

CDA INFORMATION FACT SHEET

What is CDA?

- The Child Development Associate (CDA), a national credentialing program, is a competency-based credential awarded to individuals who work with young children. New Jersey licensing regulation recognizes the CDA credential as equal to the Group Teacher title.

Who is a CDA Candidate?

- A person who is eligible and is working towards the requirements for National Credential.

What do I need to be an eligible CDA candidate?

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have a High School diploma or equivalent. (waiver is available)
- Be able to speak, read and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA candidate
- Documented 480 hours direct experience working with children

What do I have to do to become a CDA?

- **Course work is comprised of 120 clock hours of study in the following eight subject areas listed below:**
 1. Planning a safe, healthy learning environment.
 2. Steps to advance children's physical and intellectual development.
 3. Positive ways to support children's social and emotional development
 4. Strategies to establish productive relationships with families
 5. Strategies to manage an effective program operation
 6. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism
 7. Observing and recording children's behavior
 8. Principles of child growth and development
- **There are four components of the final assessment:**
 1. The CDA Professional Resource File includes a collection of 17 reference items that relate to the candidate's work, written competency statements, and an autobiography.
 2. Parent Opinion Questionnaires provide feedback from parents of children in the Candidate's classroom.
 3. The CDA Observation Instrument is used to record observation of the candidate's skills while working with children and families
 4. The council assigns a trained early childhood professional to administer a written exam. This person will conduct an oral interview and check the Professional Resource File, the formal Observation, and the Parent Questionnaires. A committee of the Council conducts a review of all materials and makes a decision regarding the credential award

Where can I obtain the required 120 clock hours of study?

All the formal education hours must be under the auspices of an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. The education could be for college credit or for no credit. Training obtained at conferences or from individual consultants is not acceptable. Such agencies or organizations include, but are not limited to;

1. Four-year colleges and universities
2. Two-year junior and community colleges
3. Vocational and technical schools
4. Resource and Referral agencies
5. Divisions of state or federal governments, or all branches of the U.S. Military Services
6. Early childhood education/child care programs that sponsor training, such as Head Start, U.S. Army Child and Family services or school districts

Where can I get CDA Training?

- Local Colleges, Local Unified Child Care Agency for training resources or call the:
Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
2460 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
1-800-424-4310 or 202-265-9090
1-800-224-8103 to order CDA material