



## The Child Development Associate (CDA)

- What is it?  
A CDA credential is a nationally-recognized credential awarded to qualified caregivers who work with children from birth to age five. You can earn a CDA with an emphasis in center-based preschool, center-based infant-toddler or family child care.
- How do you earn it?  
A CDA is earned through a process in which you, as a CDA candidate, demonstrate that you are competent in working with young children in groups.
- What can we offer?  
We offer a comprehensive package that includes: classes that integrate the portfolio, advisement, and technical assistance. We can also help you apply for funding to assist with class fees.

**Classes Will Be Starting in January 2023!**

**CDA classes will be held at Family Enrichment Network  
24 Cherry Street, Johnson City, NY**

## **What are the qualifications?**

Individuals who earn the credential must:

- be 18 or older,
- hold a high school diploma or equivalent,
- have 480 hours of experience working with children within the past 5 years,
- complete 120 hours of education in 8 topic areas,

## **How do I get a CDA?**

No one automatically gets a CDA. It is earned through a process in which you, as a CDA candidate, demonstrate that you are competent in working with young children in groups. Here are the steps involved in earning a CDA:

- You attend and verify 120 hours of training in 8 topics.
- You develop a professional portfolio.
- You send out and collect Family Questionnaires.
- You complete the application form and send it with payment to the Council for Professional Early Childhood Recognition in Washington, D. C. or submit your CDA application online.
- You receive your *Ready to Schedule Notice* with a 6 month deadline to complete the remainder of the process.
- You schedule your verification visit with a CDA Professional Development Specialist to review your documents, conduct an observation, and participate in the reflective dialogue.
- Complete the CDA Exam at a PearsonVue test center.
- The Council for Professional Recognition either awards or denies a Credential.

## **What can I do with a CDA?**

A CDA credential

- is one qualification for head teachers in child care centers in New York State.
- Is required by Head Start as a minimum qualification.

## **How long does it take to get a CDA?**

Candidates must have 120 hours of training within the past five years. Here at Family Enrichment Network we offer classes to meet the training component of the CDA. These classes take approximately 1 year. During this time you will develop your professional portfolio and gather your family questionnaires. Once you have completed your classroom requirements, you will be ready to apply for the CDA. While the new CDA process will allow all Candidates the chance to complete their assessments more quickly than ever, Candidates will have up to six months to complete their assessment requirements (the CDA Exam and Verification Visit). The amount of time that takes depends entirely on you – some people work very quickly and others procrastinate. Once you send in your completed application to Washington, you must wait for approval to schedule a verification visit with the CDA Professional Development Specialist and conduct your test. It will take time to schedule that visit. You will schedule and take the CDA Exam at a PearsonVUE testing center. The closest center is in Endicott. We are finding that it usually takes people about 15 months to earn a CDA.

### **How do I get started to earn my CDA?**

Check out the next offering of the CDA classes and see if they will work for you. If they do, you can get started by completing an enrollment form so we have information about you, and by checking the CDA fees and the funding possibilities. Look at all the possibilities, see which you might be able to access, and decide how you will pay the CDA fees. If you need help with the various options, please give us a call at (607) 723-8313 ext. 1187.

### **How does Family Enrichment Network help people earn the CDA?**

#### Classes

We offer classes that help people meet the training requirement for the CDA. They are organized into 5 sections. Each section addresses a particular topic, and together they meet all the CDA categories. The five sections are: Child Development, Health & Safety, Working Effectively with Parents, Curriculum and Activities for Young Children, and Behavior Guidance

#### Advising

The instructor for the classes will also serve as your CDA advisor. She will guide you through the process leading up to the obtainment of your credential.

### **What are the fees for CDA and How can I pay them?**

Our CDA program is broken into 2 sections – Part 1 and Part 2. Each section cost is \$1250. The fee for our comprehensive program which includes classes, materials and advising for the CDA credential is \$2,500. Scholarship funding to participate in this training may be available through the Educational Incentive Program (EIP). For more information, visit [www.tsg.suny.edu](http://www.tsg.suny.edu). You may also contact EIP at [eip@tsg.suny.edu](mailto:eip@tsg.suny.edu) or 800-295-9616.

For people who are not eligible for the EIP scholarship or are eligible for only a partial scholarship, we can set up payment plans. Some employers will contribute towards the cost of the CDA program. Please take the time to check to see if you are eligible for the EIP scholarship.

Included in the course cost is a \$100 registration fee which must be paid in advance at the time of enrollment. Payment of this fee will reserve your place in the class and will be used to purchase textbooks and classroom materials on your behalf. If EIP funds are awarded for the entire course cost, the registration fee will be refunded to you upon completion of the course.

### **I have questions. Who should I call?**

Call or email Cortney Nornhold, our CDA instructor. You can reach her at (607) 687-6721 ext. 1187. Email is probably the best way to reach her! Email Cortney at [cnornhold@familyenrichment.org](mailto:cnornhold@familyenrichment.org).