

Congratulations on beginning the Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing process!

The following steps will help you to understand how you can obtain your CDA Credential.

Step 1: Prepare

Any Time Before You Apply

- High School Education
- Professional Education – 120 clock hours, including 10 hours in each of the 8 CDA Subject Areas

Within Three Years of Submitting Application

- Work Experience – 480 hours of experience working with children ages 3-5

Within Six Months of Submitting Application

- Family Questionnaires
- Professional Portfolio

Step 2: Apply

- Identify a CDA Professional Development Specialist and obtain her or his Identification Number
- Secure your director's permission for your Verification Visit
- Submit the CDA application to the Council and pay the assessment fee

Step 4: Earn

- Earn your CDA Credential

Step 3: Demonstrate

Once the Council has approved your application and processed your payment, you must schedule and complete the following:

- Your Verification Visit
- Your CDA Exam

Step 5: Renew

- Renew your CDA Credential
- Earn a second CDA Credential

In this class, you will begin compiling your Professional Portfolio and tracking your Professional Education and Work Experience hours. Assignments to complete your portfolio may not be given in the order listed here, but it will be your personal responsibility to organize your Professional Portfolio in accordance with these guidelines prior to applying for your CDA Credential.

Professional Portfolio

The Professional Portfolio is intended to be a reflective professional development experience for you. You are encouraged to use and add to your Portfolio as you grow throughout your career.

Your Professional Portfolio must include:

1. The *My CDA Professional Portfolio* cover sheet (*The Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program and CDA Competency Standards Preschool Edition*, pg. 131). This cover sheet provides greater details on the specific order of portfolio components and can be used as a checklist as you build your Portfolio to ensure that your completed Portfolio contains all of the required contents.
2. The *Summary of My CDA Education* cover sheet (pg. 133) followed by your transcripts, certificates, letters, tracking sheets, etc.
3. The *Family Questionnaires* cover sheet (pg. 135-136) followed by your completed family questionnaires (pg. 137).
4. Six Reflective Statements of Competence, followed by the related Resource Collection items, as outlined on the *My CDA Professional Portfolio* cover sheet
5. Your Professional Philosophy Statement, which summarizes your professional viewpoint and may take into account new ideas you learned during the building of your Portfolio.

RC I-1 CPR and First Aid Training

Include your valid and current certificates of completion or cards from a) any **first aid course** and b) an **infant/child (pediatric) CPR course** offered by a nationally-recognized training organization (such as American Red Cross or the American Heart Association). Online training is not acceptable.

- ❖ Make a copy of your certificate and place it on or behind this page. When the CDA council does your evaluation, they will want to see your original certificate.

RC I-2 Weekly Menu

Provide a copy of **one weekly menu** for Preschoolers. In order to complete your related Reflective Competency Statement on this topic, the menu would ideally be one that you have participated in serving to and/or designing for children.

Weekly Menu					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast					
Lunch					
Snack					

RC I-3 Weekly Lesson Plans

Provide samples of your **weekly lesson plans** that include goals for children's learning and development and brief descriptions of planned learning experiences. Indicate the age group for which the plan is intended.

❖ Place at least 3 professional looking preschool lesson plans with evaluations behind this page.

Preschool Special Needs Accommodations

Complete a written explanation below for 2 of your chosen lesson plans that explains how you will provide accommodations for children with special needs (whether for children you currently serve or may serve in the future).

1. Lesson Theme: _____

2. Lesson Theme: _____

RC II Learning Experiences

In your words, describe nine **learning experiences** (activities) that cover each of the following areas:

RC II-1 Science/Sensory

RC II-2 Language and Literacy

RC II-3 Creative Arts

RC II-4 Fine Motor (Indoor Activity)

RC II-5 Gross Motor (Outdoor Activity)

RC II-6 Self Concept

RC II-7 Emotional Skills/Regulation

RC II-8 Social Skills

RC II-9 Mathematics

Optional: Music and Movement

- ❖ These should be, but may not be limited to, activities you have planned and used in past lessons. **You may either write your descriptions in the spaces provided or include copies of your lesson plans that fit each of the nine areas.**

- ❖ **For each experience, indicate the age group (3s, 4s, or 5s) and list the intended goals, materials and processes/teaching strategies. For each activity, discuss why it is developmentally appropriate for that age group.**

- ❖ **It is best to include a Visual/Sample/Picture of your activity and place it in an optional, but preferred, plastic sheet cover.**

Resource II-1 Science/Sensory

Activity

Age Group

Objective

Materials Needed

Process and Teaching Strategies

How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?

Resource II-2 Language and Literacy	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

Resource II-3 Creative Arts	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

Resource II-4 Fine Motor (Indoor Activity)

Activity

Age Group

Objective

Materials Needed

Process and Teaching Strategies

How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?

Resource II-5 Gross Motor (Outdoor Activity)	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

Resource II-6 Self Concept	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

Resource II-7 Emotional Skills/Regulation

Activity

Age Group

Objective

Materials Needed

Process and Teaching Strategies

How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?

Resource II-8 Social Skills	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

Resource II-9 Mathematics	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

(Optional) Music and Movement	
Activity	Age Group
Objective	
Materials Needed	
Process and Teaching Strategies	
How is this activity Developmentally Appropriate?	

RC III **Developmentally Appropriate Books**

Create a **bibliography** that includes the titles, authors, publishers, copyright dates, and short summaries of ten developmentally appropriate children’s books that you have used with young children. Each book should support a different topic related to children’s lives and challenges.

Subjects you might consider addressing include:

Cultural and linguistic group identity; gender identity; children with special needs; separation, divorce, remarriage, or family structures; phases of the cycle of life from human reproduction to death; other topics that reflect the children and families with whom you work.

1. **Title of the Book** _____
Author _____
Publisher: _____ **Copyright date** _____
Short Summary of the age-appropriate children’s book:

What area of a child’s life does this book support and explain how:

2. **Title of the Book** _____
Author _____
Publisher: _____ **Copyright date** _____
Short Summary of the age-appropriate children’s book:

What area of a child’s life does this book support and explain how:

3. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

4. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

5. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

6. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

7. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

8. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

9. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:

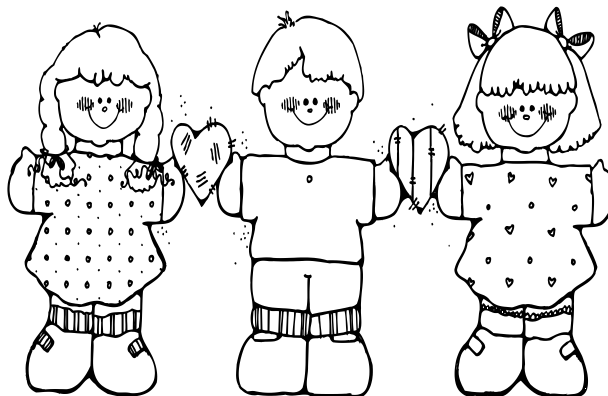
10. Title of the Book _____

Author _____

Publisher: _____ Copyright date _____

Short Summary of the age-appropriate children's book:

What area of a child's life does this book support and explain how:



RC IV Family Resources Guide

Create a **Family Resources Guide** that you might choose to share with the families you serve. The guide should include helpful working information you think they might need. At a minimum, you must include the following required items. Add any other items that children within your care might also need.

- **Resource IV-1 Family Counseling**

Provide the contact information (agency name, phone number, website, address, etc.) of a local agency in the community where you work that provides family counseling.

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- **Resource IV-2 Translation Service**

Find out contact information (agency name, phone number, website, address, etc.) of a translation service for families whose home language is other than English as well as a service that provides American Sign Language translation.

Translation Service where the home language is other than English:
Service for American Sign Language Translation:

▪ **Resource IV-3 Children with Disabilities**

Obtain contact information (agency name, phone number, website, address, etc.) for at least two agencies in the community that provide resources and services for children with disabilities (in most communities, the local school district provides these services).

1.	2.
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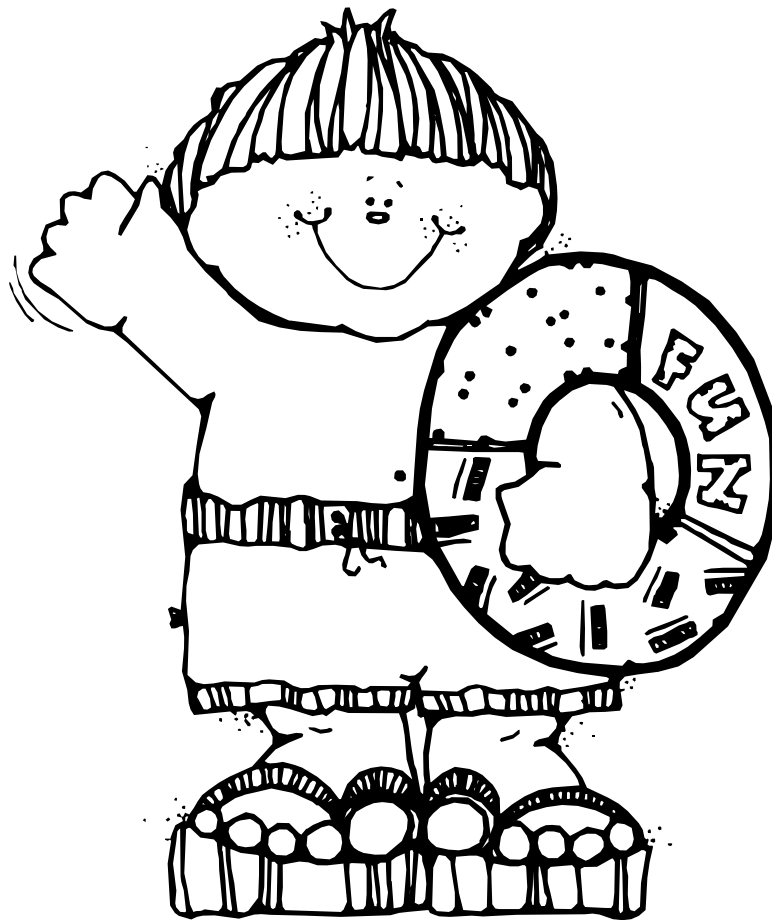
▪ **Resource IV-4 Child Development Resources**

Provide a list of 3 or more websites, and brief descriptions of each, that provide current information to help families understand how young children, ages 3- 5 years old, develop and learn. Include one current article from each website.

Web sites must contain articles that help families understand the development and learning of 3-5 year olds. At least one article must relate to child guidance.

Source #1
Source #2
Source #3
Source #4 (Optional)

- ❖ Print off and place your THREE Resource IV-4 articles on how young children develop and learn **BEHIND** this page.
- ❖ Remember that one of the three articles must relate to child guidance.



Place your THREE Resource IV-4 articles on how young children develop and learn HERE

RC V Record Keeping Forms

Provide three samples of **record keeping forms** that you use or have used. Include an accident report form, an emergency form, and a completed tool or form that you have used to observe for and document a child's developmental / learning progress (**DO NOT INCLUDE CHILD'S NAME**).

- ❖ Place the three samples of record keeping forms behind this page.
 - ✓ Accident Report
 - ✓ Emergency Form
 - ✓ Completed Observation Form



Place your three RC V samples of record keeping forms HERE

RC VI-1 Child Care Regulations

Provide the contact information (agency name, website, phone number, address, etc.) of your state's agency that is responsible for **the regulation of child care centers and family child care homes**. These regulations are available at the website of the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care:

(<http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>).

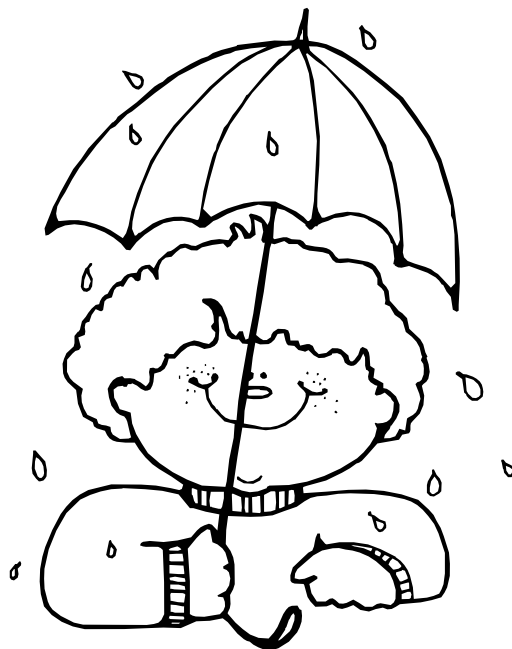
- **Qualification Requirements for Personnel**

Print a copy of the section that describes qualification requirements for personnel (include: teachers, directors, and assistants).

- **Ratio Requirements**

Print off information that states the group size and adult-child ratio requirements.

❖ Print off and place your Qualification Requirements and Ratio Requirements behind this page.



RC VI-2 Early Childhood Associations

List two or three **early childhood associations** (national, regional, state, or local) and include website addresses, and describe the professional resources and membership opportunities they each offer.

Early Childhood Association #1 - Include website addresses and describe the professional resources and membership opportunities they each offer.

Early Childhood Association #2 - Include website addresses and describe the professional resources and membership opportunities they each offer.

Early Childhood Association #3 - Include website addresses and describe the professional resources and membership opportunities they each offer.

RC VI-3 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Provide summaries of the **legal requirements** in your state regarding child abuse and neglect (including contact information for the appropriate agency in your state) and Mandatory Reporting Guidelines.

- **State Agency for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

Identify the contact information (agency name, phone number, website, address, etc.) of the state agency to whom you would report child abuse and neglect.

- **Mandatory Reporting Guidelines**

Explain the mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting guidelines for your state.

Prepare six written reflections on your own teaching practices. Each Reflective Statement must relate directly to one of the six Competency Standards. Many of the Statements will require the use of specific Resources from your *Resource Collection*, as the focus of that written reflection. Each statement should be no more than **500 words** in length.

Begin your reflective statement about each Competency Statement with a paragraph describing how your teaching practices meet the Standard. (Note: alternatively, you may also choose to write one paragraph for each Functional Area, if this makes it easier to express your thoughts more clearly.)

Then write at least one paragraph on each of the Resource Collection or Competency Standard requirements that follow.

Competency Standard I: To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment

CDA Competency Standard I	Functional Areas	Definitions
I. To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment	1. Safe 2. Healthy 3. Learning Environment	1. Candidate provides a safe environment and teaches children safe practices to prevent and reduce injuries. 2. Candidate provides an environment that promotes health and prevents illness, and teaches children about good nutrition and practices that promote wellness. 3. Candidate organizes and uses relationships, the physical space, materials, daily schedule, and routines to create a secure, interesting, and enjoyable environment that promotes engagement, play, exploration, and learning of all children including children with disabilities and special needs.

I will

CS I a Sample Menu (from RC I-2)

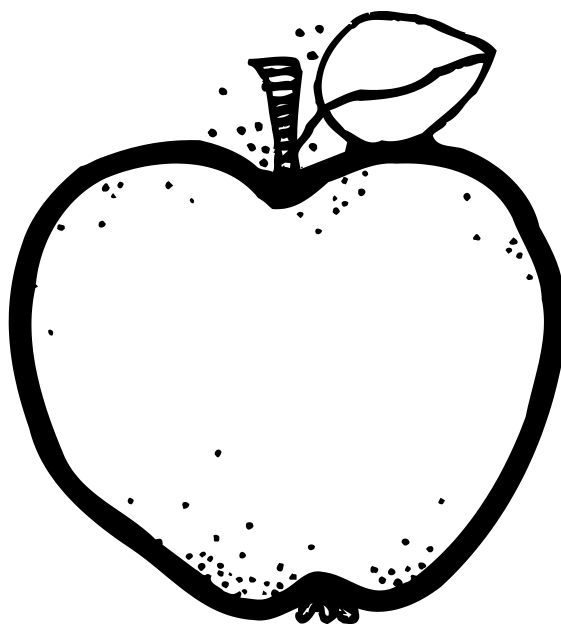
Reflect on the sample menu for *Resource Collection I-2* that you participated in serving and/or designing: If you designed the menu, how does it reflect your commitment to children’s nutritional needs? If you served the menu but did not design it, what are its strengths and/or what would you change?

CS I b Room Environment

Reflect on the room environment in which your Verification Visit Observation will occur: How does the room design reflect the way you believe young children learn best? If the room was not designed by you, what do you see as its strengths and/or what would you change?

CS I c Weekly Plan (from RC I-3)

Reflect on the weekly plan you included in your *Resource Collection I-3*. How does this plan reflect your philosophy of what young children need on a weekly basis? If the plan was not designed by you, what do you see as its strengths and/or what would you change?



Competency Standard II: To advance physical and intellectual competence

CDA Competency Standard II	Functional Areas	Definitions
<p>II. To advance physical and intellectual competence</p>	<p>4. Physical 5. Cognitive 6. Communication 7. Creative</p>	<p>4. Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate equipment, learning experiences, and teaching strategies to promote the physical development (fine and gross motor) of all children.</p> <p>5. Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies to promote curiosity, reasoning, and problem solving, and to lay the foundation for all later learning. Candidate implements curriculum that promotes children’s learning of important mathematics, science, technology, social studies, and other content goals.</p> <p>6. Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies to promote children’s language and early literacy learning and help them communicate their thoughts and feelings verbally and nonverbally. Candidate helps dual-language learners make progress in understanding and speaking both English and their home language.</p> <p>7. Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies for children to explore music, movement, and the visual arts, and to develop and express their creative abilities.</p>
<p>I will</p>		

CS II a Learning Experiences (from RC II)

Pick one of the nine learning experiences you chose for your *Resource Collection II*. How does this experience reflect your personal philosophy of how you support young children's **physical** development?

CS II b Learning Experiences (from RC II)

Pick another one of the nine learning experiences you chose for your *Resource Collection II*. How does this experience reflect your personal philosophy of how you support young children's **cognitive** development?

CS II c Learning Experiences (from RC II)

Pick a third learning experience you chose for your *Resource Collection II*. How does this experience reflect your personal philosophy of how you support young children's **creative** development?

CS II d Communication and Language Development

Describe ways to promote the communication and language development among all children including dual language learners.

Competency Standard III: To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance

CDA Competency Standard III	Functional Areas	Definitions
<p>III. To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance</p>	<p>8. Self 9. Social 10. Guidance</p>	<p>8. Candidate develops a warm, positive, supportive, and responsive relationship with each child, and helps each child learn about and take pride in their own individual and cultural identity. 9. Candidate helps each child function effectively in the group, learn to express feelings, acquire social skills, and make friends, and promotes mutual respect among children and adults. 10. Candidate provides a supportive environment and uses effective strategies to promote children’s self-regulation and support acceptable behaviors, and effectively intervenes for children with persistent challenging behaviors.</p>

I will

CS III a Developing Children’s Self-Concept

Describe some of the ways you support the development of children’s positive self-concepts and growing social/emotional skills.

CS III b Guiding Young Children’s Behavior

Reflect on your personal philosophy of guiding young children’s POSITIVE behaviors. How is your professional philosophy similar or different from how you were guided as a child? How do you constructively deal with young children’s *challenging* behaviors?

Competency Standard IV: To establish positive and productive relationships with families

CDA Competency Standard IV	Functional Areas	Definitions
IV. To establish positive and productive relationships with families.	11. Families	11. Candidate establishes a positive, responsive, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, engages in two-way communication with families, encourages their involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with his or her family.

I will

CS IV a Communication with Families

How do you ensure that families are kept aware of what's happening in their child's daily/weekly life in your program?

CS IV b Awareness of Children's Home Life

How do you ensure that you are aware of what's happening in each child's home life? How does that awareness direct your teaching practices?

CS IV c Family Questionnaires Feedback

Reflect on the feedback you received in the *Family Questionnaires* you collected. Explain how the responses surprised you, confirmed your own reflections about yourself and/or gave you a new goal for professional growth.



Competency Standard V: To ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is responsive to participant needs

CDA Competency Standard V	Functional Areas	Definitions
V. To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs	12. Program Management	12. Candidate is a manager who uses observation, documentation, and planning to support children's development and learning and to ensure effective operation of the classroom or group. The Candidate is a competent organizer, planner, record keeper, communicator, and a cooperative co-worker.

I will

CS V a Observation Tool (from RC V)

Describe how you used the observation tool/form from Resource Collection V.

Importance of Observation and Documentation

Explain why observation and documentation forms are an important part of program management.

Accurate Observations

How do you ensure that you are accurately and objectively observing and tracking each child's developmental and learning progress?

Competency Standard VI: To maintain a commitment to professionalism

CDA Competency Standard VI	Functional Areas	Definitions
VI. To maintain a commitment to professionalism	13. Professionalism	13. Candidate makes decisions based on knowledge of research-based early childhood practices, promotes high-quality in child care services, and takes advantage of opportunities to improve knowledge and competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

I will

CS VI a Early Childhood Professional

Reflect on why you choose to become an early childhood professional.

CS VI b Indicators of Professionalism

Reflect on what you believe are the most important indicators of professionalism that you possess.

Your goal is to summarize your professional beliefs and values about early childhood education.

Identify your personal values and beliefs around teaching and learning: How do you believe young children learn? Based on this, explain what you believe your role is as their teacher/caregiver. Beyond teaching and learning, reflect and write about what you believe are the other important aspects of your role in the lives of children and families.

No more than 2 pages. Write or type this statement in the boxes on the following pages.

Place your Tracking Sheets HERE

Place your Tracking Sheets HERE