

A CDA credential is a nationally-recognized credential awarded to qualified caregivers who work with children from birth to age 5. You can earn a CDA with an emphasis on center-based preschool, center-based infant-toddler or family child care.

Individuals who earn the credential must:

- be 18 or older.
- hold a high school diploma or equivalent.
- have 480 hours of experience working with children within the past 5 years.
- complete 120 hours of education in 8 topic areas within the past 5 years.
- develop a professional resource file.
- demonstrate their ability to nurture children's physical, social emotional and intellectual growth in a child development framework.

Here is an overview of the steps involved in earning a CDA through the direct assessment method. You, as the CDA candidate, take charge of the process yourself. We have information, timelines and training courses to help you, but you are in charge of your own professional development.

- You send for a CDA application packet from the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.
- You attend and verify 120 hours of training in 8 areas of training specialization.
- You develop a professional resource file.
- You develop six statements of competency.
- You send out and collect Parent Opinion Questionnaires.
- You work with an advisor and set times for observations and feedback.
- You complete the final application form.
- You meet with a CDA Representative who interviews you, administers a written assessment and reviews your documentation of competence.

How The Child Care Network Can Help You Earn Your CDA

Training specific to earning the CDA Credential is offered through SACCN. The 10-month program runs from February through December. It includes:

- ❖ workshops in the 13 CDA Functional Area topics
- ❖ development of a CDA portfolio, including the professional resource file
- ❖ the on-site observation/assessment
- ❖ individualized technical assistance in CDA readiness

Why would anyone want to pursue a CDA Credential?

Earning the prestigious CDA Credential helps you as a child care provider:

- ❖ Build your confidence
- ❖ Know what you're doing
- ❖ Find refreshing, new perspectives

- ❖ Give yourself an edge
- ❖ Make new friends
- ❖ Earn OCFS training hours