

What is the difference between the CDA and NAFCC Accreditation?

NAFCC Accreditation and the Child Development Associate Credential compliment one another. The purpose, the process, the standards and the observation tools are very different from each other.



The CDA is a provider competency based credential. Candidates must demonstrate their competence in an early childhood education setting based on the six CDA Competency Goals in 13 Functional Areas.



NAFCC accreditation reflects a high level of quality through a process that examines all aspects of the family child care program. NAFCC's 289 quality standards are specific to a family child care environment. The standards represent quality in Relationships, The Environment, Developmental Learning Activities, Safety and Health and Professional and Business Practices. Accreditation values the "many right ways" that the standards can be met in an environment based on the diversity of family child care programs.

When you use the services of a public or private school system, hospital, or police department, you want to be able to trust that you are getting the best services possible. Many programs are accredited as a public demonstration that they provide high quality service.

The purpose of NAFCC accreditation is:

- To ensure quality programs through the use of standards and rigorous evaluation criteria
- To stimulate programs toward higher levels of quality and efficiency
- To provide a system for public trust and accountability

NAFCC encourages high quality care by providing a structure that supports continued professional development and quality improvement. Input from hundreds of providers, parents, and early care and education experts were used to design the system in an effort to create a quality indicator for family child care programs across the country.

There are about 1800 NAFCC Accredited providers throughout the United States and in other international locations where military family child care programs operate. NAFCC Accreditation recognizes that a family child care program is a quality environment. In states where Quality Rating Systems have been implemented, NAFCC Accreditation is often the "top" level in the rating system.