



ChildCareEd

Providing a World of Learning



How to Compile Your CDA Portfolio

The CDA Professional Portfolio is a:

- Requirement for obtaining a Child Development Associate credential.
- Collection of resources to help you in your work with children and families.
- Method for the CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist to evaluate your competence.
- Way to showcase your own philosophy about your work with young children and their families.

The completed CDA Professional Portfolio is a tool that you will use during your career in early childhood education and can be used as a reference manual.

Your Professional Portfolio must have been completed within six months prior to submitting your application for the CDA Credential. The information collected in the portfolio must match the age group and setting for which you are applying.

Your Professional Portfolio

Your Professional Portfolio should appear well-organized. Common ways to organize your Professional Portfolio include a binder or a file box. Select the option that is easy for you to carry, store, and manage.

Organize

Organize your Professional Portfolio following the My CDA Professional Portfolio checklist. In each Competency Standard section, start with the Reflective Competency Statement followed by the resources required for that standard.

Here is a list of the items that must be in your Professional Portfolio, in the order they should be placed. NOTE: All cover sheets are found in the back of the CDA Competency Standards Book.

CDA Professional Portfolio cover sheet

- Tab A: Summary of My CDA Education
 - Documentation of your CDA training and education such as official training records or college transcripts, certificates, or other verification that you have successfully completed a minimum of 120 hours of training with no fewer than 10 clock hours of training in each of the eight CDA subject areas.
- Tab B: Family Questionnaires(FQ) and FQ Summary Sheet



- Completed Family Questionnaires, a form you distribute and collect back from the majority of the families of children in your care (a return from more than 50% of families is required).
- Tab C: Reflective Competency Statement 1
 - Resource Collection Items RC I-1, RC I-2, and RC I-3
- Tab D: Reflective Competency Statement 2
 - Resource Collection Items RC II-1 through RC II-9
- Tab E: Reflective Competency Statement 3
 - Resource Collection Items RC III
- Tab F: Reflective Competency Statement 4
 - Resource Collection Items RC IV-1 through RC IV-4
- Tab G: Reflective Competency Statement 5
 - Resource Collection Items RC V
- Tab H: Reflective Competency Statement 6
 - Resource Collection Items RC VI-1, RC VI-2, and RC VI-3
- Tab I: Professional Philosophy Statement
 - A written summary of your professional beliefs and values about early childhood education, how young children learn, and your role as an early childhood educator (no more than two pages in length).

At your Verification Visit, your PD Specialist will review your Portfolio to make sure it is complete.

Guidelines for Writing CDA Reflective Competency Statements

The Council for Professional Recognition in Early Childhood Education provides guidelines for writing CDA reflective competency statements. These statements are intended to highlight a candidate's understanding and mastery of the criteria for their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. The guidelines recommend that candidates provide specific examples or experiences that demonstrate their competency. It is also important to use reflective language, such as "I learned" or "I realized," to show self-awareness and growth. Additionally, the guidelines stress the importance of using appropriate grammar and correct spelling. Lastly, candidates should review the requirements for each competency carefully to ensure they address all components in their statements. It's helpful to divide each statement into the Functional Areas included in the Competency Standard and to write a brief paragraph for each of those Functional Areas.

CDA Competency Standards and Functional Areas

- Standard 1: To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment
 - Functional Areas:
 - Safe
 - Healthy
 - Learning Environments
- Standard 2: To advance physical and intellectual competency
 - Functional Areas:



- Physical
 - Cognitive
 - Communication
 - Creativity
- Standard 3: To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance
 - Functional Areas:
 - Self
 - Social
 - Guidance
- Standard 4: To establish positive and productive relationships with families
 - Functional Area:
 - Families
- Standard 5: To ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is responsive to participant needs
 - Functional Area:
 - Program Management
- Standard 6: To maintain a commitment to professionalism
 - Functional Area:
 - Professionalism

Each of your Reflective Competency Statements should be:

- Labeled with the Competency Standard number and description as well as the Functional Area(s) covered in the statement.
- Spell-checked, written in full sentences, and grammatically correct
- Typed in 11-12 point font using Arial or Times New Roman
- Approximately 500 words long

Guidelines for Writing Your Professional Philosophy Statement

The final piece of your CDA Professional Portfolio is your Professional Philosophy Statement. This Statement is a one to two-page document that describes your approach to teaching, the methods you use, and your expertise. A professional philosophy statement is an important document that outlines your beliefs, values, and goals as a professional. To write an effective statement, you should begin by reflecting on your personal and professional experiences as they relate to your career goals. You should also consider the needs of your target audience and tailor your statement accordingly. Your statement should be concise, focused, and easy to understand, and should contain concrete examples of how you plan to put your philosophy into practice. Finally, you should review and revise your statement regularly to ensure that it accurately reflects your evolving beliefs and goals as a professional.

Where can I get more help?

Visit the CDA Council at www.cdacouncil.org for more information.

