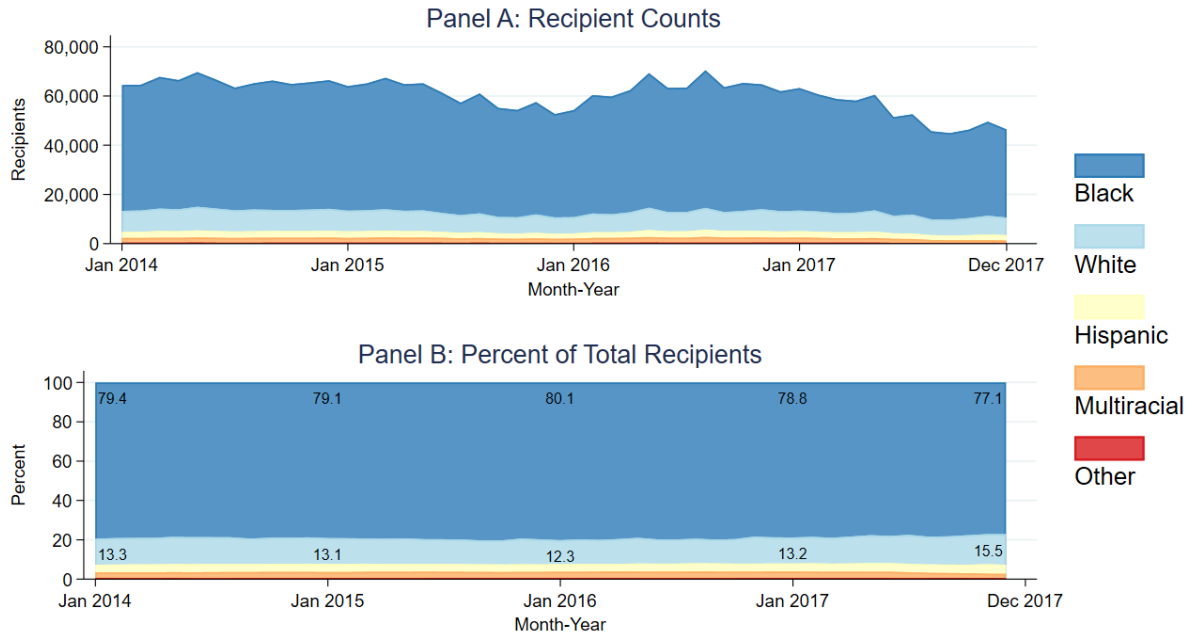
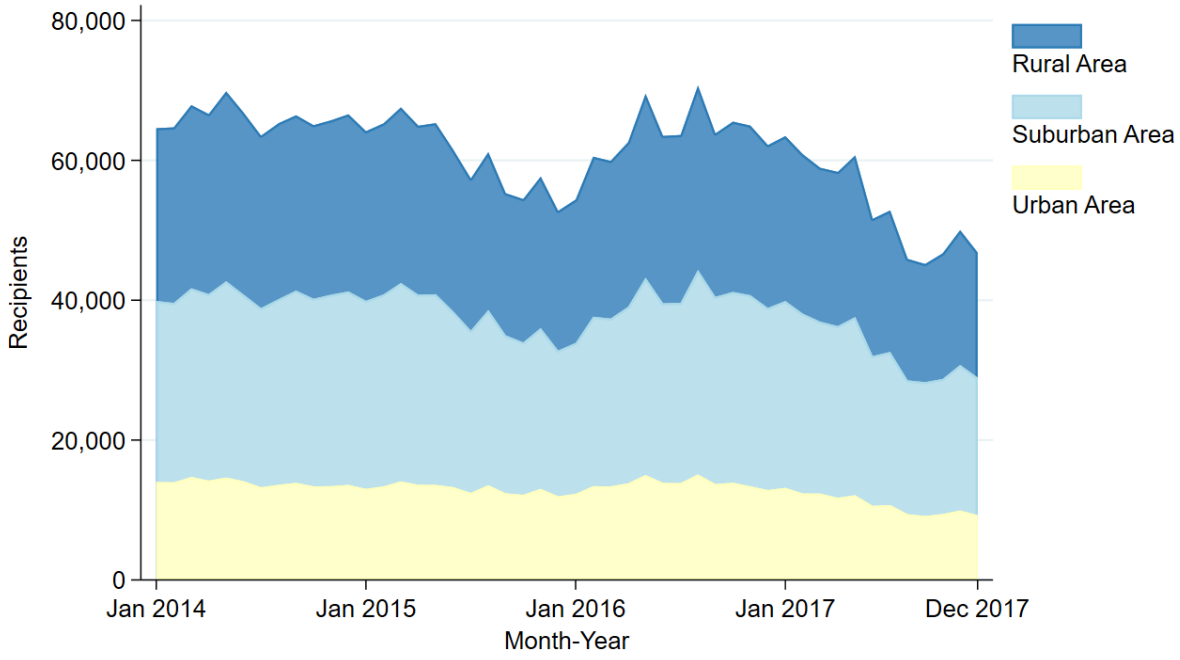


Figure 4. Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Rural, Suburban, & Urban Areas and Month-Year



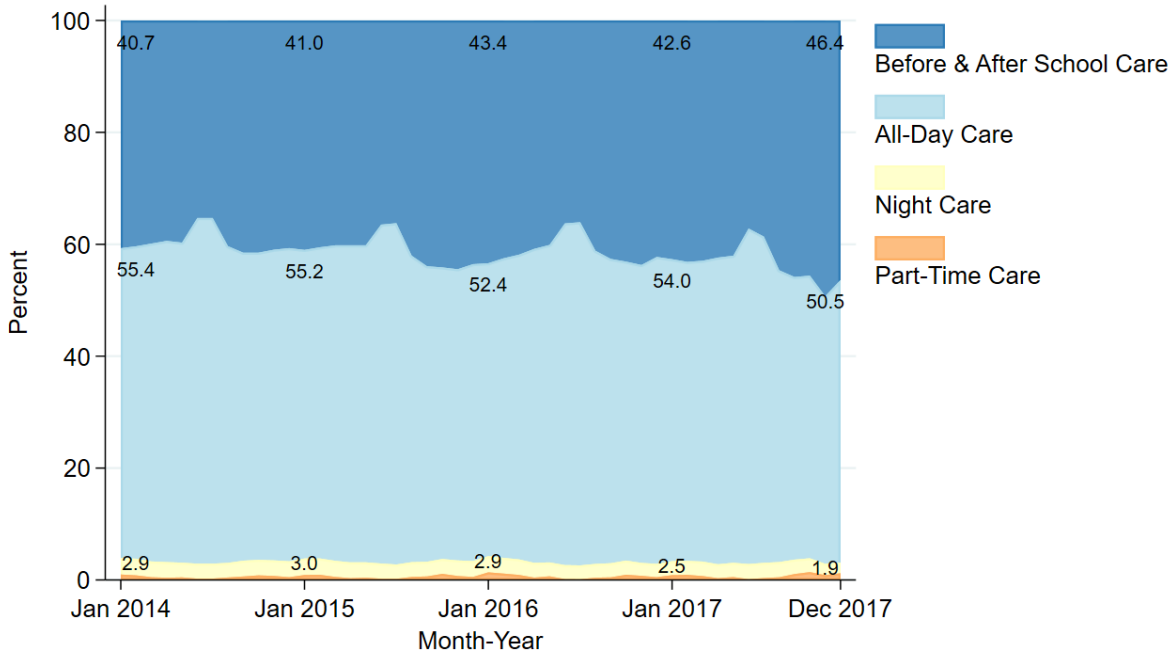
To understand if access to subsidized child care has changed over time for families in more and less populated areas throughout the state, Figure 4 shows the recipient counts in rural, suburban, and urban areas. Results show that there was a decrease in absolute counts for all areas. CAPS recipients from urban areas decreased from 14,000 in 2014 to approximately 9,000 by the end of 2017 (21.7 percent to 19.8

percent, respectively). Similarly, in suburban areas, the number of CAPS recipients fell from 26,000 to 20,000 (40 to 42 percent, respectively). In rural areas, CAPS recipients fell from 25,000 to 18,000, but the proportion of recipients who reside in rural areas stayed constant over time at 38 percent.

TYPES OF CHILD CARE OVER TIME

The CAPS program provides families access to four general types of subsidized child care: before- and after-school care, all-day care, night care, and part-time care. Figure 5 shows the percentage of recipients in each type of care from January 2014 to December 2017. Results show that families used all-day care more than any other type of care and that the percentage of recipients who used night or part-time care was very small. There is a clear seasonal pattern: The percentage of recipients who used all-day care rose during summer months and the percentage of recipients who used before- and after-school care fell during the summer months of June and July each year. This pattern is consistent with many schools' summer closure schedules and families needing alternative forms of child care. It illustrates some of the flexibility the CAPS program provides to families who can choose arrangements that fit their needs and can alter arrangements as their needs change.

Figure 5. Percent of Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Type of Care and Month-Year

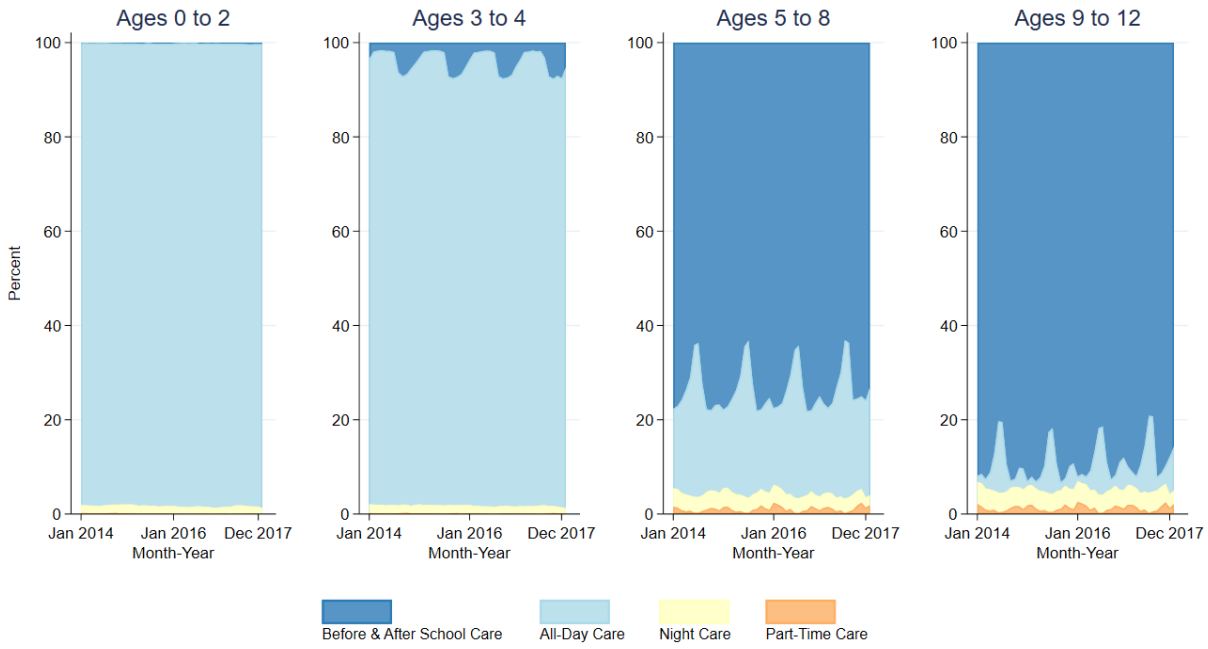


Overall, the percentage of recipients who attended all-day care declined from 55.4 percent in early 2014 to 50.5 percent by the end of 2017. During this time, the percentage of recipients who attended before- and after-school care increased from 40.7 percent to 46.4 percent. This result was mainly driven by an increase over time in the percentage of recipients who were of school age (ages five and older) as shown in Figure 2.

To observe the changes in types of care by age, we disaggregated the percentage of recipients by type of care and different age groups in Figure 6. We omitted children ages 13 to 17 years because of the small

number of children in this group. The results show that the type of care used by families in the CAPS program varied substantially by age. Almost all recipient children ages zero to two years attended all-day care. Similarly, the vast majority of recipients ages three to four years attended all-day care, although a few attended before- and after-school care in the fall months, which was consistent with children age four starting to attend Georgia's Pre-K Program. In contrast to younger children, most school-age recipients used before- and after-school care. A higher percentage also used night and part-time services. Among children ages five to eight years, a substantial number used all-day care services, with the same seasonal pattern depicted in Figure 5; many of the children in this group using all-day services may be five-years old in the months before they entered kindergarten or who turned four after the September 1 Georgia's Pre-K Program deadline. Among children ages nine to 12 years, all-day care was mainly used during school vacations and not used as much during other months.

Figure 6. Percent of Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Age Group, Type of Care and Month-Year



INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES OF CAPS PROGRAM USE

Families can qualify for and use CAPS scholarships from one year to the next through the program's redetermination process. This means that children may receive services across several years. We examined children's histories of CAPS program use by looking at the children who were receiving services sometime during 2017 and calculating the percentages of children who were receiving services in prior years. We tracked recipients over time from 2014 to 2017.

Table 1 shows the percentage of 2017 CAPS program recipients by number of years they had been receiving subsidized child care. The first row shows the percentages for all children who received services in 2017, and the subsequent rows show the percentages for subgroups defined by race and ethnicity, sex, population density, and type of care. In 2017, approximately 57,000 unique children received CAPS

program services, and most of them (about five-sixths) also received services in prior years. Specifically, 34.5 percent were observed receiving CAPS in one prior year; 15.2 percent were observed receiving CAPS in two prior years; and 31.8 percent were observed receiving CAPS in all three of the prior years.[8]

When looking at the number of years receiving CAPS, we find that about half of Black children had two or more years of prior program use, while about 40 percent of Hispanic children and just under a third of White children used services for two or more years. Histories of program use do not differ much between girls and boys. Looking at population density, children living in cities tended to have the most years of prior program use, and children living in rural areas tended to have the least. Finally, when looking at type of care, 49.4 percent of children who attended before- and after-school care in 2017 had received CAPS for three or more prior years, while more than 50 percent of children using day care had received CAPS for two years or less. The differences by type of care are partly attributable to the ages of the children (e.g., a two-year old could only have received services in one or two prior years).

Table 1. Percentage of 2017 CAPS Program Recipients by Prior Years of CAPS Use by Race, Ethnicity, Sex, Population Density and Type of Care

Prior years receiving CAPS	None	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
		Percent		
Total	18.5	34.5	15.2	31.8
Race and ethnicity				
Black	16.0	33.8	15.8	34.4
White	31.4	37.0	12.6	19.0
Multiracial	14.1	40.6	17.7	27.7
Other	21.6	35.6	12.5	30.4
Hispanic	25.3	35.2	12.3	27.2
Sex				
Boy	19.1	33.9	15.4	31.5
Girl	17.8	35.1	15.1	32.1
Population density				
Rural area	20.2	34.7	15.6	29.6
Suburban area	18.1	35.5	14.1	32.3
City	16.1	32.2	16.9	34.8
Type of care				
Before and after school	10.9	23.9	15.8	49.4
All-day care	19.2	35.0	15.7	30.1
Night care	9.3	22.9	19.7	48.1
Part-time care	18.3	23.1	20.0	38.7

[8] Because the data we have for this analysis begins in 2014, we cannot observe whether children in 2014 started receiving CAPS in that year or in previous years.

CAPS PROGRAM FEES AND PAYMENTS OVER TIME

Figure 7 presents the average assessed family fees and the subsidy reimbursement amounts made by the CAPS program to child care providers. Assessed family fees are the amount that families pay; they were based on the number of children in the family and the family's gross applicable income and are paid on a weekly basis.[9] The average weekly assessed fee paid by families was $16 and was generally stable from 2014 to 2016 when it started to decrease. The decline mostly reflects changes in the composition of families receiving CAPS subsidies, especially an increase in the proportions of families with lower incomes and families who became eligible through priority group status after August 2016. The percentage of families with no assessed fees increased from 52 percent in 2014 to 67 percent in 2017. Among families who had assessed family fees, the median weekly amount was $33.

Figure 7. Average Assessed Family Fees and Subsidy Amount in Georgia's CAPS, Per Week

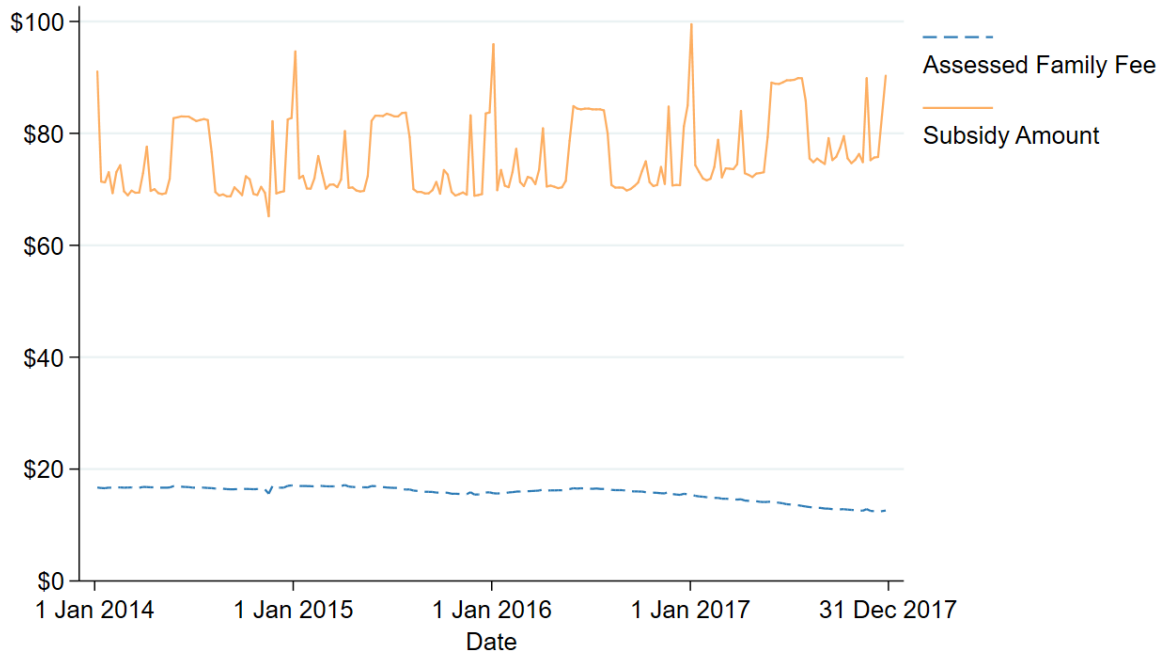


Figure 7 also presents the average subsidy payments made on a weekly basis by the CAPS program to providers from 2014 to 2017. These payments vary by type of care, Quality Rating, geographic area, and age of the child. They are reimbursements that the CAPS program paid directly to the provider.[10] The average subsidy payment during this time period was $76, with a small upward shift after January 2017. As with the type of care, weekly payments follow a seasonal pattern. Payments are higher during the summer months and in December of each year. This is consistent with families needing more care services in months when school is out or on break. Assessed family fees, which were determined by income and number of children in care, do not have a seasonal pattern. This shows how the CAPS program helps to protect families from child care cost variation throughout the year. It is worth mentioning that families

[9] As mentioned previously, some CAPS priority groups do not pay assessed fees. For more information on the fee calculation method, see: caps.decal.ga.gov/assets/downloads/CAPS/AppendixD-Family%20Fee%20Assessment%20Chart.pdf.
[10] For more information on what are the reimbursement fees that the CAPS program pays, see: caps.decal.ga.gov/assets/downloads/CAPS/AppendixC-CAPS%20Reimbursement%20Rates.pdf

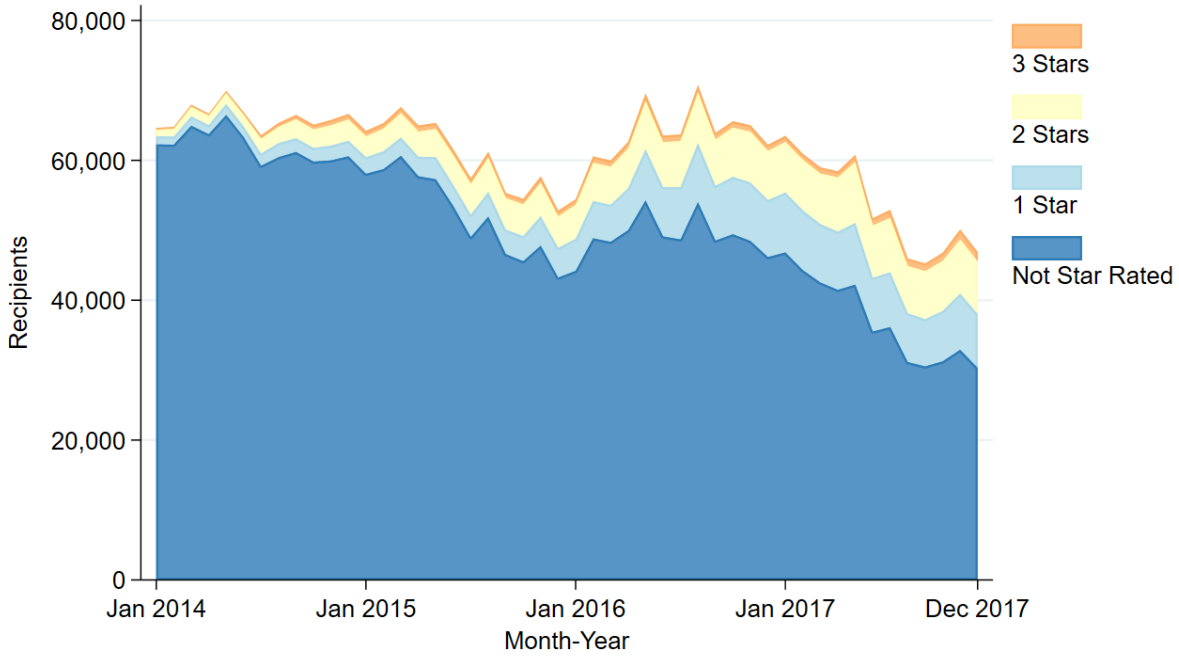
would be responsible to pay the difference between the CAPS rate and the provider's rate if it is higher. Further research needs to be done to learn how much families are paying in addition to the assessed fees.

QUALITY RATED CHILD CARE

The CAPS program will soon require all providers to be Quality Rated.[11] The goal of the Quality Rated framework is to determine, improve, and communicate the quality of child care providers in Georgia and ensure children have quality early education experiences. For a provider to be Quality Rated, it has to exceed state licensing standards. A provider can earn up to three stars—the highest Quality Rated designation.[12] CAPS pays a tiered reimbursement to providers based on the number of stars earned, and families received an assessed family fee discount for attending a Quality Rated provider.[13]

Figure 8 shows the number of recipients of the CAPS program by Quality Rated status from January 2014 to December 2017. Results indicate that the number of recipients with a provider that has at least one star has increased steadily. In January 2014, 3.6 percent of recipients were with a provider that had at least one star compared to 35.4 percent in December 2017. In December 2017, approximately 7,700 CAPS recipients received services from providers with one star, 7,500 received services from providers with two stars, and 1,300 received services from providers with three stars.

Figure 8. Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Quality Rated Status and Month-Year.



[11] Originally, the deadline to be Quality Rated was December 2020, but it was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
[12] For more information on how the Quality Rated Program works, see: qualityrated.decal.ga.gov/Content/Documents/PM_ProgramManual.pdf
[13] Tiered reimbursement increased DECAL's total CAPS payment by 2 percent for one star, 5 percent for two stars, and 10 percent for three stars; these reimbursement rates increased over time to 5, 10 and 20 percent, respectively. Since 2018, families attending a Quality Rated provider received a 15 percent discount on their assessed family fee.

PROXIMITY TO CHILD CARE SERVICES OVER TIME

To examine the proximity of child care services, we analyze whether children were enrolled at a site that was in the same ZIP Code as their home. Child care services near children's homes might be more convenient for families; however, it is also possible that services near parents' places of employment or education or near children's schools might be more convenient, and those may be in other ZIP Codes. Figure 9 shows the percentages of CAPS recipients who were served by a provider that was in the same ZIP Code as their home, a neighboring (contiguous) ZIP Code, and a non-neighboring ZIP Code. We use these classifications as rough indicators for the distance that families travel to reach their care providers.

Figure 9. Percent of Georgia CAPS Recipients, by Distance Between Home and Provider ZIP Code, and Month-Year

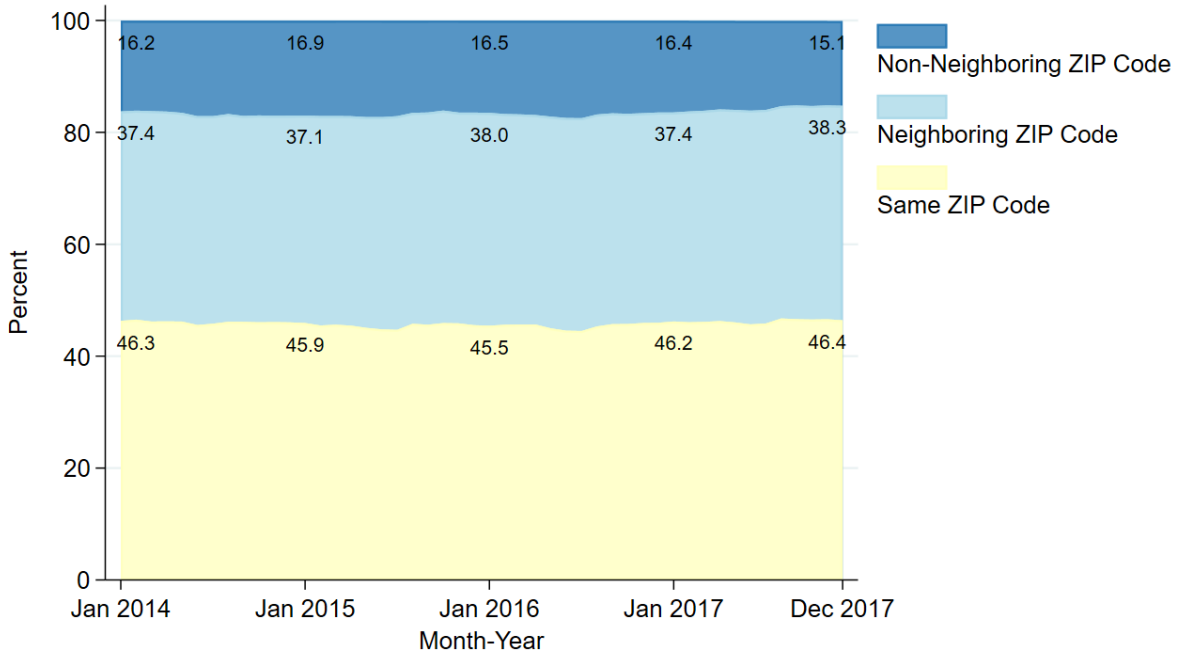
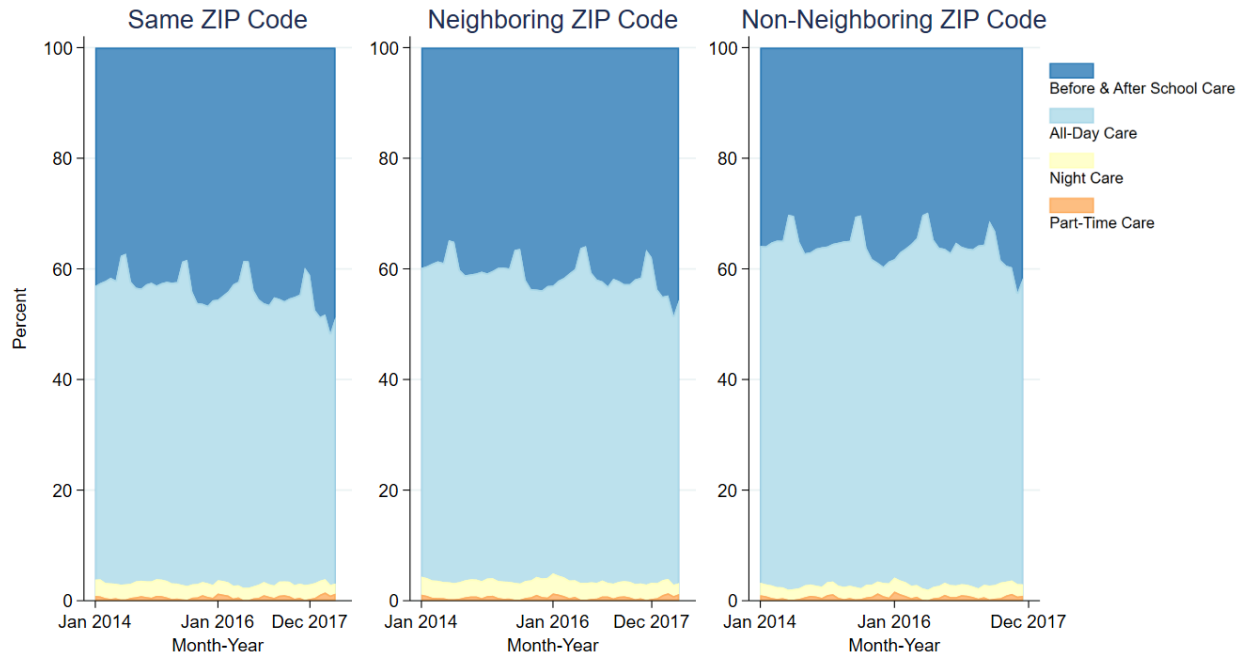


Figure 9 indicates that there have not been substantial changes in proximity to child care services over time. The percentage of recipients who attended child care in the same ZIP Code as their home was approximately 46 percent from 2014 to 2017. Moreover, the percentage of children who were enrolled at a site that was in a neighboring ZIP Code where they lived increased from 37.4 to 38.3 percent. Finally, the percentage of children who attended a site that was more than one ZIP Code away fell from 16.2 to 15.1 percent.

Figure 10 shows the percentages of children who attended different types of child care by proximity to their residence from 2014 to 2017. Among children who attended child care in the same ZIP Code, a moderately higher percentage used before- and after-school care compared to children attending child care in neighboring and non-neighboring ZIP Codes. Conversely, a lower percentage of children attending child care in the same ZIP Code used all-day care services.

Figure 10. Recipients of Georgia's CAPS Program, by Type of Care, Proximity to CAPS Site, and Month-Year



CONCLUSION

This report presents trends over time and characteristics of subsidized child care in the Georgia CAPS program from January 2014 to December 2017. Six findings are particularly noteworthy. First, the number of active-paid scholarships decreased from 65,000 in 2014 to 47,000 in 2017. Second, while the number of scholarships decreased, the racial and ethnic composition and the geographic composition of recipients did not meaningfully change. Third, there is a seasonal component in the types of child care families used: Families transition between before- and after-school and all-day care during the summers and December holidays. This is also reflected in the CAPS program payments to providers. However, it does not affect the family assessed fees because during the period of the analysis they were based on number of children and income levels. Fourth, the age distribution of children enrolled in CAPS modestly changed: From 2014 to 2017, the average age of children receiving subsidized child care increased from 4.9 to 5.7 years. Fifth, 49.4 percent of children who attended before and after school care in 2017 had received CAPS for three or more prior years, while more than 50 percent of children using all-day care have received CAPS for two years or less. These differences are partly attributable to the ages of the children (e.g., a two-year old could only have received services in one or two prior years). Finally, nearly half of families enrolled their children in sites that were in the same ZIP Code as their home (46 percent) and only 15 percent attended a child care site that was not neighboring the ZIP Code where they live.

Overall, our findings show there is relevant seasonal variation in subsidized child care use by type of care and for different age groups. Families' ability to choose from different child care providers and transition between different types of care in the short-term—in addition to the structure of family fees under the CAPS program—helps them receive higher quality care at an affordable cost and reduces price variation

compared to what they would face without the subsidies. For policymakers and researchers, this study underscores the relevance of accounting for seasonality of use and families' needs for flexibility in choosing child care.

Additionally, our findings reflect recent policies enacted in Georgia's CAPS program—such as changes in priority groups and interactions with the Quality Rated program—and lead to several follow-up issues that may motivate future analysis:

- Georgia's CAPS program pays providers a reimbursement fee. In addition, providers receive an assessed fee from families. If the cost of care from a specific provider is higher than the addition of the reimbursement fee and family assessed fee, families may have to pay the difference. Further research needs to examine how much families are paying in addition to the assessed fees.
- Analyzing subsequent periods will allow us to examine several trends, including changes to the program since DECAL began administering the program; the number of CAPS providers who became Quality Rated, which increased over the period we examined and will soon be required of all CAPS providers; whether family assessed fees continue to decline; and if the increase in average age for CAPS program recipients persists over time.
- Finally, this report focuses on the characteristics of children, care services, and costs in the CAPS program. Additional data can help us understand other outcomes, including the extent to which CAPS services have changed parents' and guardians' employment and work-readiness outcomes and family well-being. These results will further underscore the relevance of providing families with high-quality subsidized child care.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Jessie Bruno, Woody Dover, Thomas Goldring, Anita Hasni, Japera Johnson Hemming, Elisabetta Kasfir, Randy Hudgins, Robert McMillan, Rob O'Callaghan, Bentley Ponder, Maggie Reeves, Dave Ribar, Tyler Rogers, Annick Simo, and Chris Thayer for their valuable comments and contributions to this report.

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DATA APPENDIX

SOURCE

The source of the data presented in all graphs is Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program Administrative Records, 2014 to 2017, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

NOTES

Figure 1

Active-paid are scholarships for which the CAPS program paid the provider because they were used by families during the reference week; active-not paid scholarships are those that were approved by CAPS but not used by families during the reference week. Monthly counts include scholarships that were used at least once during the reference month.

Figure 2

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month. Panel B labels show the percentage of recipients from each age group at each period of time.

Figure 3

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month. Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive. Black is Black, non-Hispanic. White is White, non-Hispanic. Multiracial is two or more race categories, non-Hispanic. Other race includes Asian, American Indian or Alaskan, and Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, all non-Hispanic. Panel B labels show the percentage of recipients from each race and ethnicity at each period of time. For presentation purposes, value labels for Hispanic, Multiracial, and Other are not shown.

Figure 4

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month. Rural, suburban areas, and urban areas were identified at the ZIP Code level using the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service classification.

Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month. Figure 5, Panel B value labels show the percentage of recipients that used each type of care for each period of time. For presentation purposes, value labels for recipients using Part Time type of care are not shown.

Figures 9 and 10

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month. Same ZIP Code indicates those recipients who attended a child care site in the same ZIP Code where they live. Neighboring ZIP Code recipients are those who attended child care in a site that is immediately bordering their ZIP Code. Non-Neighboring ZIP Code denotes recipients who attend child care in a site that is not in the same or a neighboring ZIP Code relative to the recipient's residence. In Figure 9, Panel B value labels show the percentage of recipients by geographical proximity for each period of time.

Table 1

Recipient counts include only recipients for which their scholarships were active and paid by the CAPS program during at least one week of the reference month during 2017. Rows in this table add up to 100 percent where each row shows the percentage of recipients who received CAPS in each one of the columns (e.g. row 1, column 1 shows that 18.5 percent of all recipients received CAPS scholarships during 2017 and did not receive it in previous years).

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