



## NRFC State Profiles Georgia (2012)

This profile describes state-funded and federally funded programs and policies that aim to strengthen families. These programs and policies support parenting and father involvement, help couples maintain strong bonds, enhance fathers' economic stability, and provide support during incarceration and reentry. The profile lists phone numbers and websites for the programs. This information was correct when the profile was written (in 2012) but may change over time.

### Programs to Support Parenting and Responsible Fatherhood

Responsible fatherhood programs often focus on improving parenting skills, keeping fathers involved with their children and helping them pay child support. A few such programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
Family Relationships Anchored in Marriage Education (FRAME)-Works	Parenting	Federally funded program provides weekend events to help couples strengthen relationships and prepare for parenting. Program also includes six months of follow-up support to address specific needs.	<a href="https://secure.bethany.org/A55798/bethanyWWW.nsf/0/18D84A2B73A3E00E8525728E0065BEEB">https://secure.bethany.org/A55798/bethanyWWW.nsf/0/18D84A2B73A3E00E8525728E0065BEEB</a>  (888) 443-7263
Nurturing Parent Programs (NPP)	Parenting	State-funded program that provides family-based parenting education throughout the state.	<a href="http://heartsforfamilies.org/prgrams-services/programs.html">http://heartsforfamilies.org/prgrams-services/programs.html</a>  (770) 972-3664
Abstinence-Only Education Program	Preventing unwanted or early fatherhood	State-funded program to promote abstinence and healthy behaviors among adolescents. Program aims to decrease rates of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse, tobacco use, sexual assault, violence, and suicide deaths among the youth.	<a href="http://health.state.ga.us/programs/adolescent/abstinence/index.asp">http://health.state.ga.us/programs/adolescent/abstinence/index.asp</a>  (404) 657-2613
Adolescent Health and Youth Development (AHYD)	Preventing unwanted or early fatherhood	State-funded programs targeted towards decreasing teen pregnancy and increasing graduation rates by providing academic support abstinence education and reproductive services as well as seminars for parents. These services are offered in communities throughout Georgia at Teen Centers and youth organizations partnered with local health departments.	<a href="http://health.state.ga.us/programs/adolescent/index.asp">http://health.state.ga.us/programs/adolescent/index.asp</a>  (404) 657-2613

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Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
RealTalk ATL	Preventing unwanted or early fatherhood	Federally funded program offers youth four to six weeks of intensive education on dating and relationships and pregnancy prevention.	<a href="http://www.future-foundation.com/programs/real-talk-atl/">http://www.future-foundation.com/programs/real-talk-atl/</a>  (404) 766-0510

### Programs to Promote Healthy Relationships

Programs that support healthy marriages and relationships may focus on skills such as communication and dealing with conflict. A few such programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
BE REAL (Building and Enhancing Relationships, Employment, and Life Skills)	Healthy marriage and relationships	Federally funded program aimed to strengthen relationships by providing marriage education and job and career advancement. Also includes services for engaged couples or those interested in marriage and marriage enhancement and training programs for married couples.	<a href="http://www.bethany.org/atlanta/events">http://www.bethany.org/atlanta/events</a>  (888) 443-7263
Marriage Appreciation Training Uplifting Relationship Education (MATURE)	Healthy marriage and relationships	Federally funded program provides skills-based healthy marriage and relationship education to high-risk adolescents, primarily African American teens, who attend greater Atlanta area high schools.	<a href="http://www.mtciga.org/about-us.html">http://www.mtciga.org/about-us.html</a>  More Than Conquerors, Inc (404) 725-5568

### Programs to Prevent Domestic Violence

Programs to prevent domestic violence may offer shelters for victims, counseling, and legal advice. One such program, shown in the table below, is available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Domestic violence prevention	Federally funded organization offers services and programs to prevent domestic violence and provide help to victims of domestic violence.	<a href="http://gcadv.org/about-gcadv/">http://gcadv.org/about-gcadv/</a>  (404) 209-0280

## Programs to Enhance Economic Stability

Economic stability programs help parents support themselves and may include services to help fathers find jobs or increase their earnings. A few programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
Georgia Fatherhood Program	Job training and employment	State-funded program that helps noncustodial parents overcome barriers to payment of child support. Program is usually completed in three to nine months and consists of workshops and services to assist parents in achieving economic stability.	<a href="http://www.dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/fatherhood-program">http://www.dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/fatherhood-program</a>
Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One-Stop Centers	Job training and employment	More than 45 WIA One-Stop Centers throughout Georgia offer vocational training, education, job readiness, job search, mentoring, and support services to job seekers. Many other employment-related services are provided by partner agencies or through referrals from the One-Stop Center.	<a href="http://www.dol.state.ga.us/wp/wia_contact_info.htm">http://www.dol.state.ga.us/wp/wia_contact_info.htm</a>

## Programs for Incarceration and Reentry

Programs for incarceration and reentry aim to meet the needs of people involved with the criminal justice system. A few programs, shown in the table below, are available in the state.

Program or Organization	Topic	Description	Contact Information
Department of Corrections	Reentry	State-funded program offers services to assist inmates in reentry including preparation for employment and reuniting with family members.	<a href="http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/">http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/</a>

## Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood and Parenting

### Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Georgia has a FMLA, which allows both fathers and mothers time off after the birth or adoption of a child, or during an illness, without fear of losing their jobs. Parents are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a one-year period in order to care for a new child, an ill family member, or to recover from their own illness. The FMLA protects fathers and mothers who have worked with the same organization for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours within the past year. Georgia has no state provisions for paid leave.<sup>1</sup>

### Paternity Establishment

Establishing paternity is the legal process to be identified as the father of a child. Georgia has an in-hospital paternity acknowledgement program. When paternity is uncontested, parents can establish a child's paternity either in the hospital or through signing a Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgment form. When paternity is contested, parents must go through a judicial process in which the alleged father may have to participate in genetic testing. Currently the cost of genetic testing in Georgia is \$29.65 per person.<sup>2</sup>

### Child Custody

When married couples with children divorce, both parents have the right to petition any Georgia circuit court to determine the custody of their children. Custody decisions are made in the best interest of the children, which includes factors such as the age of the children and each parent's ability to care for the children.<sup>3</sup>

### Child-Support Assistance

Georgia operates a child support program through its Department of Human Services Division of Child Support Services (DCSS). The DCSS aims to improve the well-being of children by ensuring that they receive financial and medical support from both parents. The DCSS helps parents establish paternity, file a support order, and receive payment after orders have been set.<sup>4</sup> Noncustodial fathers who are unable to pay their child support awards are eligible to participate in Georgia's Fatherhood Program, created by DCSS. This program offers educational opportunities, training, life-skills development, workforce preparation, comprehensive services, and job-search assistance to parents to increase their ability to pay child support.<sup>5</sup>

### Child-Support Enforcement

Georgia employs a number of enforcement remedies against noncustodial parents who do not pay child support. The state can seize child support payments from wages, unemployment or workers' compensation benefits, tax refunds, lottery winnings, and bank accounts. In addition, the state may place liens on property, report the parent's unpaid payments to credit bureaus, file contempt-of-court actions, and suspend driver's, professional, or other licenses. When a parent is more than \$5,000 in arrears, the state may also suspend or revoke the parent's passport.

As of May 31, 2012, the Social Security Act requires the use of the Income Withholding for Support (IWO) form for all cases in which a parent has been ordered by the court to pay child support through income withholding.<sup>6</sup>

### Policies to Enhance Fathers' Economic Stability

Georgia offers Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), with a lifetime limit of 48-months. Parents receiving financial assistance must participate in full-time work activities, although training and education may fulfill this requirement for some parents.<sup>7</sup>



## References

<sup>1</sup> To learn more about the Family and Medical Leave Act, see <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>.

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about establishing paternity for a child in Georgia, see <http://ocss.dhs.georgia.gov/paternity-establishment>.

<sup>3</sup> To learn more about child custody, see <http://georgia.gov/popular-topic/learning-about-child-custody>.

<sup>4</sup> To learn more about the child support process, see <http://dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/child-support-process>.

<sup>5</sup> To learn more about the fatherhood program, see <http://dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/fatherhood-program>.

<sup>6</sup> To learn more about withholding income for child support, see <http://dcss.dhs.georgia.gov/income-withholding-support-0>.

<sup>7</sup> To learn more about Georgia's TANF program, see <http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/temporary-assistance-needy-families>.