CDA Required Coursework

**Required reading**

Readings from the following three books are required to complete the Better Kid Care CDA coursework and the CDA Credential Process. The books are available from the Council for Professional Recognition [http://store.cdacouncil.org/](http://store.cdacouncil.org/).

1. CDA Competency Standards (for your identified CDA setting)
2. Essentials for Working with Young Children, 2nd edition
3. Essentials Workbook, 2nd edition

**1. Read and complete the following in the book CDA Competency Standards:**

a. Introduction and Part One – Earning the Child Development Associate Credential
b. Part Two – The Child Development Associate Competency Standards
c. Part Three – Additional Information and Resources

**2. Read and complete the following in the books Essentials for Working with Young Children and the accompanying Essentials Workbook:**

**CDA Competency Standard I:** To plan a safe, healthy learning environment.

**CDA Functional Area 1 Safe:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 4 – 37.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 2 – 16.

**CDA Functional Area 2 Healthy:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 38 – 74.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 17 – 29.

**CDA Functional Area 3 Learning Environment:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 75 – 109.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 30 – 41.

**CDA Competency Standard II:** To advance physical and intellectual competence.

**CDA Functional Area 4 Physical:**

Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 42 – 50.

**CDA Functional Area 5 Cognitive:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 135 – 160
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 51 – 60.

**CDA Functional Area 6 Communication:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 161 – 197
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 61 – 73.

**CDA Functional Area 7 Creative:**

Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 198 – 214
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 74 – 84.

[extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare](http://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare)
CDA Competency Standard III: To support children’s social and emotional development.

CDA Functional Area 8 Self:
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 85 – 94.

CDA Functional Area 9 Social:
Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 238 – 252.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 95 – 104.

CDA Functional Area 10 Guidance:

CDA Competency Standard IV: To build productive relationships with families.

CDA Functional Area 11 Families:
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 117 – 126.

CDA Competency Standard V: To ensure a well-run, purposeful program.

CDA Functional Area 12 Program Management:
Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 303 – 324.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 127 – 137.

CDA Competency Standard VI: To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

CDA Functional Area 13 Professionalism:
Essentials for Working with Young Children – Read pages 325 – 345.
Essentials Workbook – Complete activities on pages 138 – 147.

CDA Subject Area 7: To observe and record children’s behavior.
There is no specific chapter for CDA Subject Area 7; however it is helpful to review the sections “Observing Children With the Setting” and “Documenting Children’s Learning” in chapter 12 “Program Management” pages 304 – 316 in Essentials for Working with Young Children.

CDA Subject Area 8: To understand principles of child development.
There is no specific chapter for CDA Subject Area 8; however it is helpful to review chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 (pages 113 – 272) in Essentials for Working with Young Children.
Recommended readings

Read the Better Kid Care research-to-practice articles listed below to help understand and apply the eight CDA Subject Areas and 13 Functional Areas. Information obtained in the articles supports overall child development knowledge and preparation for the CDA Exam and Verification Visit.

CDA Subject Area 1 – Planning a safe, healthy environment to invite learning

**Functional Area 1 – Safe:** Candidate provides a safe environment and teaches children safe practices to prevent and reduce injuries.

- **Be vigilant for children – Recognizing signs of abuse and neglect**
  http://bit.ly/1TSZYWR

- **Taking the fear out of food allergies**
  http://bit.ly/1ToYQff

- **Using sunscreen and insect repellant with children**

- **Technology and media in child care**
  http://bit.ly/1QsnsXn

- **Safe sleeping for babies**

**Functional Area 2 – Healthy:** Candidate provides an environment that promotes health and prevents illness, and teaches children about good nutrition and practices that promote wellness.

- **Be a caregiver who supports the breastfeeding mother**
  http://bit.ly/1QUekqZ

- **MyPlate for preschoolers – A helpful nutrition resource for caregivers**
  http://bit.ly/1RI7UZ9

- **Preparing and storing breast milk in your home child care program**
  http://bit.ly/1Y2FoUp

- **Move on: Reversing children’s sedentary lifestyles Part 1**
  http://bit.ly/1oQ8VEN

- **Move on: Reversing children’s sedentary lifestyles Part 2**
  http://bit.ly/1QsyYwv

- **Support breastfeeding in your home child care**
  http://bit.ly/1RptZZV

- **Wash your hands to stay healthy**

- **Toilet learning**
  http://bit.ly/1oQ9bn0

- **Understanding stress**
  http://bit.ly/1OR4wX9

- **Children and sleep – A real health issue**
  http://bit.ly/1QMhhUi

**Functional Area 3 Learning Environment:** Candidate organizes and uses relationships, the physical space, materials, daily schedule, and routines to create a secure, interesting, and enjoyable environment that promotes engagement, play, exploration, and learning of all children including children with special needs.

- **Energize with new ideas**
  http://bit.ly/1RK5Wrg

- **Creating a peaceful environment for young children**
  http://bit.ly/1WWMWak

- **Creating a sense of place: Considering routine, ritual, and belonging**
  http://bit.ly/1QnowoK

- **Infant environments: Let’s take a closer look**
  http://bit.ly/1UBoxs0

- **Is this on purpose?**
  http://bit.ly/1TUYY8f

- **Go outside! Fundamental and fitting views**
  http://bit.ly/1QOScOt

- **Loose parts: What does this mean?**
  http://bit.ly/1TSALNu

- **Outdoor spaces**
  http://bit.ly/1QVsuz9

- **Children’s healthy foundations: Taking the right steps**
CDA Subject Area 2 – To advance physical and intellectual competence

**Functional Area 4 Physical:** Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate equipment, learning experiences, and teaching strategies to promote the physical development (fine and gross motor) of all children.

- Brain dance Part 1: Children’s natural explorations through movement
- Brain dance Part 2: Awareness of movement, awareness of learning
- Early Intervention (EI): Helping children to develop to their full potential
- Energy in the balance: Promoting physical activity

**Functional Area 5 – Cognitive:** Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies to promote curiosity, reasoning, and problem-solving and to lay the foundation for all later learning. Candidate implements curriculum that promotes children’s learning of important mathematics, science, technology, social studies and other content goals.

- Executive function: What’s play got to do with it?
- Mathematical & scientific thinking in one-year-olds
- Mathematical & scientific thinking in two-year-olds
- Mathematical & scientific thinking in three- and four-year-olds
  [http://bit.ly/1SkOw6s](http://bit.ly/1SkOw6s)
- Developing memory
- Discovery through science
- Playing with babies

**Functional Area 6 – Communication:** Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies to promote children’s language and early literacy learning, and help them communicate their thoughts and feelings verbally and nonverbally. Candidate helps dual-language learners make progress in understanding and speaking both English and their home language.

- Create opportunities for English language learners: Four action plans
- Teaching Dual Language Learners
- Early literacy: 10 views to contemplate
- Intentional early language development
- Language & literacy in one-year-olds
  [http://bit.ly/1LBg0U1](http://bit.ly/1LBg0U1)
- Language & literacy in three- and four-year-olds
- Reading times
- Scribbles have meaning
  [http://bit.ly/1SkP8sP](http://bit.ly/1SkP8sP)
- See, scribble, print: Encouraging young children to make their mark
- Talking with infants
  [http://bit.ly/1L6tXt8](http://bit.ly/1L6tXt8)
- Build a base for strong language and emergent literacy development: Engaging with young children
**Functional Area 7 – Creative:** Candidate uses a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies for children to explore music, movement, and the visual arts, and to develop and express their individual creative abilities.

- **Art** – An opportunity to develop children’s skills

- **Arts & creativity in one-year-olds**

- **Arts & creativity in two-year-olds**

- **Arts & creativity in three- and four-year-olds**
  [http://bit.ly/1QtKhVc](http://bit.ly/1QtKhVc)

- **Play & music in three- and four-year-olds**

- **Arts & creativity in one-year-olds**

- **Arts & creativity in two-year-olds**

- **Play & music in two-year-olds**

**CDA subject Area 3 – To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance**

**Functional Area 8 – Self:** Candidate develops warm, positive, supportive, and responsive relationships with each child, and helps each child learn about and take pride in his or her individual and cultural identity.

- **Leadership and children**

- **Celebrating our differences**

- **I think I can...I think I can...**

- **Diversity: Growing in our practice**

- **Cultural understanding: Competent, Responsive, and Aware**

- **Caregiver Sensitivity: The capacity to recognize and respond to children’s needs**

**Functional Area 9 – Social:** Candidate helps each child function effectively in the group, learn to express feelings, acquire social skills and make friends, and promotes mutual respect among children and adults.

- **Change and young children**

- **Emotional wellness: Understanding its importance**

- **Helping children with sad times**

- **I’m so mad! (Helping children deal with anger)**

- **Mommy, don’t go!**
  [http://bit.ly/1Qnv0k](http://bit.ly/1Qnv0k)

- **Talking with preschoolers about emotions**
  [http://bit.ly/1QnrCsA](http://bit.ly/1QnrCsA)

- **Relationships: The essential ingredient in caring for children and how you can support it!**

- **Teaching children to cooperate**
  [http://bit.ly/1TrABgB](http://bit.ly/1TrABgB)

- **Emotion talk: It’s important!**

- **Being there for grieving children**
  [http://bit.ly/1p1tRt8](http://bit.ly/1p1tRt8)
Functional Area 10 – Guidance: Candidate provides a supportive environment and uses effective strategies to promote children's self-regulation and support acceptable behaviors, and effectively intervenes for children with persistent challenging behaviors.

- Self regulation: Searching intentional practices – Approaches  
- Self regulation: Searching intentional practices – Environment  
  [http://bit.ly/1LBiOR0](http://bit.ly/1LBiOR0)
- Giving children choices  
- Guiding infant and toddler behavior  
- Hold my hand: Gentle guiding for the misguided  
  [http://bit.ly/1SkRqIC](http://bit.ly/1SkRqIC)
- Stop behavior problems before they happen  
- Helping children manage their feelings by managing your own  

CDA Subject Area 4 –
To establish positive and productive relationships with families

Functional Area 11 – Families: Candidate establishes a positive, responsive, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, engages in two-way communication with families, encourages their involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with his or her family.

- Be vigilant for families – Recognizing family stressors  
- Child expectations – What is best?  
- Children’s learning: The gift of shared responsibility  
- Family/Child conferences: Connecting with families (Part 1)  
- Family/Child Conferences: Connecting with families (Part 2)  
- Engaging Families: Essential partnering plans (Part 1)  
- Engaging Families: Rethinking family involvement (Part 2)  
  [http://bit.ly/1SkSgVI](http://bit.ly/1SkSgVI)
- Talking with families about sensitive topics  

CDA Subject Area 5 – To ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is responsive to participants needs

Functional Area 12 – Program Management: Candidate is a manager who uses observation, documentation, and planning to support children's development and learning and to ensure effective operation of the classroom or group. The candidate is a competent organizer, planner, record keeper, communicator, and cooperative co-worker.

- Scaffolding: Approaches and practices  
- Continual marketing strategies for family child care  
  [http://bit.ly/1SkSuMr](http://bit.ly/1SkSuMr)
- Early intervention: What do you need to know?  
  [http://bit.ly/1Y5g68b](http://bit.ly/1Y5g68b)
- Late fees  
- Is this on purpose?  
- Intentional early educators: Tell me more  
- Shaping the plan: Elements to consider in approaching teaching  
CDA Subject Area 6 – To maintain a commitment to professionalism

**Functional Area 13 – Professionalism:** Candidate makes decisions based on knowledge of research-based early childhood practices, promotes high-quality in child care services, and takes advantage of opportunities to improve knowledge and competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

- **Advocacy – Spreading the word**
  http://bit.ly/1Y5hajc
- **Embracing your community**
  http://bit.ly/1WWfIIR
- **Exploring Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)**
  http://bit.ly/1LUB4VU
- **Webbing: What can early care professionals web?**
  http://bit.ly/219Cv8o
- **Facing sensitive topics**
  http://bit.ly/1LWMBOZ
- **Partnering with each other: The map to collaboration**
  http://bit.ly/1Y5iwUy
- **Professional confidence**
  http://bit.ly/1VS1pW4
- **Rediscovering joy in our work**
  http://bit.ly/1WWUytf
- **Reflecting ethical conduct**
  http://bit.ly/1Y5jKit
- **A letter to my future professional self**
  http://bit.ly/1QOcUYO

CDA Subject Area 7 – Observing and recording children’s behavior

- **Observation – Delving deeper**
- **Assessment, the big picture: What is it? Why do it?**
  http://bit.ly/1QOd4iO
- **Authentic Assessment – What’s it All About?**
  http://bit.ly/1TSFO0x
- **Reflections to move forward: Gaining insights from your work**
  http://bit.ly/1TrGlae
- **Acknowledging children’s efforts**
  http://bit.ly/1VSJ75R
CDA Subject Area 8 – Understanding principles of child development and learning

- Applying developmentally appropriate practice  
  [http://bit.ly/1VT1Q0V](http://bit.ly/1VT1Q0V)
- Trailblazing with two-year-olds  
- Terrific three-year-olds  
- Fabulous five-year-olds  
  [http://bit.ly/1Qu0V6Y](http://bit.ly/1Qu0V6Y)
- Fun with four-year-olds  
- Math before kindergarten  
- Music makes it memorable  
- Executive Function  
  [http://bit.ly/1TSVtNm](http://bit.ly/1TSVtNm)
- Temperament – What is it?  
- Why learn about child development?  
- School readiness begins at birth  
- Getting started in family child care: From dreams to reality  
- Being there for grieving children  