



STATE OF GEORGIA  
**Children's Cabinet**

**Georgia Children's Cabinet**

**Purpose**

“The Georgia Children’s Cabinet is charged with supporting a sustainable and comprehensive system of education and care to best serve the children and families in each region of our state.”

Governor Brian Kemp, Governor’s Executive Order, 12 June 2019

**Approach**

Members of the Georgia Children’s Cabinet will take a comprehensive, systematic, and whole family approach to ensure children are and feel safe, are healthy, and learning.

**Goal Areas**

Over the next four years we will focus our efforts in the following areas:

<p><b>Safety</b></p> <p>Children are and feel safe</p>	<p><b>Healthy</b></p> <p>Children have a healthy start</p>	<p><b>Literacy</b></p> <p>Children (0-18) are literate in reading and math</p>	<p><b>Two-Generation Approach</b></p> <p>Ensuring a whole family and system approach to policy and service delivery</p>
<p><b>Strategies/Actions</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define safety and how to measure it</li> <li>- Inventory current child safety related assessments, intake instruments, programs and services</li> <li>- Focus on trauma responsive practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop and deploy a messaging campaign to increase vaccine use and reduce vaccine preventable diseases</li> <li>- Meet key developmental milestones through early intervention in maternal and infant health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support new teachers with strategies to address reading and math</li> <li>- Educate and support parents through community partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adopt principles of 2 Gen across all agencies</li> <li>- Identify barriers to program access and participation</li> <li>- Update and train cabinet member agency personal on 211 system</li> </ul>



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Georgia's Children's Cabinet Meeting  
September 6, 2019  
10 AM to 2 PM

United Way of Central Georgia  
Juanita Jordan Room  
277 MLK Jr. Blvd, Suite 301  
Macon, GA 31201

## Meeting Summary

### Introduction

The Georgia Children's Cabinet is charged by the Governor with "supporting a sustainable and comprehensive system of education and care to best serve children and families in each region of our state." The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for the cabinet, with the First Lady Marty Kemp as Honorary Chair. The cabinet's first meeting was June 18, 2019, where they discussed their vision for the cabinet and priorities for children.

In answer to the question, "What do we hope for Georgia's Children?" one third of the cabinet want "children to be children; to play and experience childhood." Put the fun back in learning, which can happen anywhere. Improving access to high quality childcare; economic mobility; and success can happen regardless of income and life trauma.

Commissioner Amy Jacobs, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and George McCannless, President and CEO, United Way of Central Georgia welcomed the cabinet to Macon for this second, facilitated meeting to create priorities to focus on over the next several years. Commissioner Jacobs reviewed the Governor's priorities:

- Increasing educational opportunity for all (emphasis on rural Georgians, but no matter a child's zip code);
- Addressing Georgia's teacher shortage and building a teacher pipeline (build and support teachers);
- Developing a student-centric approach to learning to support student achievement; improving literacy rates for children in grades 3-12;
- Improving healthcare and access to healthcare;
- Increasing campus safety;
- Improving access to mental health care and improving outcomes for children and young adults.

The cabinet first heard items of interest from members, then spent the meeting in brainstorming and discussion sessions that culminated in a set of four priorities and strategies to address those. The top priority areas to focus on in the next four years:

Literacy

- New teachers are supported with strategies to address reading and math
- B-8, middle grades, high school, adult: math and reading
- Target frontline (for example, public health) and community organizations, medical personnel, public libraries
- Nexus degree, Reach Out and Read program

#### Child safety

- What does it take to make a child feel safe and be safe?
- Identification of threats, vulnerabilities
- Coordinated response

#### Comprehensive family approach

- Adopt principles of two-generational model across all agencies
- 211 expanded
- Community family resource guide

#### Immunization/Vaccine

- Social media campaign-counter message: value of vaccines
- PR campaign: fun, not boring, with celebrities
- Each agency/organization promotes vaccine use
- CDC Foundation support for PR campaign
- School nurses and public health clinics partner on Meet Teacher Day at start of school

This report summarizes the process, priorities, and strategies.

## Process

The general process for the cabinet meeting was typical for decision-making meetings: small groups discussed questions and recorded ideas, after which the entire cabinet gave feedback and voted on ideas to focus on first.

## What outcomes for children and families do we want to focus on over the next 4 years?

Eight small groups answered this question as a headline on a story recognizing the great work of the cabinet written four years from now. The outcomes required the collaboration of multiple members of the cabinet and had to address the five areas of interest related to child well-being:

1. Physical health and safety
2. Cognitive development and education
3. Behavioral and emotional health
4. Community, family, and social well-being
5. Economic well-being and self-sufficiency

Most groups included specific outcomes related to their headlines. The cabinet chose their top outcomes after each group presented their headlines for discussion.

## Future Headlines

- Georgia Ranked #1 in State for Families
- Georgia Soars to #1 in National Kids Count Ranking
- Georgia Leads National Gains in Positive Outcomes for At-Risk Children

- How are the Children? The Children in Georgia are Well!
- Georgia Eliminates Vaccine-Preventable Diseases in Children
- Finally, Georgia’s Grad Rate has Seen Improvement 3 Years Running
- Georgia Leads Nation w/Laws Which Result in Sig. Decline of E-Cigs and Vaping
- GA’s Childhood Immunization Rates Lead Nation
- Georgia Adopts Comprehensive Family Support Systems

### Top outcomes

What is susceptible to the children’s cabinet influence, for children 0–18 years old? Can we do all of these? What is the reality? These questions guided the cabinet members as they voted on the headlines and ideas, which were then consolidated by combining like statements.

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
18	Eliminate vaccine-preventable diseases
18	Georgia adopts comprehensive family-support system: whole family approach/2-gen/multigenerational, jobs, housing. “Access” barriers
15+/-	Literacy in math and reading
13	Children feel and are safe in school and community: mental health care, trauma care, parent practices/triggers (Family First)
11	Maternal and child health, early intervention

### Discussion

- What is a family support system? Two-generation, whole family support: help the adults get out of poverty by assisting with housing, training, etc.
- How do you use a 2-generation family support system collaboratively; example: DECAL provides childcare but what about the other supports that exist or are needed for the family? You can’t disrupt poverty without treating the whole family, not just a piece.
- Safe children everywhere: children feel safe in families, schools. It’s a two-generation cycle – synergistic with the above theme. Trauma and mental health care included in this sector.
- Family support includes getting prenatal care: Babies Can’t Wait, etc.; early childhood services / beginning services and then early childhood education; mental health care, rapid re-housing. All should be combined to address multi-generational issues, and which can support all children and families, not just those in poverty—support the whole child.
- The cabinet members acknowledge that the focus should be on the family/whole child not just the child-level.
- “Children are safe and feel safe”
  - Our purpose in the next four years is for children to be and feel safe and to focus on the family whole well-being—a cultural shift/vision approach that supports the **WHOLE FAMILY SYSTEM**
- Family structure is critically important to prevent child abuse and neglect. Families need to be successful to help children be safe. Chronic chaos can make children feel unsafe; low levels can be worse than the larger “dangers.”
- The cabinet needs to be careful about terminology: jargon is useful for internal discussion, since it’s a short-cut description of topics, but the public needs clear language. For example, what does “family support system” mean to the public?

### All Headlines and outcomes with votes

The following is the entire set of outcomes by headline group:

**Vote    **Headline or idea****

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- 6 Georgia Ranked #1 in State for Families
  - 1 • Early intervention programs for parents and children
  - 2 • Strong collaboration between sectors
  - Opportunities to learn and work
- 2 Georgia Soars to #1 in National Kids Count Ranking
  - Great strides in *reading and math*
  - Almost 100% enrolled in Pre-K
  - Healthcare coverage for children beats national average
  - *Infant and maternal* mortality rates decrease for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year
  - #1 for business,
  - 1 • #1 for small business
  - #1 for kids
- 2 Georgia Leads National Gains in Positive Outcomes for At-Risk Children (Agency Heads get Big Bonus!)
  - Children’s Cabinet credited with improving resilience, partnerships
  - 4 • State has created multi-agency focus on *trauma-responsive* practices, has encouraged community innovation and held agencies accountable
  - 6 • System identifies and intervenes to address family issues beginning at ***birth***, *breaking generational cycles*
- 1 How are the Children? The Children in Georgia are Well!
  - 1 • Maternal and infant mortality are down, birth weight is up
  - 3 • Early identification of and appropriate intervention of missed developmental milestones [quickly matching appropriate services]
  - 3 • 10% increase in grade-level ***reading*** proficiency by 4<sup>th</sup> grade
  - 4 • \*Decrease racial and geographic disparities across all 3 indicators
- Summertime Blues: Georgia’s Children Want to be in School
  - 13 • Children feel safe
  - 2 • Relevant
  - Parents and children see a plan/hope for the future
- 16 Georgia Eliminates Vaccine-Preventable Diseases in Children
  - Innovative outreach targets all Georgia children
  - Innovative multifaceted public education campaign across all media spectrums
  - Public/private partnership supports innovation and puts Georgians first!
- 1 Finally, Georgia’s Grad Rate has Seen Improvement 3 Years Running
- 4 Georgia Leads Nation w/Laws Which Result in Sig. Decline of E-Cigs and Vaping
- 2 GA’s Childhood Immunization Rates Lead Nation
- 12 Georgia Adopts Comprehensive Family Support Systems
  - 2 • Starting at pregnancy
  - Provides evidence-based services
  - 1 • Family supports
  - 5 • High quality early childhood services; mental health, Babies Can’t Wait, etc.

**Vote    **Headline or idea****

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- 3       • Education and economic mobility
- Includes community engagement

**Common themes**

- Collaboration across agencies
- Safe place for Georgia's children
- Literacy in math and reading
- Indicators to measure (scoreboard to know if you're winning)
- Mental health and social/emotional health in children and families
- Immunization (2 groups)
- Multigenerational approach
- Georgia #1: supports economic development goal

What is missing from this list is the following:

- Two-generation work; work supports; training is buried in the family piece
- Affordability and access for most at-risk kids
- Economic well-being and self-sufficiency

**Prioritize the outcomes**

A guiding principle is necessary for establishing meaningful priorities. More discussion is need to regarding a statement of the Cabinet's vision or approach to accomplishing its charge from the Governor.

Draft approach or vision statement:

**The Georgia children's cabinet will take a comprehensive, systematic, and whole family approach to ensure children are and feel safe, are healthy, and learning.**

**What works to make progress on our selected outcomes (programs and strategies)?**

To answer this question, the cabinet sorted themselves into four groups to address each of the four priority areas:

- Literacy
- Child safety
- Comprehensive family approach
- Immunization/Vaccine

**Literacy:**

- New teachers are supported with strategies to address reading and math
- Target frontline (for example, public health) and community organizations, medical personnel, public libraries
- B-8, middle grades, high school, adult: math and reading
- Nexus degree, Reach Out and Read program

*Explanation:*

- New ways to prepare new teachers in the classroom to address reading and numeracy
- Find strategies that work with community and other professionals
  - Medical professionals
  - Libraries
  - Public Health
  - Community Organizations
- Off the wall: the University System of Georgia developed the nexus degree, a 60-hour credential, but if you've completed the core courses it is only 18 hours. Nexus degrees could be awarded to existing teachers and members of the community so they could have a degree to assist in literacy in the community.
- NEEDS: baseline data, metrics/evaluation. Get Georgia Reading committee—could build on existing collaborations. There is more data on the reading side; math strategies are much less developed at this time.

**Child safety**

Elements

- Identification of threats, vulnerabilities
  - EPSDT
  - Schools
  - LE
  - Mental health screening
  - ACES screening/trauma
  - Healthcare providers
  - Other tools?
- Coordinated response
  - Family Justice Center
  - School-based clinics
  - “One-stop shops”
  - Trauma-informed
  - Single intake/care coordination
  - Drawbacks?
- What are barriers to access?
  - Billing restrictions (BCW, for example)
  - Funding
  - Geography
  - Stigma
  - Measuring safety
  - Data

(We must define) What does it take to make a child **feel** safe and **be** safe?

*Explanation:*

Year 1: subgroup of stakeholders spends more time defining what it takes to be safe—a landscape analysis to decide on mental health, physical health, and well-being. What do we all mean when we work on this goal?

- DEFINE CHILD SAFETY FIRST
- Who is covering what part of the map? Get consensus on the definitions of the above, find out what programs offered, what is already being done

Feedback from the larger group:

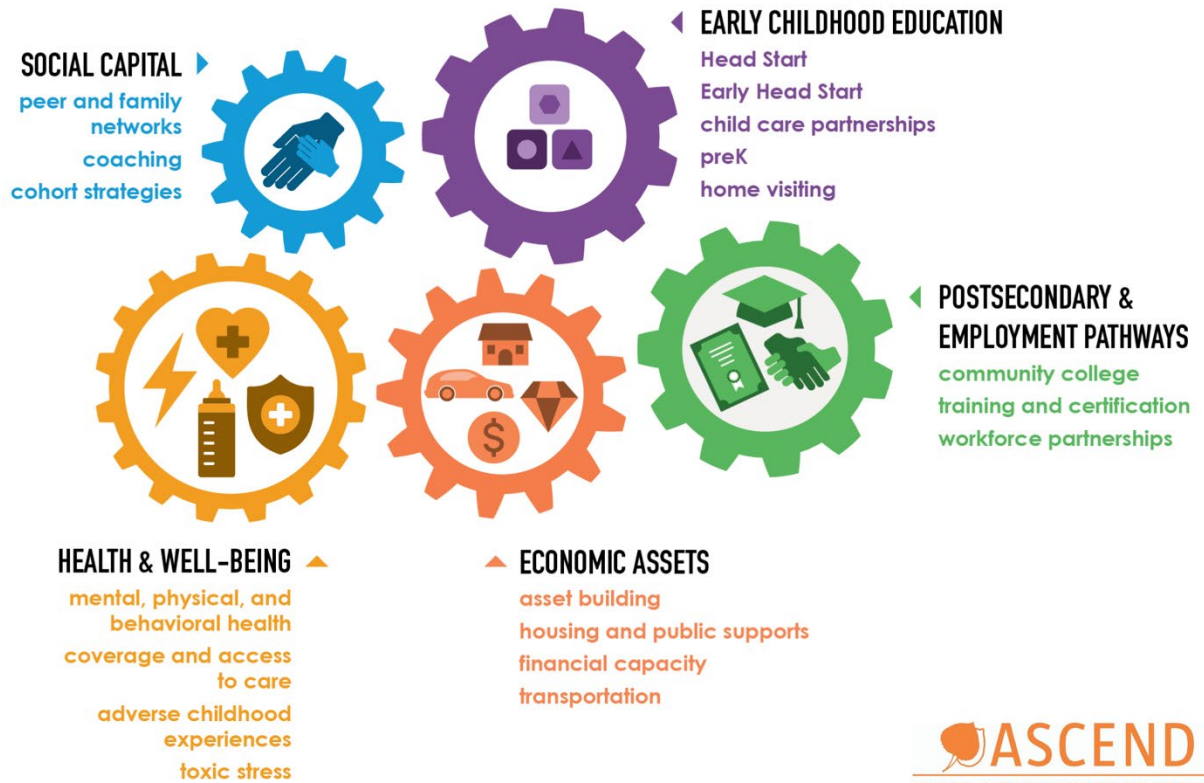
Try to find something that one agency isn’t already doing so that strategies are not duplicative.

**Comprehensive family approach**

- Family support navigators
- 211 expanded
- Community family resource guide
- Marketing—cross-sector—collaboration and training
- Engagement of fathers, grandparents, guardians, kin care
- Parental leave
- Parent incentives
- Adopt principles of two-generational model across all agencies

*Explanation:*

- Strategy: adopt principles of two-generational models across all agencies (the cabinet is itself a strategy)



- Strategy: 211 for families across the state where they can identify research
  - Marketing, cross sector training across community-based organizations

**Immunization/vaccine: keep safe, keep healthy**

- Social media campaign-counter message: value of vaccines
  - Safe, effective, they work
- Use elected officials to reinforce “safe, effective, they work”



- “Home school” populations?
- PR campaign: fun, not boring, with celebrities
  - “Keep Georgia immunized”
  - CDC Foundation support for PR campaign
- Each agency/organization promotes vaccine use
- School nurses and public health clinics partner on Meet Teacher Day at start of school

*Explanation:*

- Issue is somewhat under attack (vaccines are, but Georgia is a leader in childhood immunization rates); just want a bigger voice in marketplace
- Anti-vax social media presence
  - Take a counter-measure like using elected officials to reinforce vaccine safety on social media platforms
  - Homeschoolers: are they in the antivax area? Most antivaxers lack a profile, it's mixed
- Agency perspective: public health at the center of this but it involves DOE, DECAL, University System, and the CDC
  - CDC can help with a messaging campaign including the agencies

Feedback from the larger group:

Can we move immunization to the first priority of a more general/broad health topic: “Keep Georgians healthy”, for example, that could tackle unforeseen emergencies (vaping, etc.) or other issues that come up?

- First priority is vaccines
- Second priority is whatever comes up over the next four years

**If we can only do one thing in the next 4 years as a cabinet, what is most important?**

This question guided the cabinet as they voted on strategies for each outcome.

**Literacy**

**Vote Strategy**

- 10 New teachers are supported with strategies to address reading and math
- 9 B-8, middle grades, high school, adult: math and reading
- 7 Target frontline (for example, public health) and community organizations, medical personnel, public libraries
- 4 Nexus degree, Reach Out and Read program

**Child Safety**

**Vote Strategy**

- 18 (We must define) What does it take to make a child **feel** safe and **be** safe?
- 8 Identification of threats, vulnerabilities
- 3 Coordinated response

**Comprehensive Family Approach**

**Vote Strategy**

- 34 Adopt principles of two-generational model across all agencies

- 17 211 expanded
- 1 Community family resource guide

## Vaccines

### **Vote Strategy**

- 18 Social media campaign-counter message: value of vaccines
- 8 PR campaign: fun, not boring, with celebrities
- 2 Each agency/organization promotes vaccine use
- 2 CDC Foundation support for PR campaign
- 1 School nurses and public health clinics partner on Meet Teacher Day at start of school

## What can be done between now and January before next session?

- Convene smaller safety group by phone, email, or in-person to research what is going on around mental health, safety, school climate. Pool information
  - CVIOG school safety presentation from Biennial
- Strategic plan clarity with goals prior to January
  - CVIOG send report of this meeting to Amy for dissemination
  - Goes to Cabinet
  - Then to First Lady and Governor's Staff
  - January: this is it, where we are going
- Revisit the vision statement to have meaning for what the cabinet is striving for—not in bureaucratic language! Have for feedback in January.
- Inventory what we have that is already being done so we aren't re-inventing the wheel—"what we have" versus "what we need"—environmental scan\*
- Alignment and efficient use of resources\*
- Share information on 211 and other ideas members have
- Dr. Toomey will work with the CDC Foundation/other funding sources that could be used for a social media campaign

\* These items can be part of work that happens in the next six to nine months.

*Next Meeting: January 2020*