



The Montana Career Path: A Framework for Professional Development in Early Childhood Education

Apply to The Practitioner Registry at www.mtecp.org to be certified at one of these 11 levels.

Level 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High School diploma or GED certificate ◆ Currently working in an Early Childhood setting** ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training
Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High School diploma or GED certificate ◆ 60 hours of approved training in the past 5 years ◆ Minimum of 500 hours working in an Early Childhood setting** ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training
Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Current national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential –OR– ◆ Current National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation and 120 hours of approved training in the past 5 years ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting** ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training
Level 4 Certification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Current national CDA credential plus at least 20 semester college credits* in Early Childhood Education/Child Development –OR– ◆ Current Montana Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship Certificate (college coursework required) –OR– ◆ One year certificate requiring 30 college credits* in Early Childhood Education/Child Development ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting** ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training
Level 5 Certification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Associate’s Degree with at least 20 semester college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development* ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting** ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

Level 6 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree with at least 20 semester college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting**
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

Level 7 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree with an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education OR a minor in Early Childhood Education
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting**
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

Level 8 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development* OR Elementary Education with the P-3 teacher endorsement
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting**
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

Level 9 Certification

- ◆ Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development*
- ◆ **-OR-**
- ◆ Master's Degree in a related field with emphasis in Early Childhood Education/Child Development*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting**
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

Level 10 Certification

- ◆ Doctorate in Early Childhood Education/Child Development*
- ◆ **-OR-**
- ◆ Doctorate in a related field with Early Childhood Education/Child Development emphasis*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting**
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

*All credits and degrees must be from regionally accredited colleges and universities.

**Early Childhood settings are programs offering services to young children and their families including administrative and teacher/caregiving roles, or programs that conduct training or education in early childhood

Early Childhood coursework counts for annual training hours (1 semester credit = 15 hours). ECP verifies early childhood courses

Visit www.mtecp.org for more information about The Early Childhood Project.



montana early childhood project

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