

## What is a CDA?

A CDA is an individual who has successfully completed CDA assessment and who 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.

The CDA has demonstrated competence in the CDA competency goals through her/his work in a center-based, military school-age children, family child care or home visitor program. The proof of their competencies is the CDA Credential.

Many child care facilities are encouraging their lead teachers to obtain their CDA Credential within a certain length of time after employment. Other child care facilities are requiring the CDA Credential before an individual can be hired as a lead teacher.

## The CDA Program

The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition (The Council) operates the CDA credentialing program as a major national effort to improve the quality of child care. Focusing on the skills of the child care providers, the program is designed to provide performance-based training, assessment and credentialing of child care staff, family child care providers, and home visitors.

To date, there are more than 200,000 CDAs across the country - in all 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. territories of Guam and the Virgin Islands. Texas proudly boasts more than 12,000 CDAs throughout the state.

The CDA Competency Standards are the core of the CDA program. They are statements of skills needed to be a competent caregiver and the basis upon which caregivers are assessed. Carefully developed by the early childhood profession, the standards set the criteria for a caregiver's performance with children and their families.

These standards are called Competency Goals, which are general statements that establish the framework for caregiver behavior. The Competency Standards are further defined into 13 Functional Areas. These areas describe the major tasks or functions caregivers must complete in order to carry out the competency goal.

The CDA credentialing program currently has two systems:

1. Direct Assessment
2. CDA Professional Preparations Program

## Child Development Associate Training at Central Texas College

This certificate is designed to prepare child care personnel for the CDA credential. It is also designed for students who meet CDA eligibility requirements and are currently working with young children in a group setting. After completion of the academic course requirements for the CDA Credential, students must follow all necessary channels required by the Council to attain a credential. All courses taken in this option will apply toward the A.A.S. degree, the Administrator's Credential and the Special Child Option Credential.

CDA	1317	CDA Training I	3
CDA	2322	CDA Training II	3
CDA	2324	CDA Training III	3

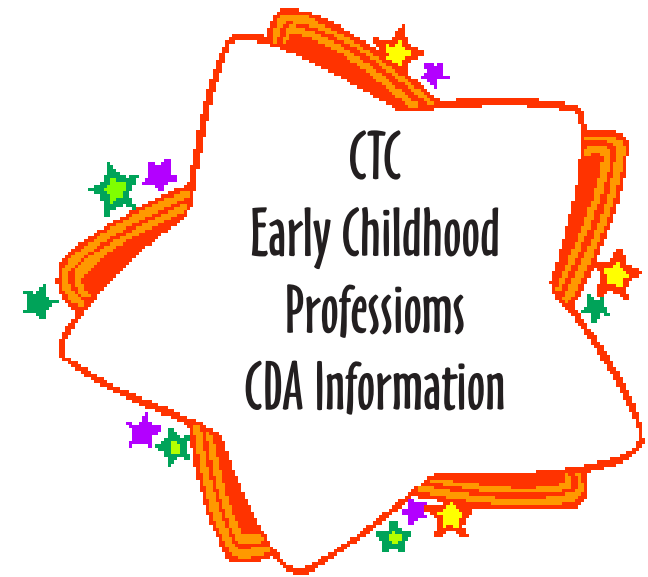
CTC Continuing Education offers a 120 hour non-credit course to meet the CDA training requirement (526-1586).

Child care providers completing their CDA can receive college credit toward their A.A.S. degree in Early Childhood Professions.

CDA credentials valid three years from award date, after which it may be renewed for five-year periods.

### For more information!

Early Childhood Professions  
Central Texas College  
P.O. Box 1800  
Killeen, Texas 76540-1800  
[www.ctcd.edu](http://www.ctcd.edu)  
1-800-792-3348, ext. 1900



Now is the  
time for you to  
become a child  
development  
associate star!

# CDA Credential by Direct Assessment

## Personal Requirements

- Be 18 years or older
- Hold a high school diploma or equivalent
- Be able to speak, read and write well enough to fulfill the responsibility of a CDA candidate
- Sign a statement of ethical conduct

## Setting Requirements

Requirements vary depending on the setting:

- Center-Based Preschool
- Center-Based Infant-Toddler
- Family Child Care
- Home Visitor
- Military School-age (MSA) (Special Education)

## Educational Requirements

Must have completed 120 clock hours of formal child care education in the past five years, with no fewer than 10 hours in eight subject areas. All formal education hours must be from an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. Workshops given at conferences are not acceptable.

## Subject Areas

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 manage an effective program option.
5. Strategies to establish positive relationships with families.
6. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
7. Observing and recording children's behavior.
8. Principles of child growth and development.

## Experience Requirements

Must have 480 hours of experience in the last five years of working with children in the designated setting in which you are applying for credentialing.

## Candidate's Application Form

Deadline Date	Assessments
Dec 1st	1st quarter - Jan., Feb., March
March 1st	2nd quarter - April, May, June
June 1st	3rd quarter - July, August, Sept.
September 1st	4th quarter - Oct., Nov., Dec.

## Documentation Requirements

- Professional Resource File (prepared by the candidate)
- Parent Opinion Questionnaires (collected by the candidate)
- Formal Observation (conducted by the Advisor)
- Early Childhood Studies Review (administered by the Council Representative)
- Oral Interview (conducted by the Council Representative)



## How Long Does It Take?

The Direct Assessment system is paced by the Candidate. Once formal education is complete, some take only a few months to prepare for assessment, others take longer. Much depends on how fast the Candidate complete the documentation needed for evaluation.

## If You Want to Apply to be a CDA

If you are interested in applying for the CDA credential through Direct Assessment and want an application packet, mail your request with \$18.00 (check or money order) plus \$5.00 shipping and handling to the Council: Council for Professional Recognition  
2460 16th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009-3575  
or  
credit card orders at  
1-800-424-4310 202-265-9090 FAX: 203-365-9161  
or online [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)

## How Much Does It Cost?

The cost for the CDA credentialing program, Direct Assessment, is \$325. The cost for the military school-age (MSA) is \$150.

## Competency Goals

1. To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.
2. To advance physical and intellectual competence.
3. To support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance.
4. To establish positive relationships with families.
5. To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs.
6. To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

# Steps in the Direct Assessment Process

1. Candidate contacts Council for Application Packet
2. Council sends to Candidate:
  - a. application form and fee schedule
  - b. schedule of assessment date
  - c. description of CDA Competency Standards and assessment procedures, and
  - d. assessment documentation materials and forms to be filled out.
3. Candidate prepares documentation of competence (Professional Resource File, Parent Opinion Questionnaires, Fomal Observation); Candidate submits fees and application form to the Council.
4. Council assigns a Council Rep to set up a date and time for written assessment and oral interview.
5. Candidate meets with Council Representative who:
  - a. conducts interview
  - b. administers written assessment, and
  - c. reviews documentation of competence.
6. Council Representative sends materials to Council for credentialing decision.
7. Council committee reviews documentation and issues/denies Credential. Council notifies candidate of results.

## 13 Functional Areas

- Safe
- Healthy
- Learning Environment
- Physical
- Cognitive
- Communication
- Creative
- Self
- Social
- Guidance
- Families
- Program Management
- Professionalism



## Do You Have Questions?

For more information on the CDA Credential call the CDA Hotline number, at 1-800-424-4310.