

Iowa's Professional Development Consultation Project

What is the new consultation project?

The Iowa Professional Development Consultation (IPDC) project offers services that are available across the state for any early care and education practitioner who desires support and guidance with developing a professional development plan, obtaining a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, and completing degrees in early childhood related fields.

Why do we need this consultation?

Education is critical to having a quality early care and education workforce in Iowa because the quality of child care is related to both the formal education levels and the specialized early childhood training of teachers (Tout, Zaslow & Berry, 2006; NCIECPD, 2007). Professional Development Consulting is critical to supporting early care and education professionals in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for quality care.

Often seen as a first step to formal education, the CDA credential requires 120 hours of formal training, 480 hours of experience working with young children in the past five years, an objective assessment of the provider's skills, and a verification visit (including written and oral exams). The CDA meets requirements in programs such as Shared Visions, Title I, ECSE, and Head Start; on-site supervisors and directors of child care centers and home providers to meet regulatory requirements and the Quality Rating System (QRS) with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS); and practitioner qualifications for accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). An estimated 400-500 practitioners need access to the CDA within the next two years and 1,000 practitioners will need access to the CDA within the next six years.

What are the benefits for early care and education practitioners?

- A system for using currently available community-based training hours to obtain the CDA, if content is research based and matches the CDA competencies
- Referrals to community colleges for practitioners interested in for-credit CDA courses
- Referrals to T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood IOWA for those practitioners who wish to use college credit coursework to meet their CDA training requirement and for support of all practitioners with the CDA application filing fees
- A structure to assist practitioners with compiling their resource file and completing the application, if they are not connected to a formalized CDA course at a college that could assist them
- Systematic access to CDA Advisors in their area, including Spanish speaking advisors, that provides reimbursement for approved expenses in serving as an advisor and completing the assessment observation instrument (limited funding is currently available)

So, if you are interested in learning more about how you can obtain your CDA credential or higher education, need assistance in developing your professional development plan, or just have questions please contact your Regional Professional Development Coordinator.

Additional information can also be found on the [Council for Professional Recognition](http://www.cdacouncil.org) website. (Please link it to: www.cdacouncil.org)

Please visit the Iowa AEYC website for information on how state-wide trainings can be broken down into CDA content areas or to view and print of flyers and brochures regarding this new venture at: www.iowaaeyc.org