

The Child Development Certificates

The New Mexico Child Development Certificates are state-awarded certificates for early childhood educators. The Certificates are issued by the Office of Child Development under the NM Children Youth and Families Department.

The Child Development Certificates have been created to meet the entry-level professional requirements for educators who are already working in a classroom setting with infants and toddlers or preschool children.

The Certificates are particularly designed to assist Head Start and Early Head Start educators meet the interim staff qualification requirements of the Head Start Reauthorization (P.L. 110-134):

Sec. 19 STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT.

(3) ALTERNATIVE CREDENTIALING AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS — The Secretary shall ensure that, for center-based programs, each Head Start classroom that does not have a teacher who meets the qualifications described in clause (I) or (II) of paragraph (2)(A) is assigned one teacher who has the following during the period specified:

- (A) Through September 30, 2011 — ...*
- (ii) a State-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a child development associate credential.*

Sec. 645A Early Head Start Programs Center-Based Staff.

(1) ensure that, not later than September 30, 2010, all teachers providing direct services to children and families participating in Early Head Start program located in Early Head Start centers, have a minimum of a child development associate credential, and have been trained (or have equivalent coursework) in early childhood development.

Both New Mexico Child Development Certificates exceed the requirements of the CDA Credential. And, most importantly, the requirements include four of the courses (11 or 12 credits depending upon courses completed) required for an associate degree in early childhood education.



There are two New Mexico Child Development Certificates:

1. New Mexico Child Development Certificate with Infant/Toddler Specialization
2. New Mexico Child Development Certificate with Preschool Specialization

In order to qualify for either New Mexico Child Development Certificate, an applicant must request, complete and submit a certificate packet.

Certificate requirements include successful completion of:

1. Four courses with at least a "C":
 - Child Growth, Development and LearningPlus three of the four courses listed below:
 - Guiding Young Children
 - Health, Safety and Nutrition
 - Family and Community Collaboration
 - Assessment of Children and Evaluation of Programs
2. Professional Resource File
3. Family Opinion Questionnaire
4. Observation
5. Oral Interview

How do I get a certificate packet? Request an Infant/Toddler or Preschool Certificate packet from the NewMexicoKids Network office: (505) 250-6725.

I already have an associate degree in early childhood education. Do I still need to get my Child Development Certificate? No. In fact, if you got your associate degree in New Mexico, you are probably eligible to receive the Early Childhood Associate's Certificate from the Office of Child Development.

Can I take the required courses on-line? Yes. Several colleges offer these courses on-line. Please contact your local higher education institution for more information.