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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Medicaid and PeachCare Appeal Manual Will
Increase Access to Healthcare for Georgia’s Children**
**Manatt and Polsinelli provided pro bono support to help guide attorneys through
complicated health care appeals**

ATLANTA (February 23, 2021)—The majority of the almost two million Georgians enrolled in Medicaid and PeachCare health coverage are children. Their families rely on this coverage to access behavioral health supports and services that help their children thrive. When Medicaid or PeachCare deny a claim for services, the overly complicated appeals process prevents many families and caregivers from appealing. As a result, their children don’t get the physical and mental health services they need.

“Children who need services are often denied coverage. This is particularly true with mental health services,” says Vicky Kimbrell, Family Law Specialist with Georgia Legal Services Program, a nonprofit that provides direct legal services for people with low incomes. As part of her job, she and other lawyers regularly deal with cases of denied coverage, which can be challenging because Medicaid law is so complex.

To address this challenge, Georgia Appleseed published **Getting Kids the Care They Need: PeachCare and Medicaid Appeals Manual for Attorneys** to guide advocates in clear, straightforward language through the steps to file a successful appeal.

“Having a manual that lawyers can easily refer to is incredibly helpful,” says Kimbrell, especially when Medicaid law isn’t their primary area of practice.

Pro bono support from firms **Manatt** and **Polsinelli** was critical in the creation and publication of the manual. In addition to extensive legal research, pro bono lawyers interviewed Georgia advocates who have direct experience with the appeals process.

“This manual gives advocates the tools they need to identify the appropriate procedures and strategic considerations in each scenario,” says Julian Polaris, who led the team at Manatt. “Through these appeal processes, advocates and families can make sure that children receive all the benefits they’re entitled to under Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids.”

"Access to health care—both physical and mental—is a social justice issue," says Georgia Appleseed Executive Director Michael Waller. "Ensuring Georgia's children have access to needed health care will help begin to address the existing disparities. This manual is a step in that direction."

To learn more and get a copy of *Getting Kids the Care They Need*, visit <https://bit.ly/MedicaidAppeals>. To learn more about Georgia Appleseed, visit GaAppleseed.org.

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About Georgia Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Georgia Appleseed advances justice for all Georgia's children, with a particular focus on children experiencing poverty, children with disabilities, and children who experience the effects of institutional bias and racism. Justice requires that every child has access to strong, nurturing schools and a healthy home.