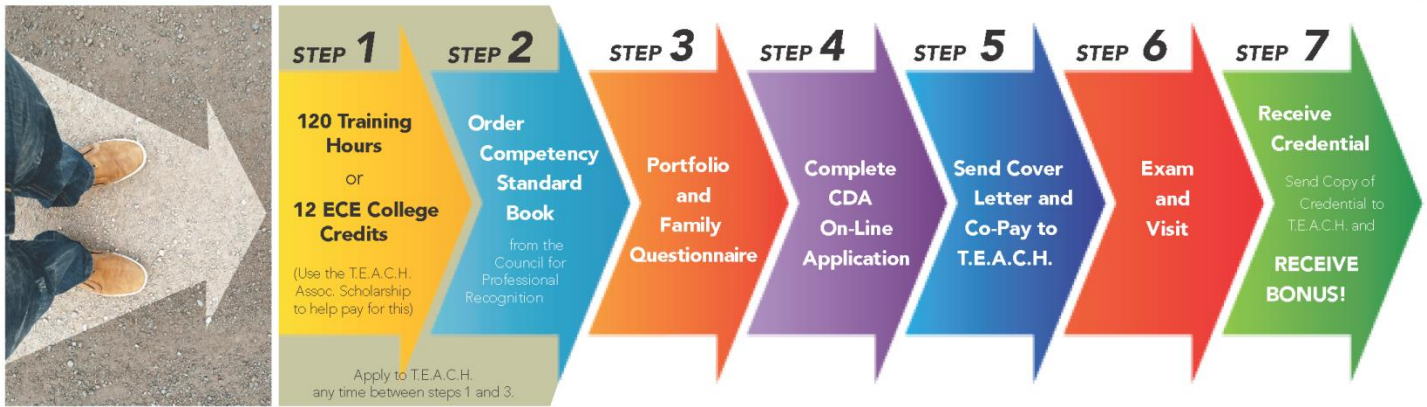


## Becoming a CDA in Iowa...

The *Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential*<sup>TM</sup> is earned after completing a process and assessment by the Council for Professional Recognition. Hundreds are seeking CDA credentials as **basic-level education**, to enhance skills or to meet **position/regulation requirements**. Some use the CDA credential as a **first college experience** without committing to a degree program. Others use it to raise their level of **professionalism** for registration, licensing, Iowa's QRS, the Quality Preschool Program Standards, Head Start Standards, and NAEYC Accreditation.

## Simple Steps To Getting Your CDA



### A. Competency goals: The successful CDA candidate will:

1. Establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment
2. Advance physical and intellectual competence
3. Support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance
4. Establish positive and productive relationships with families
5. Ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs
6. Maintain a commitment to professionalism

### B. Criteria: When the candidate has completed the requirements for the CDA credential, s/he must meet and verify the following:

- Have a high school diploma/equivalent or be a junior or senior in a high school/vocational program in early education
- Have 480 hours of **experience** working with young children within the past 3 years
- Have **120 hours** of formal ECE education with at least **10 hours** in each of **8 subject areas**:
  1. Planning a **safe, healthy environment** to invite learning
  2. Steps to advance children's **physical** and **intellectual** development
  3. Positive ways to support children's **social** and **emotional** development
  4. Strategies to establish productive **relationships with families**
  5. Strategies to manage an effective **program operation**
  6. Maintaining a commitment to **professionalism**
  7. **Observing** and **recording** children's **behavior**
  8. Principles of **child development** and learning

The Community College Early Childhood Alliance selected four 3-credit courses for **college credit** (12 credits) as CDA courses.

**ECE 103**—Introduction to Early Childhood Education

**ECE 133**—Child Health, Safety & Nutrition

**ECE 243**—Early Childhood Guidance

and one of the following:

**ECE 158**—Early Childhood Curriculum I

**ECE 159**—Early Childhood Curriculum II

**ECE 221**—Infant Toddler Care/Education

Optional wrap up one-credit class (offered online to anyone): **ECE 106**—CDA Standards

An alternative way to earn training hours is through **community-based**, training organizations such as Child Care Resource & Referral, Area Education Agencies, ISU Extension, etc. Although the opportunities are approved by the Council, T.E.A.C.H. scholarships can only support college coursework.

**C. Candidate documentation:** In addition to completing the 120 clock hours, the candidate must also document competence with these steps:

*Prepared documentation (these items are kept for Verification Visit):*

1. **Professional Portfolio** including 10 resource collection items, 6 reflective statements of competence (up to 500 words each), and a professional philosophy statement (up to 2 pages).
2. **Family Questionnaires** are distributed & collected in sealed envelopes.

*To be completed after application is approved by the Council:*

3. **CDA Exam** taken at a PearsonVUE testing center within 6 months of application approval. Consists of 65 multiple choice questions completed within one hour and 45 minutes.

*Verification Visit (administered by Professional Development Specialist):*

4. **Review** of materials including the Professional Portfolio, Family Questionnaires, and transcripts/certificates.
5. **Observation** of candidate working with children over approximately 2 hours.
6. **Reflective Dialogue** with candidate focusing on professional reflection and goal-setting.

These combined requirements ensure that many **assessments** are completed. The candidate is assessed caring for **children**, and by the **families, instructors**, and a **Professional Development Specialist**.

**CDA Assessment Types:** The CDA credential is earned as a center based **infant/toddler** (birth to 36 months), a center based **preschool** (3-5 years old), **family child care**, or **home visitor**. Non-English monolingual and bilingual options available.

**CDA Renewal:** Once a CDA credential is awarded, it must be renewed every three years thereafter to remain current. Some renewal requirements include completing one **3-credit course** and belonging to a **professional association**, as well as other steps.

### *How can T.E.A.C.H. help?*

**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Iowa** assists providers in Iowa with earning a CDA credential by offering scholarships. This requires a commitment to their current program and offers compensation (raise/bonus). There are 3 ways T.E.A.C.H. can help:

- Assist with the **college credit courses**, materials, and books.
- Provide support for the \$425 **assessment application fee**, and provide a **bonus** when the credential is earned. This scholarship is available regardless of how the coursework is completed.
- Provide support for CDA **renewal** requirements.

For more information about the CDA in Iowa or an information/application packet, please contact Iowa AEYC/T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA, 5525 Meredith Dr. Suite F, Des Moines, IA 50310, 515- 331-8000, [www.iowaaeyc.org](http://www.iowaaeyc.org).

### **T.E.A.C.H. can help with renewing your CDA credential!**

*Additional information can be obtained from:*

**The Council for Professional Recognition**, 2460 16<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009-3575, 800- 424-4310, [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)



Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children