Need Financial Assistance?

T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships

T.E.A.C.H. scholarships provide:
• The majority of the cost of tuition and books
• A per semester student access stipend for most scholars
• A tiered-bonus structure for degree-seeking scholars who complete their contract
• Counseling and administrative support
• A reimbursement to the center or family child care home for the paid leave time provided to scholars in most scholarship models

Under **T.E.A.C.H.** the state pays 80% for coursework, 90% for books, and 80% for CDA certification assessment fee. The remainder may be paid by the individual or the school where the person works. More information on **T.E.A.C.H.** can be found at http://teach-fl.org/

Why Centers should financially support **T.E.A.C.H.** CDAs:
• Improve teacher quality
• Reduce turnover rates in early care and education. Rates are between 30-40% nationally. For Florida **T.E.A.C.H.** scholars, the turnover rate is approximately 6%. As many directors know, turnover is expensive and can range from several hundred dollars per employee to as high as 1.5 times an employee's annual salary.
• In most situations, scholars who complete a contract with **T.E.A.C.H.** make a commitment to stay with the center that sponsored them for up to a year following completion of their contract.

CDA Professional Portfolio

The CDA Professional Portfolio is a requirement for the national CDA Credentialing Process. It is a:
•Collection of specific resource materials to help you in your work with children and families
• Method for the National CDA Council to evaluate your competence
• Way to showcase your own philosophy about your work with young children and their families
Your Professional Portfolio must be completed within the six months prior to your application for CDA Credentialing and match the age group and setting for which you are applying.
For the complete description of requirements, please refer to The Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program and CDA Competency Standards book from the national CDA Council at www.cdacouncil.org.

CDA Verification Visit

The verification visit is a required component of the CDA credentialing process, where you will be observed working with children in a specific age group.
• During the visit, the Council-approved early childhood specialist will go to the CDA candidate's place of work and review the CDA Professional Portfolio, observe the candidate working with children and conduct a reflective dialogue about the candidate's strengths and areas of growth.
• The early childhood specialist submits an evaluation and scores to the Council based on the visit. The evaluation and scores will be used as one part of the credentialing decision to determine whether you will be awarded the CDA Credential.

Preschool Provider Professional Development Guide

EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Nurturing the young children of Southwest Florida and those who care for them.

**2675 Winkler Ave.
Suite 300
Fort Myers, FL 33901
(239) 935-6100
www.ELCofSWFL.org**

Why Credentials are Important

Appropriate training and credentials are critical to improving the quality of early childhood education. An early childhood teaching credential has many benefits:

• It makes teachers more effective at ensuring children will be kindergarten ready
• It provides teachers with more opportunity to achieve better pay, recognition and a sense of accomplishment
• It confirms that teachers are professionals
• It increases parents' confidence in their children's teachers and the school in general

The organizations providing credentials in Florida can be searched for in this portal: https://regportal.flchild.com/degreedatabase

Steps for Preschool CDA Credentials link: https://www.cdacouncil.org/credentials/apply-for-cda/preschool

Steps for Infant/toddler CDA link: https://www.cdacouncil.org/credentials/apply-for-cda/infant-toddler

Steps for Family Childcare CDA link: https://www.cdacouncil.org/credentials/apply-for-cda/family-child-care

Florida Department of Children & Families Birth through Five Credential Training Program link: ccrain.fl-dcf.com/documents/-99/2479.pdf#page=1

Types of Credentials

National Child Development Associate Certification (CDA)

• The Council for Professional Recognition offers both the original certification and a renewal process every 3 years.
• Certification is valid in all states.
• Before applying, you must complete 120 clock hours of professional education covering eight CDA Subject Areas.
• Within 3 years before you apply, you must have 480 hours of experience working with young children.
• Within 6 months before you apply, you must prepare a CDA Professional Portfolio according to the requirements outlined in the CDA Competency Standards book
• Must meet with a CDA Professional Development Specialist. The CDA PD Specialist brings the mentoring/coaching skills and ECE expertise needed to assess your competencies and facilitate your self-reflection.

Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)

• DCF credential that is recognized as equivalent to the National CDA.
• May not be recognized in other states.
• Developed to allow more accessibility to training programs in order to meet the diverse needs of child care providers around the state of Florida.
• Can be obtained by attending and graduating from an approved program listed on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) website.
• Five year renewal process.

• Must complete 120 hours of classroom instruction, 480 hours of work experience and one professional observation during the program.
• DCF requires a portfolio, including an autobiography, statement of competence and resource collection.

Early Childhood Professional Certificate (ECPC)

• The Florida Department of Education offers this credential for work in preschool classrooms only. Requirements almost identical to FCCPC.
• Must complete 120 hours of classroom instruction, including the 40 hours of DCF introductory training.
• The 120 hours also includes five clock hours in literacy and 10 clock hours in each of the eight content areas.
• Must work 480 hours in a child care setting and complete a professional portfolio like the requirements described above for DCF credential.

Florida Department of Education Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate (CCAC)

• Birth through Five Child Care Credential issued by the Florida Department of Education
• Obtained by completing the DOE Child Care Apprenticeship Program at either a technical school or a community college.
• Designates a student as a Child Care Development Specialist
• Students complete all ECPC requirements within the Apprenticeship Program.
• Some schools require up to 4000 work hours vs. the 480 hours required for ECPC, thus providing more structured experience for graduates.
• Often completed as part of an Associates Degree Program.