



Using CCV Courses and Programs to Earn Early Childhood Professional Recognition: The Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder

Are you completing CCV courses related to working with young children and their families? Are you working toward the CCV Childcare certificate or Early Childhood Education associate degree? Do you have current or prior experience working in the early childhood education field? If you can answer YES to any of these questions, you may be recognized on the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder.

What is the Career Ladder?

The [Career Ladder](#) is a tool for recognizing, tracking, and planning professional growth in the field of early childhood (birth to age eight). The Career Ladder organizes coursework, credentials, degrees, and licensure into 6 levels which are recognized in Vermont's professional development System for early educators. As you gain early childhood professional education, training, and experience, you can move up levels on the Career Ladder. Each time you achieve a new level on the Career Ladder you receive an industry recognized certificate, meet regulated child care staff and program requirements, and may even be eligible for a recognition bonus from the Child Development Division.

What does achieving a level mean?

Achieving a level means you have earned a level certificate, a sign of professional recognition. [Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center](#), housed at CCV, issues the early childhood level certificates. Each level requires a candidate to have (a) education, (b) experience working with young children in groups, and (c) a current Individual Professional Development Plan. The education you complete at CCV, including coursework related to working with young children and families, the CCV Childcare certificate, and the CCV Early Childhood AA degree, can meet education requirements for levels on the Career Ladder.

Why is the Career Ladder Important?

The Vermont Career Ladder recognizes achievements and professionalism of workers in the early childhood field. It provides a pathway for planning the next steps in your career and guidance on how to get there. Even if you have not yet completed an early childhood degree, the Career Ladder recognizes coursework you have taken related to working young children.

Professionals with level certificates help programs meet staff requirements for Vermont child care licensing regulations and program quality standards required through [STARS](#): Step Ahead Recognition System.

Lastly, when professionals earn level certificates along the Career Ladder, the information is recorded in a state-wide database system that tracks and recognizes achievements of the early childhood workforce and identifies needs for professional development trainings.

How do CCV courses, the CCV Childcare certificate, and Early Childhood Education AA degree fit on the Career Ladder?

Each level on the Career Ladder has education requirements. One way to meet the education requirement for the first level is to successfully complete a 3-credit child development course (covering birth to age 8). Level II and IIIA require successful completion of additional coursework related to the field. Completion of the CCV Childcare certificate also meets the education requirement for Level IIIA. Earning an Early Childhood AA degree meets the education requirements for Level IIIB. If you continue your education and earn a bachelor degree in an early childhood field, you will meet the education requirements for Level IV on the Career Ladder. Individuals with a bachelor degree in a different field may choose to take CCV courses to obtain 30 related credits required for Level IV.

Which CCV courses qualify for “related college credits?”

When you apply for a level certificate and you do not have a degree or your degree is in an unrelated field, Northern Lights will look for college credits related to early childhood. The Vermont Career Ladder is based on five Vermont core knowledge areas and competencies for early childhood professionals. Related credits fall into one or more of the core knowledge areas. See below for a partial list of CCV courses sorted by core knowledge areas.

Child Development

PSY 2010 - Child Development	PSY 2110 - Educational Psychology
PSY 2020 - Infant & Toddler Development	EDU 1030 - Introduction to Early Childhood Education
PSY 2025 - Development of the Young Child: Ages 3 - 8	EDU 1040 - Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals
PSY 1010 - Introduction to Psychology	EDU 2065 - Afterschool Education & Development of the School-Aged Child
PSY 1050 - Human Growth & Development	

Teaching and Learning

EDU 1250 - Fostering Creative Learning for Children	EDU 2055 - Teaching Methods for Literacy Development
EDU 1270 - Introduction to Early Intervention	EDU 2075 - Literature for Children
EDU 1320 - Introduction to Afterschool Education	EDU 2110 - Introduction to Exceptional Populations
EDU 2010 - Foundations of Education	EDU 2150 - Management of the Classroom
EDU 2045 - Curriculum Development for Early Childhood Education	EDU 2160 - The Multi-Age Classroom
	EDU 2720 - Nurturing Early Literacy

Healthy and Safe Environments

BIO-1030 Introduction to Nutrition	BUS-1190 Health & Safety in the Work Environment
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Families and Communities

PSY 1020 - Child Abuse & Neglect	SOC 2220 - The Family in Society
PSY 2040 - Social Psychology	SWK 1010 - Introduction to Human Services
SOC 1010 - Introduction to Sociology	SWK 2020 - Family Violence

Professionalism and Program Organization

EDU 2041 - Leadership, Mentoring & Supervision for Early Childhood & Afterschool Practitioners	COM 1030 - Intercultural Communication
EDU 2042 - Management for Early Childhood Education & Afterschool Programs	BUS 1150 - Professional Financial Literacy
COM 1015 - Communication in the Early Childhood Education & Afterschool Workplace	BUS 2210 - Small Business Management
COM 1020 - Interpersonal & Small Group Communication	BUS 2410 - Human Resource Management
	ACC 1001 - Office Accounting I
	ACC 2121 - Financial Accounting

Contact the Northern Lights office if you have questions about specific courses meeting level certificate requirements.

How do I get a level certificate?

The Northern Lights Career Development Website has all the information you need about the Career Ladder and level certificate application process:

<http://northernlightscdc.org> > CAREER PATHWAYS > EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREER LADDER

The Career Ladder webpage has links to describe each level, FAQs, and information for creating the required Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). Applications for each level can be found on the sidebar of webpage. You do not have to start at Level I; apply for the level that best matches your current education, training, and experience. Print and complete the application and send it to Northern Lights with your current IPDP and an official copy of your college transcripts (transcripts must be issued by college registrars).

How do I apply for a CDD recognition bonus?

You do not have to apply for a recognition bonus. The first requirement to achieve a recognition bonus from the [Child Development Division](#) (CDD) is to have a level certificate. When Northern Lights issues you a level certificate, they share that information with CDD to consider for a recognition bonus. Additional information about bonus requirements can be found on the level application. Also, when you successfully complete a level, a letter from CDD explaining the recognition bonus is included with your certificate.

Are there other credentials and certificates I can earn with college coursework?

CCV completed coursework may be applied towards three other Vermont recognized credentials/certificates:

1. The national Child Development Associate Credential (CDA), issued by the [Council for Professional Recognition](#), meets the education requirement for a Level II certificate on the Career Ladder. One requirement to earn this credential is 120 completed training hours. College credits may be used to help meet this requirement. Upon completion of a CDA, early childhood professionals can apply for a Level II certificate.
2. The [Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program](#) is hosted by [Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council \(VCCICC\)](#) and includes six CCV courses. VCCICC sponsors Apprenticeship courses and offers them free of charge to early childhood professionals registered in the Apprenticeship program. After completing the program, apprentices can also apply to receive a Level IIIA certificate on the early childhood Career Ladder. All of the CCV courses in this program can be applied to a CCV Childcare certificate or Early Childhood Education associate degree.
3. Northern Lights issues the [Program Director Credential](#) for early childhood and afterschool directors. Three CCV college courses meet Step I Program Director certificate requirements: Child Development, Curriculum Development, and Early Childhood Education & Afterschool Program Management. Two CCV courses meet 2 of the 3 required courses for the Step 2 Program Director certificate: Leadership Mentoring & Supervision, and Human Resource Management. Learn more about this credential on the Northern Lights website, <http://northernlightscdc.org>, under CAREER PATHWAYS- Credentials and Certificates
4. The Career Ladder also recognizes professionals with a current teaching license and endorsement in early childhood or elementary education from the VT Standards Board under the Vermont Agency of Education. This endorsement is often earned by taking specific college coursework.

What if I am working on a certificate or degree but am not currently employed in the early childhood education field?

A level certificate requires 1-2 years or more of experience working with children birth to age 8 in a group setting. This experience can be completed at any time and does not need to occur in Vermont.

How do I find out more?

Look on the Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org> or contact the Northern Lights office: professional.development@ccv.edu