

What is Accreditation?

“A process, which certifies that a program meets and/or exceeds state licensing standards.”

Accreditation is a voluntary process designed specifically for child care programs, family child care homes and school-age programs. The accreditation process is an opportunity for a program to conduct a thorough examination of every aspect of the program based on recognized quality standards. Accreditation involves staff, parents, administrators and children. The process consists of a comprehensive self-study, a validation visit by an objective, qualified, trained individual, and a review of the self-study and parent and staff surveys by a Council of peer professionals and educators. Receiving the award of program accreditation is highly prized and exemplifies a program that excels in the care and education of young children. To gain a better understanding of the various accreditations available please review the following information.

	National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)	National School Age Care Alliance (NSACA)
Available for	Licensed Childhood Care and Education Programs Licensed Child Care Centers	Child Care Centers and Preschools	Family Child Care Providers	School-age child care programs serving ages 5-14
Professional Recognition	Program Accreditation	Program Accreditation	Provider and Home Accreditation	Program Accreditation
Qualifications	Prerequisite: Must meet legal requirements for operations and must have been in operation at least 1 year	Prerequisite: Program must be in operation for 12 months or more before receipt of accreditation	Prerequisite: Must be a provider for 18 months before the observer visit, primary caregiver in own home, high school, diploma or G.E.D., 21 years of age, must operate over 20 hours per week, minimum of 3 children, and 65 hours of documented training	Prerequisite: In operation for at least one year
Regulatory Requirements	Meets or exceeds state requirements	Meets or exceeds state requirements	Meets or exceeds state requirements	Must be licensed. If exempt, must demonstrate compliance with local codes for school-age programs.
Self-Study Process	Surveys: Staff and Parents Self-assessment instrument Verifier observation	Administrator self-evaluation Staff and Parent Questionnaire Classroom observation Validator observation	Provider self-evaluation Parent questionnaires Observer observation	Team representing staff, parents, administration and host assess the program using: observation, questionnaires and director's ratings. Action plan for improvement is part of application for accreditation.
Evaluation Measurements	Self-assessment instrument, Staff surveys, Parent Surveys, AAIS (Automated Accreditation Indicator System) review, and National Accreditation Council review	Program Description, Classroom observation Staff and Parent questionnaire Accreditation Commission Review	Self-assessment instrument and observer instrument based on "Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation," and Parent questionnaire.	Program application (including self-assessment) On-site visit by two endorsers Staff review of report and recommendation of the endorser.
Costs	\$650 - \$950 (based on licensed capacity)	Level I: 60 or few children \$125 Application \$300 Validation – Level II: 61-120 children \$200 Application \$450 Validation – Level III: 121-240 children \$250 Application \$575 Validation	\$495 for NAFCC members \$695 for non-members	\$750 per site
Financial Assistance From	CCR&R Accreditation Professional Development Funds	CCR&R Accreditation Professional Development Funds	CCR&R Accreditation Professional Development Funds	CCR&R Accreditation Professional Development Funds
Valid For	3 Years	3 Years	3 Years	3 Years
Update	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
Contact	Suzanne Grace, The NECPA Commission, Inc. 1016 Rosser Street, Conyers, GA 30012 (800) 505-9878 www.nccanet.org	Stephanie Glowacki, National Academy of Early Childhood Programs 1509 16 th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 (800) 424-2460 www.naeyc.org	Accreditation Staff, National Association for Family Child Care, 525 SW 5 th Street, Suite A, Des Moines, IA 50309 (800) 359-3817 www.nafcc.org	Kristina Young, National School-Age Care Alliance 1137 Washington Street Boston, MA 02124 (800) 617-8242 www.nsaca.org

What is a Credential?

“An award that is a basis for credit or confidence.”

Credentials are awarded to individuals who have successfully demonstrated their ability in areas identified as critical to their profession. Through a series of indicators including experience and education, credentials are awarded to directors; teachers and family child care providers who are competent in management and administration, as well as nurturing and educating young children.

The credentialing process recognizes an individual's achievements as a professional. It also advances the professional development of individuals wishing to move up the career ladder within their respective program and/or to pursue a career in an early care and education. To gain a better understanding of the various credentials available please review the following information.

	Certified Child Care Professional (CCP)	Child Development Credential (CDA)	Illinois Directors Credential
Available for	Infant/toddler teachers, preschool teachers, primary teachers	Infant/toddler teachers, preschool teachers, family child care Providers, home visitors	Director's/Administrator's of center based early childhood and/or school-age programs
Professional Recognition	Individual Credential	Individual Credential	Individual Credential through the Director or Entitled Route
Qualifications	720 hours or more of child care experience in a licensed center-based program 180 clock hours of training reflecting the 15 Professional Ability Areas 18 years of age or older High school diploma or equivalent	480 hours or more working with children 120 clock hours of training reflecting the 8 CDA Content Areas 18 years of age or older High school diploma or equivalent	Level I: Associate's Degree Level II: Bachelor's Degree Level III: Master's Degree
Regulatory Requirements	Program meets or exceeds state requirements	Program meets or exceeds state requirements	Program meets or exceeds state requirements
Self-Study Process	Director recommendations Parent recommendations Colleague recommendations Writing samples Performance observation Professional development portfolio Plans for continued professional development	Parent opinion questionnaire CDA Rep. Interview Professional resource file	Validation of accomplishments in the 5 competency Components Consultation with a Professional Growth or Academic Advisor Meets credential requirements Development of a Application Portfolio
Evaluation Measurements	CDA Professional Ability Areas Multi-indicator evaluation Professional development Portfolio National Early Childhood Credentialing Exam	CDA Competencies and functional areas Professional resource file Formal observation Written assessment	Evidence of a degree/coursework in early childhood and management, experience, and professional contributions Validation of accomplishments in the 5 competency components Application Portfolio
Costs	\$495	\$325 (CDA Direct Assessment) plus \$18.50 application packet \$1,500 CDA P3 (includes curriculum)	Application Packet \$25 Assessment \$500 Renewal \$50
Financial Assistance From	TEACH or CCR&R Credential Professional Development Funds	TEACH or CCR&R Credential Professional Development Funds	TEACH or CCR&R Credential Professional Development Funds
Valid For	2 Years	3 Years – Then renewed for 5 year periods	3 Years
Update	Biennial – Must submit 20 clock hours of competency based training/education	Every 3 years and then every 5 years	Every 3 years and submit a Professional Growth Plan and complete additional education and make professional contributions
Contact	Randa Kenslea NCCA Institute for Professional Development 1016 Rosser Street Coyers, GA 30012 (800) 543-7161 www.nccanet.org	Carol Phillips Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition 1341 G Street, NW Suite 400 Washington, DC 20005 (800) 424-4310 www.cdacouncil.org	Karen Bruning INCCRRA 207 West Jefferson, Suite 503 Bloomington, IL 61701 (800) 649-1884 www.ilchildcare.org

	TEACH Early Childhood Illinois	CCR&R Accreditation Funds YWCA of Lake County	CCR&R Credential Funds	CCR&R Professional Development Funds
	A scholarship and compensation project for licensed family child care providers, center staff and directors working at least 30 hours per week. Receive up to 80% of the cost of tuition and books. Scholarships support CDA, Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in early childhood education or the Illinois Director's. Scholarship recipients receive a bonus or pay raise as they take steps towards completing a degree or credential. For more information call 1-800-863-0499 or www.ilchildcare.org .	YWCA of Lake County Child Care Resource & Referral Program receives funds from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to support accreditation. Family child care providers, child care center staff and director's are eligible to apply for these funds. Priority is given to programs that serve 25% or more IDHS funded children. For more information and an application call 847-662-4247	YWCA of Lake County Child Care Resource & Referral receives funds from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to support credentialing. Family child care providers, child care center staff and director's are eligible to apply for these funds. Priority is given to programs that serve 25% or more IDHS funded children. For more information and an application call 847-662-4247	YWCA of Lake County Child Care Resource & Referral receives funds from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to support credentialing. Family child care providers, child care center staff and director's are eligible to apply for these funds. Priority is given to programs that serve 25% or more IDHS funded children. For more information and an application call 847-662-4247
Child Development Credential (CDA) 800-424-4310	X		X	
Child Care Professional (CCP) 800-543-7161	X		X	
Illinois Director's Credential (IDC) 800-863-0499	X		X	
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation 800-424-2460		X		
National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation 800-359-3817		X		
National Early Childhood Program (NECPA) Accreditation 800-505-9878		X		
National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) Accreditation 800-617-8242		X		
Tuition	X			X
In-State Conferences				X
In-Service/Consultation				X

Additional Professional Development Initiatives

- Great START** (Strategy to Attract and Retain Teachers) is a program that provides a wage supplement to child care personnel working in licensed child care centers and family child care homes. Wage supplements range from \$300-3,900 yearly, dependent upon an applicants level of educational attainment. **For more information and an application call 1-800-649-1884 or www.ilchildcare.org.**
- TEACH Early Childhood Illinois** is a scholarship and compensation project for licensed family child care homes, center staff and directors working at least 30 hours per week. If eligible you can receive up to 80% of the cost of tuition and books, travel reimbursement and a stipend for a substitute. Scholarships support the above credentials, Associates or Bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Scholarship recipients receive a bonus or pay raise as they take steps towards completing a degree or credential. **For more information or an application call 1-800-863-0499 or www.ilchildcare.org.**

Professional Development Funds are available through YWCA of Lake County Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) based on the availability of funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). Family Child Care Providers, Child Care Center Staff and Directors are eligible to apply for these funds. Applicants may apply for tuition, to attend an in-state conference, and/or for in-service training/consultation. Priority is given to programs with 25% or more of their enrollment consisting of IDHS funded children.