



# Why CDA?



## *CDA is the Best 1st Step!*

*The CDA™ represents expert consensus about what early educators should know and be able to do. It plays a significant role across the spectrum of early childhood settings in the United States, from employer-sponsored child care to federal government – funded entities.*

**Valora Washington, PhD**  
CEO  
Council for Professional Recognition



- **An assistant teacher** with experience, but little formal education
- **A family child care provider** who must improve the quality of his/her setting to meet licensing requirements
- **A high school student** interested in pursuing a career in working with young children

The CDA helps early educators meet current state and national professional requirements. CDA recipients are competent practitioners who value vital knowledge and skills **and** formal education. It has stood the test of time, with more than 350,000 CDAs awarded since the early 70s, and 20,000 new CDAs and 18,000 renewals in 2013 alone.

But there's more.

1. **The CDA** online process is streamlined, with credentialing decisions taking days rather than months.
2. **The CDA** is portable, recognized in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, community colleges, school districts and the military.
3. **The CDA** is the only national multilingual credentialing system that assesses educators in the language of their daily work.

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The Child Development Associate™ (CDA) National Credential represents the crossroad where education and experience meet. This crossroad epitomizes competence and is a pathway to learning best teaching practices for many early educators, including:

- **A lead teacher** who already holds an academic degree, but needs to gain hands-on practical skill and competency in early care and education

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