What is a CDA?

A child development associate is an individual who has successfully completed a CDA assessment and has been awarded the CDA Credential. S/he is able to meet the specific needs of children and works with parents and other adults to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth in a child development framework.

A CDA is an individual who has demonstrated competence in her/his ability to meet the CDA Competency Goals through her/his work in a center-based, home visitor or family child care program. In addition, an individual who has demonstrated competence in meeting bilingual CDA criteria is a CDA with a Bilingual Specialization.

Vision Statement

Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development System

All Early Childhood Professionals in Arkansas value a coordinated professional development system based on research and best practice, containing high quality training experiences, allowing the development of career pathways to meet diverse needs of individuals.

CDA Credential: Who in Arkansas will benefit?

Benefits For Children

Many family child care providers open their doors to children totally unprepared. Reading and workshops are wonderful but these providers still needed the more in-depth "How To" information on how children learn, organization of materials, and how to set up the learning environment. CDA gives these providers hands-on support that is very much needed.

Jo Battle
***Resource/Referral Education and Childcare Help R.E.A.C.H., Jonesboro**

Benefits For Families

"CDA gives the new teachers the knowledge of child development and the confidence needed to begin a career in early childhood education."

Bill Mandrell, Director
The New School, Fayetteville

Benefits For Early Care And Education Programs

"Working on my CDA credential gave me the opportunity to receive great ideas that I could immediately take back and use in my center. I became more aware of the resources that are available to me as a teacher and was able to network with other early childhood professionals in the state."

Becky Johns, Teacher
Play School, Harrisburg

Benefits For Communities

"CDA training has become important for professional development in many child care centers in Northwest Arkansas. CDA has a positive effect on directors, family daycare home providers, and preschool teachers who learn much about child development, health and safety issues, and professionalism."

Karen Beaton, President
Northwest Arkansas Early Childhood Association

How do I become a CDA?

To become a CDA you must meet these eligibility requirements:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Hold a high school diploma or GED
- Have 480 hours of experience working with children within the past five years
- Have completed 120 clock hours of formal child care education in the eight CDA subject areas

Select a CDA Setting.

Persons wishing to seek a CDA Credential must select one of the following settings for CDA Assessment:

- **Center-based preschool** – licensed or registered child care center serving children aged 3 through 5 years
- **Center based infant/toddler setting** – licensed or registered child care center serving children aged under 3
- **Family child care setting** – licensed or registered family child care home serving children 5 years old or younger
- **Home visitor setting** – program in which regular home visits are the primary method of program delivery
- **Bilingual setting** – child care program that has specific goals for achieving bilingual development in children and in which two languages are consistently used in daily activities

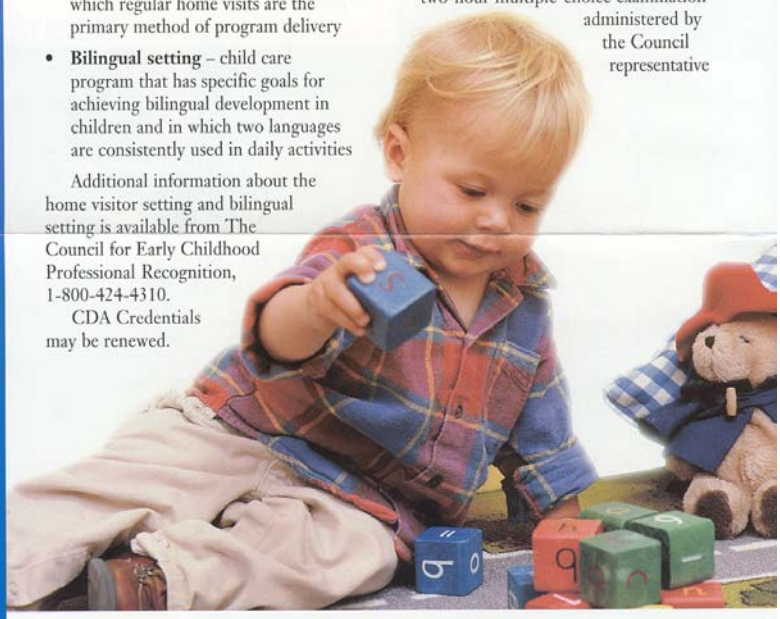
Additional information about the home visitor setting and bilingual setting is available from The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, 1-800-424-4310.

CDA Credentials may be renewed.

Document and Demonstrate Competence.

This information is in reference to the center-based and family child care setting only.

- **Complete a professional resource file** – a collection of reference materials related to candidate's work
- **Collect parent opinion questionnaires** – feed-back from parents with children in the candidate's classroom or family child care home
- **Be observed by an advisor using the CDA Assessment Observation Instrument** – recorded observations of the candidate's skills while working with children and families as the primary caregiver
- **Participate in an oral interview** – interview conducted by a Council-trained representative to evaluate the candidate's skills and knowledge of good early child care practices
- **Complete a written assessment** – a two-hour multiple-choice examination administered by the Council representative



Be a part of the Arkansas Earl

CDA SUBJECT AREAS

- Planning a safe, healthy learning environment.
- Steps to advance children's physical and intellectual development.
- Positive ways to support children's social and emotional development.
- Strategies to establish productive relationships with families.
- Strategies to manage an effective program operation.
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
- Observing and recording children's behavior.
- Principles of child growth and development.

Scholarships help pay for CDA courses and CDA assessment fees.

CDA Training Scholarships Available

Are you interested in a CDA Credential? Do you wish to receive a scholarship? Check out what to do.

✔ **Meet these scholarships requirements.**

- Have been employed at the same licensed or registered child care facility for at least six months

  OR

- Have completed Child Care Orientation Training (CCOT) or Director's Orientation

  AND

- Be recommended by the owner/director of the program in which you are employed

✔ **Review the list of approved CDA Training Institutions.**

These approved institutions...

- are qualified to receive CDA scholarship funds
- employ experienced and knowledgeable CDA instructors
- offer college credits or CEUs for CDA training

✔ **Select an approved CDA Training Institution.**

✔ **Request CDA training information from the Institution.**

Are you ready to enroll in CDA training? Check out what to do.

✔ **Apply for a CDA scholarship.**

To apply for a CDA Scholarship, contact the Division of Child Care and Early Education and let them know you need an application for CDA classes.

✔ **Complete the scholarship application. Return it to...**

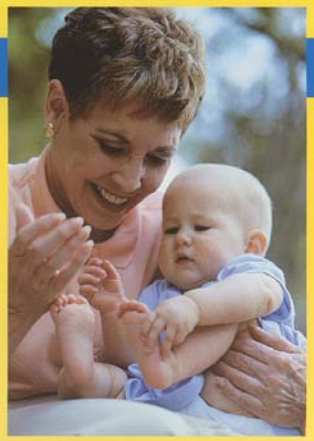
The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
101 East Capitol, Suite 106
Little Rock, AR 72201

501-682-9699 or 1-800-445-3316
FAX: 501-682-4897
www.state.ar.us/childcare/

Childhood Professional Development System

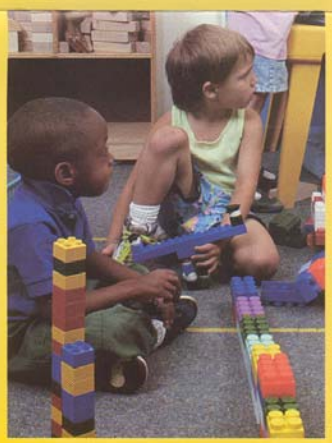
Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care and
Early Childhood Education
101 East Capitol, Suite 106
Little Rock, AR 72201

Become a Child Development Associate (CDA)



You can make a difference in the early care and education of young children in Arkansas.

Be a part of the Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development System.



10 reasons to be a CDA in Arkansas

1. National credential
2. Professional recognition
3. Connection to other professionals
4. Code of ethical conduct
5. Early care and education training
6. Enhanced competence
7. Valued employee
8. Career mobility
9. Job satisfaction
10. Pathway to continued professional development