

## What is the CDA Credential?

*The following description is taken directly from the website of the Council for Professional Recognition, the organization responsible for monitoring the CDA credential. More information is available at [www.cdaCouncil.org](http://www.cdaCouncil.org).*

“The Child Development Associate (CDA) is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE) and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in ECE.

The CDA credential is based on a core set of competency standards, which guide early care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children. The Council works to ensure that the nationally-transferable CDA is a credible and valid credential, recognized by the profession as a vital part of professional development.

CDAs have knowledge of how to put the CDA Competency Standards into practice and understanding of why those standards help children move with success from one developmental stage to another. Put simply, CDAs know how to nurture the emotional, physical, intellectual, and social development of children.

Becoming a CDA is a big commitment, but one that creates confident practitioners with command of today’s best practices for teaching young children.”

There are several steps toward becoming a CDA. The first requirements are that (1) you hold a high school diploma, or equivalent, or you are a junior or senior in a high school vocational program in early education, and (2) that you are able to speak, read, and write well enough to perform the responsibilities of a CDA.

The CDA candidate can apply for a credential in a variety of settings— infant/toddler, preschool, family child care, or as a home visitor. The credentialing process requires 120 contact hours of formal early childhood education training within the 5 years prior to application, with no fewer than 10 hrs in each of 8 subject areas:

- Planning a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Advancing children's physical & intellectual dev't.
- Supporting children's social and emotional development.
- Building productive relationships with families.
- Managing an effective program operation.
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
- Observing and recording children's behavior.
- Understanding principles of child dev't and learning.

In addition to the 120 hours of training, a candidate must also have 480 hours of professional experience working with children in a group setting and complete several other requirements for the credentialing process. A \$325 application fee is required. A comprehensive overview of the CDA process can be found at [www.cdaCouncil.org](http://www.cdaCouncil.org). We also have CDA literature available for checkout in the QCCI Library.

Quality Child Care Initiative

(540) 245-5899 x108

Family Resource & Referral Center

(540) 245-5899

1600 North Coalter Street, Suites 11 & 12B

Staunton, Virginia 24401

[www.FRCenter.org](http://www.FRCenter.org)

 **Community Foundation**  
CENTRAL BLUE RIDGE

*Augusta*  
HEALTH  
Foundation

**United Way**  
United Way of Greater Augusta

## Shenandoah Valley Social Services: Changes to the DSS Child Care Subsidy Program

- Direct payments to child care vendors through your local DSS (Shenandoah Valley Social Services) will stop after November 30, 2011.
- Payments starting December 1, 2011 will be made through the state directly to all pre-approved child care vendors.
- Vendors will either have a swipe card machine or dial in attendance procedure. Each child must be swiped in and out/**or** dialed in/out each day. This allows for payment to the vendor twice a month.
- Installation of the swipe machine/**or** dial in system is activated once the vendor is in the computer system **and** a DSS purchase order has been issued. If you are **not** in the system, **DSS cannot** issue any purchase orders to you to activate the service or make payments.

Do you need to request another packet of materials to get set up for payments with the state? If so, please call (804) 726-7000 today!

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## Thank You, Staunton Public Library

We feel very fortunate to have such a wonderful facility in which to hold our Spring & Fall Training Series, and we would like to thank the Staunton Public Library for the use of the training room.



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## Family Resource & Referral Center

We are located at 1600 North Coalter St., Suites 11 & 12B, in Staunton. Hours are 8:30 to 5:00. \*\* Please note: if you need to borrow child care videos, we suggest that you first check availability with Sarah Foster at 540-245-5899 x108 or SarahFoster@ntelos.net. The videos are very popular, and frequently all checked out. We don't want you to drive out here only to find there are no videos available for you.

## JMU Practicum Students - 2012

JMU has redesigned its early childhood education programs. Part of this redesign includes an added emphasis on working with infants and toddlers. Starting in January, teacher candidates going through this new program, known as "Inclusive Early Childhood Education", will be required to fulfill a practicum field experience working with Infants & Toddlers for two hours per week.

JMU is seeking center-based child care settings in the Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro areas to host one or more practicum students. The placement(s) will last for approximately 14 weeks; therefore programs with consistently participating children are preferred so that practicum students can observe how a young child develops over time. If your center-based child care program has infants and toddlers, and you would like more information about hosting a JMU student next spring, please contact **Brianna Quinn**, Ph.D, by email at [quinnbs@jmu.edu](mailto:quinnbs@jmu.edu).

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## CDA Training Courses

There are many ways to accumulate the 120 required training hours towards the CDA Credential. The formal education hours can be for credit or non-credit, but they must be earned through an agency or organization with early childhood expertise. The agency or organization must verify your education in the form of an official transcript, certificate, or letter. Conference workshops do not count.

➤ **ChildCare Connection** in Harrisonburg offers a comprehensive 120 hours training called HANDS. A new session will be starting up in January 2012 and will cost \$600 per person. For more information, contact Reagan Eshleman at 540-564-5661.

➤ The free workshops offered by the Family Resource Center's *Quality Child Care Initiative* (QCCI) **do count** towards the initial CDA credential. However, the CDA Council will not accept the photocopied certificate from the QCCI workshops. If you plan to apply for the initial CDA credential, contact **Sarah Foster** at 540-245-5899 x108 with the names & dates of the workshops that you've taken and we will provide an official transcript for you.

➤ One way to supplement the free QCCI workshops, or to acquire the entire 120 hours quickly, is to take courses online through a pre-approved CDA training vendor, such as **Care Courses**. The entire preschool center-based CDA training can be taken online for a total cost of \$356.00. It is also possible to pick and choose from a wide range of courses at lower costs per course. Please visit their website at [www.CareCourses.com](http://www.CareCourses.com) for more information.

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