



Sheltering Arms

GEORGIA TRAINING INSTITUTE

385 Centennial Olympic Park Drive • Atlanta, GA 30313 • 404-523-9906 • FAX 404-523-9952

CDA benefits to participants

Cost \$1,200

Here's what you get when you take the CDA course at the Georgia Training Institute at Sheltering Arms:

- 120 hours of CDA specific training
- Materials and individualized instructional support to develop your Professional Resource File
- CDA Application Packet (CDA Assessment System and Competency Standards, Parent Opinion Questionnaires, CDA Assessment Observation Instrument)
- Direct observation of teachers working with children in model classrooms (3months – 5 years)
- Access to scholarship funds available from Bright from the Start for tuition and assessment fees
- Continental Breakfast and Lunch
- Free Parking/MARTA easily accessible

The power of education begins here.™

www.shelteringarmsforkids.com



The University of Georgia

Frequently Asked Questions about the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential

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◆ *What is a CDA?*

The *Child Development Associate (CDA)* is a nationally recognized credential for early care and education teachers, assistant teachers, family care providers and other caregivers who work directly with children from birth through age five. **The Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. is the only organization that can award a CDA Credential.** To read more about the Council for Professional Recognition, go to the following website: www.cdacouncil.org.

◆ *What are CDA Competency Standards?*

The *CDA Competency Standards* are the national standards used to evaluate a caregiver's performance with children and families during the CDA assessment process. The *Competency Standards* are divided into six Competency Goals, which are statements of a general purpose or goal for caregiver behavior. The Competency Goals apply to all child care settings.

The six goals are defined in more detail in the 13 Functional Areas, which describe the major tasks or functions that a caregiver must complete in order to carry out the Competency Goal. A Developmental Context, a brief overview of relevant child development principles, explains each Functional Area.

The CDA Competency Goals

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

◆ *Are there different types of CDA Credentials?*

There are four different *endorsements* of the CDA Credential: **Center-Based Pre-school, Center-Based Infant/Toddler, Home Visitor, and Family Child Care.** You may also choose to work toward a Spanish/English bilingual endorsement if your program serves Latino children and families, and you complete the requirements for a bilingual credential. Monolingual endorsements are available in Spanish for candidates who speak only Spanish.

◆ *Why should I earn a CDA Credential?*

Many early childhood care and education employers are encouraging and even requiring their employees to obtain at least a CDA Credential within a certain length of time before being hired as a teacher, assistant teacher, parent educator home visitor or infant/toddler caregiver. Early childhood programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) must employ a certain number of adults with degrees and/or CDA Credentials.

Additionally, *Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning* rewards teachers of children age five-years and under for remaining in the field of early childhood care and education and increasing their level of skill and knowledge through credentials, certificates and degrees. The **Georgia SCHOLARSHIP & INCENTIVES Program** recognizes teachers who earn credentials and degrees with a stipend if they remain in early care and education settings. Increased interest and demand in the CDA Credential has prompted many of these frequently asked questions.

◆ ***What requirements must I fulfill before I am eligible to apply for the CDA Credential?***

You must meet several requirements before you can apply to be considered for a CDA Credential. After you complete the requirements and submit your CDA application, you will be given a test and participate in an interview. A CDA representative will review your written documentation and professional resource file and forward your observation, exam, and parent questionnaire to The Council for Professional Recognition for final review. Enrolling in a high quality CDA Training program will help you complete the credentialing process successfully.

All of the following must be complete before applying to the Council for a CDA Credential:

Personal Requirements

- Be 18 years of age or older (age 21 for Family Child Care)
- Hold a high school diploma or equivalent
- Be able to speak, read, and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA candidate
- Sign a statement of ethical conduct
- Be currently working in a child development setting with children ages birth-5

Experience and Documentation Requirements

- You must have 480 hours of experience within the last five years with the age group setting in which you are applying for credentialing.
- You must also currently work with children ages birth-5 in a center, family child care home, or a home-based parent education program.
- A qualified CDA Advisor must observe you in your work setting with children for a minimum of three hours in the morning, and complete an observation report.
- The parents of the children you work with will be asked to complete a confidential questionnaire about your skills.
- You are required to develop a Professional Resource File, which includes an autobiography, statements of competence, and a resource collection.

Setting Requirements

Requirements vary depending on the setting, center based or home based. For specific setting requirements contact *The Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C.* at (800) 424-4310 or visit their website at www.cdacouncil.org to order an application packet that contains all the necessary information and forms. The four types of settings are: **Center-Based Pre-School, Center-Based Infant/Toddler, Home Visitor, and Family Child Care.**

Educational Requirements

Candidates must complete 120 hours of formal education within the past five years, with no fewer than 10 hours in each of the content areas listed below. The additional 40 hours may be in any of the eight areas. This requirement may be met through participation in a CDA course or training from colleges and universities, state and federal government agencies, resource and referral agencies, and Head Start. **All formal education hours must be taken through an agency or organization with expertise in child development or child care and early childhood teacher preparation.**

A CDA Training program will increase your knowledge and skills in the following CDA Content 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 manage effective program operation
- Strategies to establish positive relationships with families
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism
- Observing and recording children's behavior
- Principles of child growth and development

◆ *What is involved in the CDA Direct Assessment Process?*

1. Contact the *Council for Professional Recognition* for an application packet at (800) 424-4310. The price is approximately \$18. The application packet has all necessary forms and two CDA Standards Booklets. The packet may be provided by your training program.
2. The *Council* sends to candidate: a) application form and fee schedule, b) description of CDA Competency Standards and Assessment Procedures, and c) assessment and documentation materials and forms to be completed after your training.
3. Candidate completes all the training and documentation requirements described in *CDA Competency Standards and Assessment System*. This typically takes about six to nine months.
4. Candidate sends the completed application for a *Verification Visit* with a transcript verifying that she/he has completed the required training in the eight content areas and the \$325 application/assessment fee to the *Council* in Washington DC.
5. The *Council* accepts applications for *Verification Visits* four times a year: March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1.
6. The *Council* assigns a *CDA Representative* who calls the Candidate to schedule a date for a *Verification Visit*. During the *Verification Visit*, the *Council Representative* verifies that the CDA Candidate has completed all of the documentation required. The Council Representative also administers *The Early Childhood Studies Review* assessment and conducts the Interview during the *Verification Visit*. The CDA Council has future plans to make an online option for the assessment available.
7. Candidate meets with the *Council Representative* who: a) conducts the *Interview*, b) administers the written *Early Childhood Studies Review* (exam), c) reviews completion of the *Professional Resource File*, and d) collects copies of Candidate's *Competency Statements*, *Parent Questionnaires*, and *CDA Assessment Observation Instrument*.
8. The *Council Representative* sends materials to the *Council* for review.
9. The *Council* has a *Committee* of documentation reviewers score the assessment information. The Council then awards the CDA Credential based on the scoring of all of the documentation (*Competency Statements*, review of *Professional Resource File*, *Parent Questionnaires*, *Early*

Childhood Studies Review (exam), and the Interview).

10. Candidate receives notification by mail of credential award within six weeks to three months of *Verification Visit*.
11. Candidate must *renew* the CDA credential in three years, and every five years after that.

◆ ***If I meet all of the above basic eligibility requirements set by the Council for Professional Recognition, am I ready to send in the CDA Application form for my Verification Visit?***

Candidates will also want to make certain they are competent and knowledgeable in all of the 13 Functional Areas. Functional areas are categories of responsibility that define a caregiver's role in relation to children. The six CDA Competency Goals are divided into 13 Functional Areas:

Functional Areas:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Safe | 6. Communication | 11. Families |
| 2. Healthy | 7. Creative | 12. Program Management |
| 3. Learning Environment | 8. Self | 13. Professionalism |
| 4. Physical | 9. Social | |
| 5. Cognitive | 10. Guidance | |

◆ ***How can I tell if I am competent in the 13 Functional Areas?***

First, do you have experience and knowledge in each of the functional areas? Can you demonstrate and give written examples of your ability in each area? Do you feel comfortable being observed demonstrating what you do with children in each of the functional areas? Do you feel comfortable being interviewed and answering questions about each functional area?

◆ ***What are some sources I can use to gain competency or experience?***

You can enroll at colleges, universities, technical colleges, or other accepted training agencies and take a specific CDA course; have an advisor observe and advise you on ways to improve your skills; work under a skilled early childhood care and education teacher for a period of time to gain skills; work at a child care center or preschool where you can apply basic skills and knowledge in the 13 Functional Areas; attend early childhood/child development courses and workshops; and join local, state, and national professional organizations. You will want to use several of these sources to gain knowledge and skills about competent care and teaching of young children.

◆ ***Where can I get CDA training in Georgia?***

Specific CDA training is provided through different sources including public and private colleges, universities, technical colleges, federal and state agencies, Head Start, Early Head Start, child care resource and referral agencies, and other organizations with expertise in child development teacher preparation. Contact information for CDA Training in Georgia can be accessed at the Georgia Early Care

and Education Professional Development System website at www.decal.state.ga.us.

◆ ***Where can I get financial assistance for CDA training?***

Occasionally, scholarships are available for CDA training or for students enrolled in college degree programs. Additionally, there may be assistance available to help pay for the CDA application fee of \$325. Contact the financial aid departments of your local college, university, or technical college regarding potential eligibility for grants/scholarships such as the HOPE Grant/Scholarship or Pell Grants. Also, go to www.caresolutions.com or www.decal.state.ga.us for information and application forms for the **Georgia SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES Program**.

◆ ***Where can I find more information about the CDA Credential?***

You can learn more about the CDA Credential by contacting the Council for Professional Recognition.

Council for Professional Recognition
2460 16th Street N.W.
Washington DC 20009-3575
Phone: 800-424-4310 Fax 202-265-9090
www.cdacouncil.org

Source:

Adapted from Smith, Anita P. (1999-2007). *Questions and Answers about the CDA Credential*. Department of Child and Family Development, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, The University of Georgia: Athens, GA.

Reference:

The Child Development Associate Assessment System and Competency Standards (2006). The Council for Professional Recognition: Washington, DC.



Child Development Associate (CDA)

Registrations are accepted on a first come / first served basis and if selected, students will still need to pay a non-refundable registration fee: \$75.00

Please print legibly

Name _____ Title _____

Employer _____

Is your program/position funded by: Early Head Start Preschool Head Start

Pre-Kindergarten Other _____

How many children do you serve: _____ How many families do you serve: _____

If you're a Sheltering Arms employee, at which center are you currently employed? _____

Home Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone _____ Cell Phone (optional) _____ Home Phone (optional) _____

Preferred Email _____ Fax _____

I would like to register for the following GTI training classes and/or series

1. CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE (CDA)

Class Date/Series Start Date _____ Tuition _____

Supervisor Commitment Statement & Signature

I am committed to support this student in attending classes and completing course work. Supervisor's

Signature _____ Date _____

Payment – Course tuition must be paid in full BEFORE your class begins

Total Tuition Amount: **\$1200.00**

Check (payable to Sheltering Arms) Scholarship: Smart Start (if applicable): \$ _____

Visa Discover MasterCard

Name on the Card: _____

Number: _____ Expiration Date _____

Billing ZIP Code: _____ **CCV (3-Digit Security Code): _____

I will need CEU's (\$20 per class/series for non-Sheltering Arms employees)

To Register: ***By Fax:*** 404-523-9460, Attention: Shonnie G. Roberson

By Mail: Sheltering Arms, Att. Shonnie, 385 Centennial Olympic Park Dr NW, Atlanta 30313

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