

Introduction to the Child Development Associate Credential

CDA



Marshann Snyder, Ph.D.
Fairfax County Institute for Early Learning
Office for Children
Department of Family Services

marshann.snyder@fairfaxcounty.gov

What is the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential ?

- A national professional development credentialing program.
- Administered by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition headquartered in Washington, D.C.

www.cdacouncil.org or 800-424-4310

- Self-paced and candidate driven.



The CDA Credential is awarded to individuals who:

- Complete the National CDA requirements.
- Demonstrate early childhood education competence working with children ages birth to 5 years old.



Benefits of CDA

- Qualification for entry level employment.
- Recognized in Virginia's early childhood professional development system.
- Applies to coursework credit for an Associate Degree (2 year degree) in most community colleges.



Eligibility Requirements

- Hold a high school diploma, have a GED, or be currently enrolled in a high school career/technical program in early childhood education or child development.
- Fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA-credentialed professional.
- Complete 120 hours of early childhood education prior to the completion of the application.



Education

- 120 hours of formal early childhood education.
- Education must be obtained through a professional organization/agency with expertise in early childhood education.
- At least ten (10) hours of formal early childhood education must be in each of the 8 subject areas = 80 hours (part of the 120 hours).



Eight Subject Areas

1. Planning a safe and healthy learning environment.
2. Advancing children's physical and intellectual development.
3. Supporting children's social and emotional development.
4. Building productive relationships with families.
5. Managing an effective program.
6. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
7. Observing and recording children's behavior.
8. Understanding principles of child development and learning.

Which CDA credential is for you?

- Center-based Infant/Toddler (birth-36 months)
- Center-based Preschool (3-5 years)
- Family Child Care (birth-5 years)

Bilingual Specialization: A bilingual credential is available in any of the three settings.



Experience Needed

- In the previous three (3) years, the candidate must have at least 480 hours of experience working with children in the same age group and setting.



Quality Standards = Competency Standards

- The CDA Council has developed Universal Standards of Quality which are called Competency Standards.
- It is important to know these standards as they are the criteria used to evaluate early care and learning professionals.
- The Standards relate directly to the experiences of young children.



CDA Competency Standards I and II

I. To establish a safe, healthy learning environment.

1. Safe
2. Healthy
3. Learning Environment

II. To advance physical and intellectual competence.

4. Physical
5. Cognitive
6. Communication
7. Creative



CDA Competency Standards III and IV

III. To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance.

- 8. Self
- 9. Social
- 10. Guidance

IV. To establish positive and productive relationships with families.

- 11. Families



CDA Competency Standards V and VI

V. To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs.

12. Program Management

VI. To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

13. Professionalism



Family Questionnaires

- A Family Questionnaire is provided in the CDA Competency Standards book which is something you will purchase when you begin the CDA process.
- Each family with a child in your care will be asked to complete a questionnaire.
- Family questionnaires must be completed within the 6 months before you submit your CDA application.



Professional Portfolio

- Transcripts, Certificates
(documentation of professional education)
- Reflective Statements of Competence



Professional Portfolio

- Resource Collection
 - First aid/Pediatric CPR card
 - Meal and snack menus
 - Weekly plan
 - Learning experiences and activities
 - Bibliography of developmentally appropriate children's books
 - Family resource guide
 - Record-keeping forms
 - Regulation information
 - Professional organizations
 - Legal requirements
- Professional Philosophy Statement

Application

- Application may be submitted any time of year.
- Identify a CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist and obtain Identification Number.
- Submit the CDA Application to the Council and pay the Assessment Fee of \$325 (9/1/13 \$425).



The Professional Development Specialist

There are four ways to find a Professional Development Specialist.

- If you know someone who has completed a CDA, you could ask that person to share the name of his or her PD Specialist. You would then need to contact that PD Specialist to see if she/he would be willing to be your PD Specialist.
- If you know someone who is a respected early childhood professional in your community, you could ask that person to become a PD Specialist. If that person agrees, he/she will need to complete the requirements to serve in that role.
- You can go directly to the CDA Council website and use their online directory to find a PD Specialist in your area.
- You can call the Council (800-424-4310) for assistance.

Ready to Schedule (to be completed within 6 months)

- **Verification Visit**
 - Conducted by the CDA Professional Development Specialist who was selected by the candidate.
 - Candidate presents Professional Portfolio and Competency Standards book.
- **CDA Exam**



The Verification Visit

- The Professional Development Specialist reviews the Candidate's Professional Portfolio.
- The PD Specialist conducts a formal observation of the Candidate working with the children.
- The PD Specialist and Candidate Engage in Reflective Dialogue.



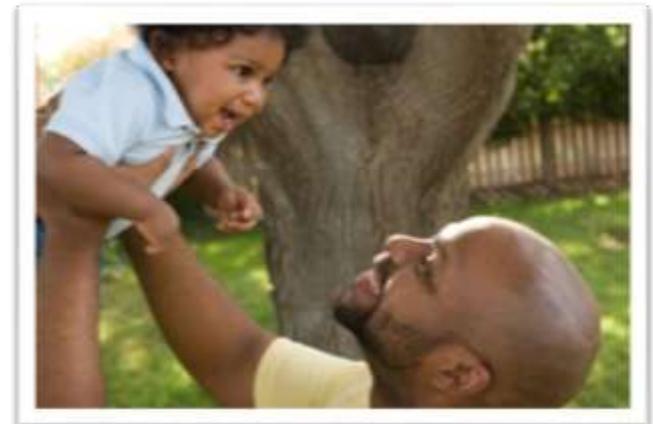
After the Verification Visit

After the Verification Visit, the Professional Development Specialist submits the Candidate's Competency Scores to the Council.



The CDA Exam

- Exam may be taken before or after the Verification Visit.
- The CDA Exam includes 65 multiple choice questions related to early childhood knowledge.
 - Includes 5 photo-scenario questions



The CDA Exam Testing Centers

PearsonVue is the Council's partner for delivering the CDA Exam at testing centers all over the country.

- The only computer-based skill needed is the ability to respond to the questions.
- Testing center locations can be found online at:

www.pearsonvue.com/cdaexam



Credentialing

- ❑ The Competency Scores (submitted by the PD Specialist after the Verification Visit) and the Exam Score are combined by the Council for a final Cumulative Score.
- ❑ The Cumulative Score will determine the credentialing decision.
- ❑ A written document from the Council will verify that the Candidate has met (or not met) the CDA Standards and earned the CDA Credential.



The CDA Credential

- Valid for three (3) years from the date of the award.
- Must be renewed within three (3) years to maintain the CDA Credential.



Contact Information for the Council for Professional Recognition

Website: www.cdacouncil.org

Toll-free Telephone: 800-424-4310

Local (DC) Telephone: 202-265-9000

Certificates

If you participated in tonight's Webinar for at least 45 minutes, your Webinar certificate will be emailed to you within the next few days.

Please print your Webinar certificate when you receive it at your email address and keep it in your file to show to your licensing specialist.