

1. You will be contacted by a candidate. When contacted, you will be asked if you are interested in serving as an advisor to a particular candidate, in a specific training period. You are free to accept or not, as you wish. Many advisors request payment for their services, and typically charge between \$200 - \$300 per candidate.
2. If you decide to serve as an advisor, you will be asked to certify that you meet the qualifications for CDA advisor, as outlined by the National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, the organization that administers the CDA program.
3. When you agree to become a CDA advisor, your candidate will give you several resources to help you do your job. These include a glossy-covered booklet describing the CDA program and a manila-colored formal observation booklet. Please read through both booklets carefully.
4. The CDA course material is based on accepted early childhood research and practice. Please refer to the following source material, available from your candidate: the book *Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Revised Edition* and the pamphlet *NAEYC Code of Ethics*. These two sources are the guidelines for appropriate early childhood practice. If you have further questions regarding an activity or practice you observe with a candidate, please call the CCR&R Professional Development Coordinator at your regional CCR&R office.
5. When you agree to become a CDA advisor, you are encouraged to perform a series of **three observations** with the candidate at their place of work (see *NOTE below*). Guidelines for observation visits are:
 - During observations, the candidate must be acting as lead teacher with a group of children who are in the age group the candidate has chosen as their CDA emphasis area (infant/toddler, preschool, or family child care). Please note that if a candidate is completing the Infant/Toddler emphasis, s/he must be observed acting as a lead teacher with each age group.
 - A minimum number of children in the designated age group **must be present during the observation period**:
 - **Center-based Preschool setting:** at least 8 children, all of whom are aged 3-5 years.
 - **Center-based Infant Toddler setting:** at least 3 children, all of whom are under age 3 years.
 - **Family/Group setting:** at least 2 children 0-5 years of age and who are not related to the CDA candidate by blood or marriage.
 - The first visit is an informal meeting to familiarize yourself with the candidate and his/her work environment. This visit will typically be about an hour in length.

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- The second visit is a dry-run of the formal observation. You may wish to make a photocopy of the formal observation instrument for this observation. During this visit, you are encouraged to advise or mentor the candidate. This is your chance to help the candidate correct any problems or to address any concerns you may have regarding their demonstrated skills. We encourage you to share your findings from this observation with the candidate and to offer suggestions for improved practice. This visit may be 2-3 hours long.
- The third and final visit is to complete the *formal observation instrument* (manila-covered observation instrument from the National CDA Council, given to you by your candidate) and typically takes between 4-6 hours. The formal observation information is used by the National CDA Council to determine a candidate's ability to be a CDA. At this point, your role as advisor shifts: you are now ADVISING the National CDA Council as to the candidate's suitability and demonstrated skills. Read the instructions on the observation booklet carefully before marking responses. Please fill out the observation booklet as completely and as honestly as you can, including descriptions and explanations as need. **The results of this observation ARE NOT shared with the candidate.**
- Be sure to date and sign the observation on the front cover, seal the observation form, place the completed observation instrument in a sealed envelope, and give it to the candidate.
- After completing the formal observation, be sure to fill out the advisor's section of the Direct Assessment Application form (ask your candidate to have this form available). Make certain that the dates you write on the observation and application forms match.

NOTE: The national CDA Council only requires that the advisor conduct one on-site observation visit, during which time the formal observation is completed. However, because the results of the formal observation cannot be shared with the candidate, CCR&R feels that candidates benefit from several visits and from your feedback. We strongly encourage you to conduct several visits to your candidate's program but acknowledge that you are not required to do so.

6. CDA candidates may ask you to read their written work. You may do this if you wish, but you are not obligated to do so.
7. As a CDA advisor, you are a very important contributor to the candidate's training experience. We hope you will enjoy working with candidates and that you will continue to be available to future candidates. If you wish to have your name removed from the list of potential CDA advisors, simply contact your CCR&R Professional Development Coordinator. Again, thank you for your help!

Leading the Way for Child Care in North Dakota