

## Child-Care Chatter

News and Information for Early Childhood Professionals

### FINDING YOUR WAY TO A CDA

There's tremendous interest these days among members of the childcare community in the CDA (Child Development Associate) credential. There's also a lot of confusion about it, so we decided to go in search of answers to your questions and ours.

We started by contacting the Council for Professional Recognition, which is the organization that operates the national CDA credentialing program. Here's what we learned.

**Q:** What is a CDA?

**A:** The CDA is a professional credential that is awarded to an individual who successfully completes a CDA assessment. It is not an academic degree.

**Q:** How does one go about completing the assessment and getting a CDA?

**A:** Start by asking yourself these four questions: (1) Am I at least 18 years old? (2) Do I have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED)? (3) Can I speak, read and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA candidate? (4) Am I pre-

pared to agree to and sign a statement of ethical conduct?

If your answer is YES to all four questions, you meet the general requirements for the credential.

**Q:** What do I do next?

**A:** Request an application packet by calling 1-800-224-8103. The packet will cost \$15, plus \$5 shipping and handling. All of the necessary forms and instructions are in the packet.

**Q:** Then what?

**A:** Accumulate 120 clock hours of formal training in areas defined by the CDA Competency Standards (see page 2). You can get these training hours from trainers like MB&A, through professional organizations, and from local community and technical colleges. Be sure to ask the training organization in advance if the Council will accept their courses.

**Q:** Is that all?

**A:** No. Once you have acc-

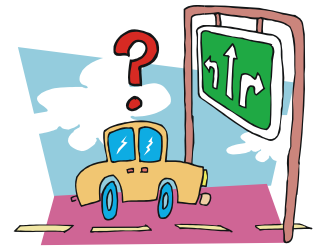
umulated the required training hours, you will need to prepare the documents in the application packet and send them, with a payment of \$325, to the Council for Professional Recognition, 2460 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009-3575.

The Council will arrange for you to meet with a representative of the National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition for an assessment interview.

The Council will issue or defer your credentials based on the score you receive from the assessment interview.

Wow, that doesn't sound too hard! It's just a matter of ordering an application packet, getting your required training and completing all of the right forms.

If this doesn't answer all of your question, try the Council hotline at 1-800-424-4310 or their website [www.cdacouncil.com](http://www.cdacouncil.com).



Volume 3, Issue 2

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### What's New At MB&A?

For those of you whom we have told that you cannot use our courses to get a CDA, we are very pleased to tell you that we were WRONG!

You may use MB&A's courses to accumulate some of the 120 hours required to get

the CDA, as well the 45 hours required to renew the credential. The same is true for those of you who are working toward a CCP or CCP renewal.

We are also excited to announce that we have added six new states to our user

group—Tennessee, Maryland, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Washington.

For those of you who have been clamoring for new courses—good news. Release 4.0 is ready to go. It contains five new courses, including two on autism and

the first three in a series of "Ages & Stages" courses. These three cover young infants, from birth to nine months.

Call us at 1-877-655-7139 to get copies.

# CDA Competency Standards

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The goals and functional areas of the CDA Competency Standards state the skills needed to be a competent caregiver and are the basis upon which CDA candidates are assessed. It is very important that you select courses that fall in content areas covered by these standards, both when preparing for an initial assessment or for renewal.

The goals and functional areas within each goal are as follow:

**Goal I:** To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.

- Safe
- Healthy
- Learning Environment

**Goal II:** To advance physical and intellectual competence.

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Communication
- Creative

**Goal III:** To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance.

- Self
- Social
- Guidance

**Goal IV:** To establish positive and productive relationships with families.

- Families

**Goal V:** To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs.

- Program management

**Goal VI:** To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

- Professionalism

You will need to document at least ten hours of training within each of the six defined goals, plus ten hours in the areas of (1) observing and recording children's behavior and (2) principles of child development and learning when you prepare your assessment application.

If you are unsure how MB&A's courses comply with these standards, you can visit our website at [www.mba-edu.com](http://www.mba-edu.com) or call us at 1-877-655-7139 for a chart that maps our courses to the CDA Competency Standards.

## Renewing A CDA

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We may get more questions about the process of renewing a CDA than we get about obtaining the credential. So, we asked the Council how one goes about renewing their CDA.

The process is fairly simple. Your first step is to request a Renewal Packet from the Council by calling

1-800-224-8103. The packet costs \$10, plus \$5 shipping and handling, and will contain all of the forms and instructions you will need for renewal.

Next, complete the required 4.5 CEUs (45 clock hours) of training or a 3-credit-hour college-level course in the functional areas de-

defined in the CDA Competency Standards.

Once you have accumulated your required hours, complete and mail the application, accompanying documents and a payment of \$50 to the Council for Professional Recognition, 2460 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009-3575.

## Carole's Corner

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The 2006-2007 school year is well under way now, and children are busy learning and growing. As teachers of young children, we are faced with lots of challenges and wonderful opportunities to help children achieve their maximum potential. As we strive to help children develop their social skills, we are often asked by parents, "How can I help my child get along with other children?" Another often asked question is, "Why isn't he/she making friends with the other children?" Teachers of young

children need to be ready to offer parents research-based counsel on this important topic when asked to do so.

Teachers should help parents realize that children need practice to develop social skills fully and that they get their practice from playing both with other children and with their family members. Perhaps the parents might be able to offer more opportunities for their children to develop relationships with other children.

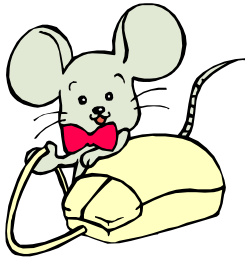
Teachers can also suggest to parents that they find ways to offer their children specific information about how social relationships

work. Casual conversations about events that happened during the child's day can provide opportunities for parents to guide children in considering the reasons for peers' behaviors and various options for responding.

Children also benefit when adults offer them positive ways of interpreting the events that are a part of their daily lives. We all know that it is easier to make friends and keep friends when we maintain a positive attitude toward others. Parents and teachers can help children tremendously when they provide them with examples of positive ways to interpret the everyday events of their lives.

# Jimmie's Journal

When I first heard about the Internet years ago, my reaction was that it was a solution in



search of a problem. Now I find myself addicted to and dependent on that solution to help me with day-to-day challenges. I buy gifts, send greeting cards, check for the best and most cost-effective dishwasher on the market, and even search for how long I can safely keep boiled eggs in the refrigerator.

I highly recommend that you use this powerful tool to answer many of the questions you face. For instance, you can download

the forms and instructions for renewing a CDA at [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org). You can also get a list of schools that offer the CDA in your state, a complete description of the CDA Competency Standards, and get a list of agencies through which you may be able to get scholarship money.

If you aren't using Google on the Internet, you're not taking advantage of one of the most powerful technologies available today. So, jump in there with the rest of us and go "Googling." You'll be amazed at what you'll find.

Also, visit [www.mba-edu.com](http://www.mba-edu.com) for links to other helpful sites like NAEYC and the National Child Care Information Center.

**NEED MORE FREE CD's?  
JUST LET US KNOW.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

# COPIES NEEDED: \_\_\_\_\_

MB&A Training  
125 Stepping Stone Ln  
Alpharetta GA 30004-4009  
1-877-655-7139  
FAX: 770-667-9906

## What About the CCP Credential?

The National Child Care Association (NCCA) offers an alternative professional credential—the Certified Childcare Professional (CCP). The first step in obtaining a CCP is to request a Pre-credentialing Packet through [www.nccanet.org](http://www.nccanet.org) or by contacting the Association (see below). You must have a high school diploma or equivalent, and you must

be able to document a minimum of 180 clock hours of continuing education credit. You must also document 720 hours of experience in the classroom. Other requirements include developing a portfolio demonstrating what you know about young children, teaching under the supervision and observation of a more experienced

teacher, and taking an exam that demonstrates what you have learned.

Contact information:  
National Child Care Association  
2025 M Street, NW, Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20036-1133  
Toll Free: 1-800-543-7161  
Phone: 202-367-2133  
E-mail: [info@nccanet.org](mailto:info@nccanet.org)

## Saying Good-bye to Mom and Dad

Saying good-bye to Mom and Dad is often tough when a child first enters a childcare program. How the separation is handled will shape the child's attitude about trust and relationships for years to come. Here are some suggestions to help parents ease a child's transition into childcare.

During arrival times:

- Take the time to make certain the child gets settled comfortably before you leave.

- Establish a routine and stick with it! For instance, say good morning to the teacher, sign in, put items in the child's cubby, and help the child locate a fun activity (a favorite book or toy) when arriving.

During departure times:

- Never try to slip out the door without saying goodbye. Tell the child exactly when you will be back to pick them up.
- Always say good-bye with a

kiss, hug and a wave.

- Be firm but friendly about leaving.
- Refrain from acting emotional in front of the child. For example, don't get into the "I'll miss you, too, Baby" routine, which can lead to tears for both child and Mom.
- Ask the child's teacher to involve the child quickly in an activity or with a special toy.



## Tales of the “Renegade Lunch Lady”

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When Ann Cooper, the self-proclaimed “Renegade Lunch Lady,” accepted the job as executive chef for the Berkeley, CA, public school system, she had no idea what she was getting into. After all, she had attended the Culinary Institute of America, had owned her own restaurant, and was even named an “up-and-coming chef” by *Gourmet*. While she had pleased the palates of many an adult, however, she had never faced the challenge of a five-year-old picky eater on a public school budget.

Cooper’s job was to revamp the city’s prepackaged, fat-laden, high-calorie, French-fried lunch program. Her list of undesirable ingredients included trans fats, preservatives, and anything that contained too much salt, sugar or high-fructose corn syrup. She replaced white bread with whole wheat and canned fruits and vegetables with fresh ones. She even replaced the fro-

zen, out-of-the bag pizza with one that was freshly made and contained lots of healthy things like homemade tomato sauce, skim-milk mozzarella, and toppings of roasted onions, walnuts, zucchini, corn and blue cheese. She and all of her staff love it. The kids hated it.

Cooper took the criticism seriously and made adjustments. First, she tried chopping the vegetables into tiny pieces. Then she tried hiding them under the cheese. Neither worked. In fact, 200 students from one school signed a petition to get rid of the “Veteteriyin pizza” altogether. She made one last attempt by pureeing the vegetables into the sauce so that even their tiny, little X-ray eyes couldn’t find them. In other words, the pizza began looking like a pizza again.

Cooper’s real problem was that by the age of five a child’s palate is formed and cannot be changed eas-

ily. So, the foods they are fed from the day they are born are essential in developing an acceptance for a variety of foods and food preparations. Recent studies even indicate that when mothers eat garlic, carrots, broccoli and other such foods when pregnant, their newborns have a taste for those flavors as well.

This doesn’t mean that Cooper cannot make a change in the eating habits of her young patrons. It’s just going to take a lot of patience and perseverance. Studies show that the average five-year-old has to taste a new food between five and ten times before accepting it. We wish her luck and patience with her mission—especially in the elimination of The Extreme Burrito.

[Based on Burkhard Bilger’s “The Lunchroom Rebellion,” *The New Yorker*, September 4, 2006.]

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