

# Careers in Early Childhood Education

## A KANSAS GUIDE



# Introduction

Child development is a dynamic, interactive process that occurs in the context of relationships, experiences and environments. For optimal development and a solid foundation, children need good health, strong families and high quality early learning and school experiences.

Young children that attend quality licensed child care programs have the opportunity to learn through play, and form comfortable, secure relationships with caring adults that nurture their health and emotional development. These types of early experiences help shape young children's brains, promote healthy development, and begin to build foundational skills for lifelong learning. With quality early childhood development experiences, children are school ready, graduate from high school and grow into productive citizens and valuable employees.

Early childhood careers are among the most critical roles within any community workforce. This guide provides information about a variety of career choices that are available in the field of early childhood education in Kansas.

Career roles in this guide include - **Direct Services, Supportive Service Career and Related Careers** and a total of 22 career descriptions. Within the early childhood industry, there are many different career paths. This Kansas guide describes career opportunities to nurture a newborn, work as a paraprofessional, teach preschool, teach other professionals and more.



<sup>1</sup> (<http://first2000days.org/first-2000-days/#.Vrjk3GfbKP8>)

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## METHODOLOGY

Information in the *Careers in Early Childhood Education: Kansas Guide* was collected from state and federal agencies, agency records, interviews and reflects the current available information. Child Care Aware of Kansas staff compiled all information for this guide. Questions should be directed to Child Care Aware of Kansas, 855-750-3343.

# Glossary

**Career Pathway** is the progression of educational qualifications, credentials and training that build upon one another and enable early childhood professionals to advance in their careers. Career pathways can be flexible, with multiple entry and exit points, to allow the workforce to acquire the necessary career-related skills and knowledge.

**Child Care Centers** are a nonresidential group settings, such as within public or private schools, churches, preschools, day care centers, or nursery schools focused on the needs of families and communities. These programs are licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (otherwise they are illegal).

**Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)** provide a range of services to the community, such as guidance and referrals to parents seeking child care; professional development and trainings for early childhood professionals; as well as parenting and other educational resources for families.

**Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential** is an internationally recognized early child care credential administered through the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. The credential identifies basic competencies (skills) needed to provide care. The CDA represents an evaluation of the practitioner's skills based on national standards. Certificates are earned in several settings, including center-based, either infant/toddler or preschool endorsements, family child care, home visitor and bilingual.

**Credentials** are academic degrees, licenses or certificates awarded to individuals who successfully complete state or national requirements to enter specialized roles in the early childhood

**Direct Service Careers** are those that involve direct care and education of young children. These careers usually require education and experience in early development and education. Often, a related field, such as elementary education or social work, is also accepted for this qualification.

**Early Childhood Core Competencies** refers to specific, basic concepts, skills and abilities that early childhood professionals should learn, understand and be able to demonstrate.

**Early Childhood Education Workforce** includes those working with young children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children in centers, homes, and schools) and their families, including agencies, organizations, and institutions of higher education, with a primary mission of supporting young children's development and learning.

**Early Childhood Related Field** includes a degree in Child Care Administration, Child Development, Child Psychology, Early Childhood Special Education, Human Services, Family and Consumer Sciences or Youth Development.

**Early Childhood Education Certificate** is a certificate that recognizes individuals with practical skills in the field of child care, and prepares them to assist, teach, or manage a child care facility or preschool facility.

**Educational Options** are credential and degree programs commonly expected for those who hold this position.

**Family Child Care Homes** are settings for children in the owner/operator's own home. These programs are licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (otherwise they are illegal). Ratios of adults to children are based on children's ages. Family child care homes have smaller numbers of children for families wanting a more home-like setting.

**Head Start/Early Head Start programs** provide comprehensive services to low-income families. Early Head Start programs serve children from birth to three years. Head Start programs serve three- and four-year olds. The programs promote school readiness by enhancing health, nutrition, parenting skills, and social and cognitive development of children.

**Part B Special Education Services** is a section of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that lays out the educational and funding guidelines and requirements for children with disabilities from 3-21 years of age. Part B references requirements related to the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

**Part C Early Intervention Services** is a section of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that lays out the educational and funding guidelines and requirements for children with disabilities from birth through two years of age. Part C references requirements related to the Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSP) and Early Intervention services.

**Preschool Programs** offer care and education specifically to children ages 3 to 5 years. Hours of operation are typically shorter than center-based or family child care homes, and may only be available 2 to 3 days a week.

**Public Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)** offers care to children ages 3 to 5 years old. Services vary based on the program's target population and hours of operation. Care may be in a public school, non-profit, for-profit, or private facility. Some programs provide after-school care.

**Supportive Service Careers** include careers that support the development, regulation, and guidance of early childhood agencies and professionals. These careers may or may not require a degree in an early childhood-related field. Examples include licensing surveyors or college or university faculty.

**Related Careers** include careers that continuously strive to develop and improve the early childhood field through government actions, advocacy efforts, fundraising, research and other large-scale projects. These careers do not necessarily require an early childhood-related degree. However, they require a great understanding of the early childhood field.

# Ten Reasons to Become an Early Childhood Professional

By Michelle Gilbert | Early Care & Education Specialist, Child Care Aware® of Eastern Kansas

Across the nation, conversations are taking place about the shortage of qualified early childhood professionals. In Kansas, the topic of workforce development comes up at virtually any meeting about our field. There is no denying some early educators work hard for low pay, which can make it challenging to recruit people to the field. However, this work also brings many rewards you can't get in other professions. Here are ten reasons to consider becoming an early childhood professional:



1

**The ability to help shape our future.** Working with young children is a nurturing profession. The love and care you show children today will shape how they treat others for the rest of their lives.

2

**Supporting strong, healthy families.** In early childhood, our work is not just with young children, but with the whole family. Early educators have the opportunity to provide connections to community resources and supports to help families thrive.

3

**The opportunity to work in a fun environment.** Young children are playful by nature. While early educators work extremely hard, it is also fun work. There are very few professions where playing dress-up or using playdough is actually encouraged!

4

**Preventing child abuse and neglect.** Because of the daily contact and relationships formed with families, early childhood professionals provide a frontline of defense for young children when it comes to abuse and neglect.

5

**Seeing children learn something new.** Young children are constantly learning! In fact, there is no other time in our lives when we will learn as rapidly as we do in the first three years of life. Early educators have the joy of planning experiences to support this development and seeing the magic in a child's eyes when they master new skills.

6

**Being part of a community of like-minded people.** The early childhood community is tight-knit and very supportive. By joining professional organizations like Child Care Providers Coalition (CCPC) or Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children (KSAEYC), early educators have the opportunity to network with others who share their passion for young children and families.

7

**Every day is unique.** When working with a group of young children, there is rarely a dull moment. From the activities and experiences they plan to the environment they provide, early educators are continually adapting to keep things fresh for the children in their care.

8

**The opportunity to be a life-long learner.** It is often said that the best teachers are learners themselves. By attending professional development classes, teachers develop knowledge and skills to support their work with young children. By growing their own skills, early childhood professionals feel more confident and competent in their work.

9

**All the hugs and macaroni necklaces you could ever want.** Young children find pleasure in the simple things in life. While working with young children, early educators have the ability to set aside the complexities of life, if even for a bit, and be "in the moment" with children as they share their special gifts.

10

**The joy of making a positive difference in the life of a child.** Every child deserves a champion – someone who believes in and encourages her to become the best version of herself. Early childhood professionals have the honor of being an advocate or cheerleader for young children every single day!



# Direct Services

**Direct Service Careers** are those that involve direct care and education of young children. These careers (alphabetized below) usually require education and experience in early development and education. Often, a related field, such as elementary education or social work, is also accepted for this qualification.



## Child Care Center Administrator and/or Director

- ▶ Recruits, screens, trains, supervises, and evaluates staff and volunteers
- ▶ Ensures adherence to federal and state employment laws and regulations
- ▶ Establishes an organizational culture where staff and volunteers feel valued, knowledgeable, and safe
- ▶ Manages all program resources (supplies, records, finances, and personnel) effectively
- ▶ Develops a fiscal business plan to reflect the program's mission and philosophy
- ▶ Collaborates with families in their child's learning, development, and well-being
- ▶ Implements strategies to promote the value of the program within the community

### SETTINGS

After School Program  
Business supported/operated Child Care Program  
Child Care Center  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Pre-Kindergarten Program  
Private Preschool

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

The amount of education that is necessary in order to be a child care center administrator/program director depends on the number of children on the center's license. The following criteria are a general outline.

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)  
Early Childhood Education Certificate  
Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood or related field

### COMMENT FROM A CHILD CARE CENTER DIRECTOR

*Envision Child Development: "The reason I have chosen to be a part of the early childhood professionals is because we make a difference in the lives of children and families. If a student has a great start their future is brighter. Children are like flowers in a garden. We just sprinkle them with love and kindness, and they will blossom. Early Childhood Educators make a strong difference daily."*

## Child Care Center Assistant Director

- ▶ Assists director in meeting responsibilities
- ▶ Follows regulations or policies regarding health and safety, including emergency, illness, and injury procedures
- ▶ Participates in leadership and advocacy opportunities within the profession

### SETTINGS

After School Program  
Business Supported/operated Child Care Program  
Child Care Center  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Pre-Kindergarten Program  
Private Preschool

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Child Development Associate credential (CDA)  
Early Childhood Education Certificate  
Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

### COMMENT FROM A CHILD CARE CENTER DIRECTOR

*Wichita State University Child Development Center: "Children are our future. If we don't give them a solid foundation through our care, love and education then they will struggle not only for the rest of their school career but as successful contributing adults to society. Not only are we shaping our children's future, but we are laying the pathway for future educators. It's our job to not only teach our youngest students but to educate our future teachers."*



## Family Child Care Assistant

- ▶ Assists Family Child Care Educator with daily schedule and activities
- ▶ Helps to create a developmentally appropriate in-home learning environment
- ▶ Models healthy lifestyle practices
- ▶ Promotes safe practices for children

### SETTING

Family Child Care Home

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

High School Diploma

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)

### COMMENT FROM FAMILY CHILD CARE

*Country Kids: "I love to be around children and want to help with their development and see their excitement."*

## Family Child Care Educator

- ▶ Creates a developmentally appropriate in-home learning environment
- ▶ Develops a business plan that includes financial planning, marketing of business, and program policies
- ▶ Develops and maintains positive communication with families
- ▶ Improves teaching and learning through professional work habits
- ▶ Promotes safe practices for children
- ▶ Creates and maintains safe indoor and outdoor areas
- ▶ Plans experiences to promote nutrition and healthy eating practices

### SETTING

Family Child Care Home

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

High School Diploma

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)

Associate in early childhood or related field

Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

Note: A person who provides child care in the child's home is generally referred to as a nanny and only receives payment through parent fees. It is important to note that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) does not regulate nanny care.

### COMMENT FROM FAMILY CHILD CARE

*Bella's Playhouse: "It is my passion & it allows me to utilize my professional strengths & many of my personal interests. I also have the ability to peer mentor. I have grown professionally throughout the years, always expanding my potential. I am in awe when I reflect on how far I have come in my career as well as the changes in early child care field & how it is perceived."*

## Paraeducators: Early Learning (State Pre-K 4-Year Old at Risk)

- ▶ Recognizes basic benchmarks for growth and development
- ▶ Assists teacher with the collection of information about each child's growth, development, and learning
- ▶ Works effectively with peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals

### SETTINGS

Public School Sponsored Early Childhood Programs

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)

Associate degree in early childhood or related field

Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

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## Substitute Teacher

- ▶ Performs many of the same duties of a teacher or assistant teacher
- ▶ Recognizes basic benchmarks for growth and development
- ▶ Models healthy lifestyle practices

### SETTINGS

All early childhood settings, excluding public school sponsored early childhood programs.

### EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)  
Early Childhood Education Certificate

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## Teacher Assistant

- ▶ Assists Teacher with the collection of information about each child's growth, development, and learning
- ▶ Recognizes basic benchmarks for growth and development
- ▶ Models healthy lifestyle practices
- ▶ Promotes safe practices for children
- ▶ Works effectively with peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals

### SETTINGS

Business supported/operated Child Care Program  
Child Care Center  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Pre-Kindergarten Program  
Private Preschool

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)  
Early Childhood Education Certificate  
Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

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## Teacher

- ▶ Creates a developmentally appropriate learning environment
- ▶ Recognizes that each child learns and develops through experience and active participation
- ▶ Promotes safe practices for children
- ▶ Plans experiences to promote nutrition and healthy eating practices
- ▶ Develops and maintains positive communication with families
- ▶ Improves teaching and learning through professional work habits
- ▶ Implements principles of teamwork in interactions with peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals

### SETTINGS

Business Supported/operated Child Care Program  
Child Care Center  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Pre-Kindergarten Program  
Private Preschool

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)  
Early Childhood Education Certificate  
Associate in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field



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## Early Childhood Special Education Services

There are a significant number of special education services provided by professionals to young children with disabilities in a variety of settings. These career options can include: Speech Language Pathologist, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Audiologist, Mental Health, and Social Worker.

For more information, visit Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Infant-Toddler Services • [www.ksits.org](http://www.ksits.org).



# Supportive Service Careers

**Supportive Service Careers** include careers (alphabetized) that support the development, regulation, and guidance of early childhood agencies and professionals. These careers may or may not require a degree in an early childhood related field. Examples include licensing surveyors or college or university faculty.

## Child Care Referral Specialist

- ▶ Helps families learn about the various types of child care settings
- ▶ Shares information with families about the impact of learning activities on development
- ▶ Shares information about community resources that meet the needs of children and families

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
Non-profit Organization

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

## Consultant/Contractor

- ▶ Recognizes the individual needs of all learners and realizes that variations in children's strengths, needs, prior knowledge and experiences, learning styles, and multiple intelligences impact learning
- ▶ Demonstrates effective organizational and time management skills
- ▶ Explains current theory, research, and policy on program planning and evaluation to peers, families and the public through articles, parent meetings, and conference presentations
- ▶ Understands adult learning and effective teaching strategies
- ▶ Works effectively with peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals
- ▶ Establishes positive community relationships through ongoing communication with community partners and volunteers

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
Government Agency  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Self-employed

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in an early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in an early childhood or related field  
Master's degree in an early childhood or related field

## Early Childhood Specialist

- ▶ Encourages best practice to help child care professionals enhance quality
- ▶ Promotes continuous, collaborative learning among professionals
- ▶ Advocates for children and the profession
- ▶ Provides resources to child care professionals for professional growth
- ▶ Recruits prospective child care professionals
- ▶ Builds collaborative relationships with community partners and early education programs

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
Government Agency  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Non-profit Organization  
Professional Association

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field  
Master's degree in early childhood or related field

## COMMENT FROM AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIALIST

*The Family Conservancy, Early Care and Education Specialist: "I love teaching children and now adults. I really enjoy being a support coach for early childhood professionals and being able to help them grow and improve their programs as well as having an impact on the children and families in their care."*





## Early Intervention Specialist

- ▶ Delivers services including speech, occupational and physical therapies, audiology, special instruction, and family training
- ▶ Knowledgeable about environments and learning experiences that value, affirm, and respect each child's diverse needs and abilities

### SETTINGS

Community Agency  
 Government Agency  
 Local Interagency Coordinating Council

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Bachelor's degree in early childhood special education or early childhood unified (teaching license required)  
 Master's degree in in early childhood special education or early childhood unified (teaching license required)

## Family Specialist/Counselor

- ▶ Develops partnerships with families to support children's learning, development, and well-being
- ▶ Shares information with families about the impact of learning activities on development
- ▶ Provides early childhood information and resources to families
- ▶ Advocates for the families as they seek resources and/or services
- ▶ Connects families with parenting materials, websites, support groups, and community resources specific to their needs
- ▶ Collaborates with service providers and other family specialists/counselors in the community to ensure that families have access to needed services

### SETTINGS

Corporation  
 Government Agency  
 Head Start/Early Head Start  
 Healthy Families  
 Non-profit Organization  
 Parents as Teachers

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field  
 Master's degree in early childhood or related field

## Home Visitor

- ▶ Recognizes that each child learns and develops through experience and active participation
- ▶ Shares information with families about the impact of learning activities on development
- ▶ Recognizes that families influence children's interests, abilities, and development
- ▶ Identifies and uses community resources to support and assist children and families

### SETTINGS

Head Start/Early Head Start  
 Health Department  
 Non-profit Organization  
 Professional Association

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Home Visitor Child Development Associate Credential  
 Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
 Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

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## Licensing Surveyor

- ▶ Conducts onsite visits to child care programs to assess compliance with state child care regulations
- ▶ Ensures adherence to appropriate local, state and/or federal child care regulations
- ▶ Provides technical assistance and training on child care regulations
- ▶ Knowledgeable about resources to support families, children, and child care program needs

### SETTINGS

Health Department  
Government Agency  
Contractor

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field

### COMMENT FROM A LICENSING SURVEYOR

*Health Department Child Care Licensing: "I started in the field due to my love of children and gift of positive interactions with them. I stayed in the field because it needs me! Early childhood goes beyond children, beyond teachers and beyond parents. It is education, it is workforce, it is community! This field needs the best individuals working for the children, the teachers and the parents. Early Childhood is the foundation. I want to be apart of making a difference."*



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## Post-Secondary Instructor

- ▶ Utilizes techniques to promote transfer of learning for classroom staff
- ▶ Applies, evaluates, and shares knowledge and resources to further understand and improve learning environments, teaching, and curricula
- ▶ Understands adult learning, utilizes effective teaching strategies, and is knowledgeable about subject matter
- ▶ Integrates information on growth, development, learning patterns, diverse abilities, multiple intelligences and knows how to apply to practices in the early childhood classroom

### SETTINGS

Community College  
Online College  
Technical College  
College or University

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Master's degree in early childhood or related field  
Doctorate degree in early childhood or related field

### COMMENT FROM AN INSTRUCTOR

*Butler Community College Instructor: "I chose to become a teacher because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of children, much like some of my favorite teachers did in mine. I absolutely love teaching Early Childhood Education at the college level because it allows me to work with adults, passing along knowledge about developmentally appropriate practice and hopefully instilling a passion to work with young children and their families. I also still have direct contact with children, as my office is in the Early Childhood Education Learning Lab, the EduCare Center, on our campus. I am in those classrooms frequently, and as I go out and observe my students during their Practicum field experiences around our area in other early childhood programs. I can see directly if they are applying what they are learning in our college classes."*



## Professional Development Coordinator

- ▶ Advocates for best practices in child and youth development programs
- ▶ Develops continuous, collaborative professional development services
- ▶ Develops and implements a professional development plan for an agency
- ▶ Creates professional development opportunities for others
- ▶ Evaluates and secures resources for ongoing professional development
- ▶ Creates partnerships for local and statewide trainings

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
 Community Agency  
 Community Foundation  
 Government Agency  
 Non-profit Organization  
 Public Agency

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
 Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field  
 Master's degree in early childhood or related field

## Professional Development Trainer

- ▶ Encourages and empowers others to continue their early childhood education
- ▶ Utilizes techniques to promote transfer of learning for child care professionals
- ▶ Understands adult learning and effective teaching strategies
- ▶ Integrates information on growth, development, learning patterns, diverse abilities, multiple intelligences and shows how to apply it in early childhood settings
- ▶ Advocates for programs and policies that impact the overall quality of services for children and families

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
 Community Agency  
 Corporations  
 County/State Department of Social Services or Education  
 Government Agency  
 Mental Health Agency  
 Non-profit Organization  
 Professional Association  
 College or University

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
 Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field  
 Master's degree in early childhood or related field  
 Doctorate degree in early childhood or related field

## COMMENT FROM A TRAINER

*Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities: "I quickly decided that my passion was working with children birth to five. My career path has lead me from the early childhood classroom to the classroom for adults who work with young children, and I couldn't be more thrilled."*



## Technical Assistance Coach

- ▶ Supports early childhood programs in the development of goals
- ▶ Provides support to early childhood professionals that encourages ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment, and problem-solving strategies
- ▶ Provides support to early childhood professionals to integrate information on growth and development, learning patterns, diverse abilities, and multiple intelligences; Applies to practice
- ▶ References best practice to encourage early childhood programs in shaping actions and interventions
- ▶ Identifies successes and strengths of programs to help promote best practice

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
 Non-profit Organization  
 Private Organization

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Associate degree in early childhood or related field  
 Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field  
 Master's degree in early childhood or related field

## Project Coordinator/Director

- ▶ Demonstrates the ability to strengthen the program's team of peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals
- ▶ Implements principles of teamwork in interactions with peers, support staff, volunteers, supervisors, and other professionals
- ▶ Advocates for programs and policies that impact the overall quality of services for children and families
- ▶ Participates in leadership and advocacy opportunities within the profession
- ▶ Demonstrates strong written, oral communication skills
- ▶ Participates in program and community activities designed to educate the public about quality early childhood education

### SETTINGS

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R)  
 Community Organization  
 Corporation  
 Government Agency  
 Local Agency  
 Non-profit Organization

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field or Business Administration degree with a minimum of 18 credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development  
 Master's degree in early childhood or related field or business administration degree with a minimum of 18 credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development





# Related Careers

**Related Careers** include careers (alphabetized) that continuously strive to develop and improve the early childhood field through government actions, advocacy efforts, fundraising, research and other large-scale projects. These careers do not necessarily require an early childhood related degree. However, they require a great understanding of the early childhood field.

## Early Childhood Program Officer

- ▶ Works with other staff, consultants and funders to determine specific priorities and outcomes desired from grant and/or special funding initiatives
- ▶ Knows, understands, and explains the multiple influences on development and learning
- ▶ Provides assistance to organizations and individuals requesting information or advice about resource development, program development and/or non-profit management issues
- ▶ Demonstrates strong written and oral communication skills

### SETTINGS

Community Agency  
Foundation  
Government Agency  
Local Agency  
Non-profit Organization

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Master's degree or Doctorate in an early childhood or related field, public policy, and/or business management and 5 to 10 years' experience in public policy and program development in early childhood



## Researcher/Analyst

- ▶ Conducts research and evaluates services that impact the outcomes for young children and families
- ▶ Uses knowledge of practices and policies to shape the early childhood profession
- ▶ Explains how government policies affect early childhood care and education
- ▶ Analyze studies to show the potential impact on children and families
- ▶ Evaluates impact of previous and proposed research
- ▶ Explores funding options for further education, such as scholarships, grants, and loans
- ▶ Works with funding entities, government agencies, and the academic community to address issues related to recruitment, compensation, and retention
- ▶ Possesses outreach, research, data analysis and grant writing skills

### SETTINGS

Community College  
Government Agency  
Non-profit Organization  
College or University

### EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

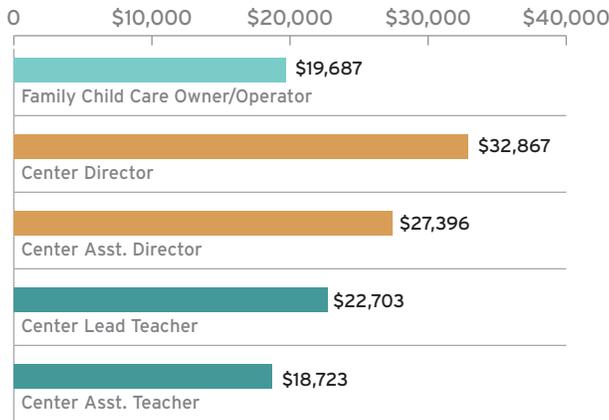
Master's degree in early childhood or related field with additional advanced coursework in early childhood education  
Doctorate degree in early childhood or related field with knowledge of and experience in early childhood education



# At-a-Glance Earnings & Hours Worked

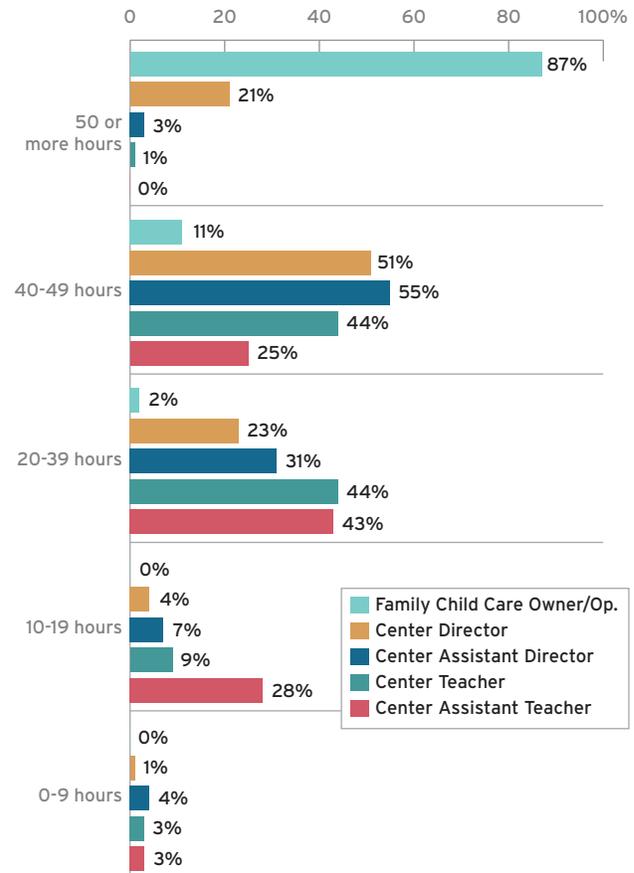
Not all main sections of this Guide or career options are represented. For more information, visit the Kansas Labor Information Center & the Kansas Wage Report at <https://klic.dol.ks.gov/>.

## Annual Earnings



Salaries represent an average based on the number of hours worked, location of employment and the type of work completed. Reflects gross pay and excludes supplemental income.

## Average Weekly Hours Worked



"Family Child Care Owner/Op." and "Center Staff" hours reflect a typical work week. "Hours worked per week" is defined as any time spent working to prepare and conduct business.

# 69%

of Full-time Child Care Center staff receive vacation pay.\*

Among those surveyed

## Consider these ideas when thinking about your career path.

- ▶ Reach out to others in the field and interview them about their job. By visiting with people in different areas of the early childhood field, you can ask about their likes and challenges in their job. Seek information about important skills they have found to be beneficial.
- ▶ Consider job shadowing for a hands-on experience.

# 6%

of Family Child Care Educators have individual health insurance\*

Among those surveyed

\*Source: 2018 Who Cares For Kansas Children: Early Childhood Workforce Study, Child Care Aware® of Kansas

# Higher Education Options

## Associate Degree 2-Year Programs

Community colleges offer both an Associate of Arts (AA), which prepares students for a Bachelor's degree program at a 4-Year college or university, and an Associate in Applied Science (AAS), which is designed for students seeking employment immediately upon graduation.

The following colleges offer coursework leading to diplomas, certificates, or credentials in areas such as special education, child care administration, school-age care, and infant/toddler care. They may also offer coursework towards the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, through the Council for Professional Recognition. Courses vary by institution.

### **Allen Community College**

620-365-5116, Ext. 268 • [www.allencc.edu](http://www.allencc.edu)

### **Barton Community College**

800-722-6842 • [www.bartonccc.edu](http://www.bartonccc.edu)

### **Butler Community College**

800-794-0188 • [www.butlercc.edu](http://www.butlercc.edu)

### **Cloud County Community College**

800-729-5101 • [www.cloud.edu](http://www.cloud.edu)

### **Cowley College**

800-593-2222 • [www.cowley.edu](http://www.cowley.edu)

### **Dodge City Community College**

800-367-3222 • [www.dc3.edu](http://www.dc3.edu)

### **Hesston College**

800-995-2757 • [www.hesston.edu](http://www.hesston.edu)

### **Highland Community College**

785-442-6000 • [www.highlandcc.edu](http://www.highlandcc.edu)

### **Hutchinson Community College**

888-464-8824, Ext. 3535 • [www.hutchcc.edu](http://www.hutchcc.edu)

### **Independence Community College**

800-842-6063 • [www.indycc.edu](http://www.indycc.edu)

### **Johnson County Community College**

913-469-8500 • [www.jccc.edu](http://www.jccc.edu)

### **Kansas City Kansas Community College**

913-334-1100 • [www.kckcc.edu](http://www.kckcc.edu)

### **Labette Community College**

888-522-3883, Ext. 1225 • [www.labette.edu](http://www.labette.edu)

### **Washburn University**

785-670-1030 • [www.washburn.edu](http://www.washburn.edu)

\*For more information on Kansas Teaching Licensure, visit Kansas State Department of Education.  
• [www.ksde.org/Teaching-Learning](http://www.ksde.org/Teaching-Learning)

## Bachelor's Degree 4-Year Programs

Universities or 4-Year colleges offer a Bachelor's Degree in an early childhood related field of the student's choice. The specific degree is designed to prepare the student for a career path he/she has chosen.

Coursework focuses on the intellectual, social, emotional, and biological development of children and the planning and design of related human services. They may also include instruction on parent-child relationships, parenting practices, special needs of children, parental and environmental influences on child development, external support services, and related public policy issues.

Degree options:

- ▶ Early Childhood Education
- ▶ Human Development and Family Studies
- ▶ Family and Consumer Sciences
- ▶ Elementary Education/Early Childhood Unified\*

### **Emporia State University**

877-468-6378 • [www.emporia.edu](http://www.emporia.edu)

### **Fort Hays State University**

800-628-3478 • [www.fhsu.edu](http://www.fhsu.edu)

### **Kansas State University**

800-432-8270 • [www.k-state.edu](http://www.k-state.edu)

### **Newman University**

877-639-6268 • [www.newmanu.edu](http://www.newmanu.edu)

### **Ottawa University**

855-774-7714 • [www.ottawa.edu](http://www.ottawa.edu)

### **Park University**

816-584-6215 • [www.park.edu](http://www.park.edu)

### **Pittsburg State University**

800-854-7488 • [www.pittstate.edu](http://www.pittstate.edu)

### **Southwestern College**

800-846-1543 • [www.sckans.edu](http://www.sckans.edu)

### **University of Kansas**

888-686-7323 • [www.ku.edu](http://www.ku.edu)

### **University of Saint Mary**

913.345.8288 • [www.stmary.edu](http://www.stmary.edu)

### **Wichita State University**

800-362-2594 • [www.wichita.edu](http://www.wichita.edu)

For more information about career opportunities available from Kansas public higher education institutions, visit Kansas Board of Regents.

• [www.kansasregents.org/academic\\_affairs/program\\_search](http://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/program_search)

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## Graduate Degree Programs

The Master's Degree program in early childhood education prepares individuals to be master teachers, administrators of early childhood programs, and leaders in the development of child care policy. Early childhood education licensure is a prerequisite for full admission. (See page 20)

### **Kansas State University**

800-432-8270 • [www.k-state.edu](http://www.k-state.edu)

### **Emporia State University**

877-468-6378 • [www.emporia.edu](http://www.emporia.edu)

### **Wichita State University**

800-362-2594 • [www.wichita.edu](http://www.wichita.edu)

### **University of Kansas**

888-686-7323 • [www.ku.edu](http://www.ku.edu)

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## Ph.D. Program Specializations

Early Childhood Unified (Blending of Early Childhood & Early Childhood Special Education)

This specialization will focus on evidenced-based practices and strategies in the field of early childhood/early childhood special education. This specialization will assist doctoral students in acquiring the foundational knowledge of the current evidence and trends in the field for providing effective early intervention and education to all young children and their families including those with identified disabilities. The expectation is that doctoral students will, through these courses, be better prepared to effectively and successfully serve as Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education faculty in institutes of higher education engaged in research, teaching, and service.

### **University of Kansas**

888-686-7323 • [www.ku.edu](http://www.ku.edu)

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## Director Credential

The voluntary Director Credential is offered on two levels: The Provisional Director Credential and the Director Credential. The levels require that candidates demonstrate competency in the areas of early childhood education, child development, and leadership/management. Candidates must also demonstrate competency by documenting their education, experience and professional contributions. The Credential is issued by the Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children (KSAEYC). For more information about the Director Credential, contact KSAEYC at 785-380-8726 or [kaeyc.net](http://kaeyc.net).

Community Colleges that offer Leadership/Management Coursework for the Director Credentials:

### **Cowley County**

Janet Davidson

Director of Child Care & Development/Early Childhood Education

[janet.davidson@cowley.edu](mailto:janet.davidson@cowley.edu)

620-441-5202

### **Allen Community College**

Beth Toland

Early Childhood Education Specialist

[toland@allenc.edu](mailto:toland@allenc.edu)

620-365-5116 x6304

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## Kansas Association for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement

The Kansas Association for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® indicates an individual's efforts to specialize in the promotion and practice of infant or early childhood mental health within his/her own chosen discipline. The individual demonstrates they have completed specialized education, work, in-service training, and reflective supervision/consultation experiences (as defined in Endorsement® criteria) that have led to competency in the promotion and/or practice of infant mental health.

### **Kansas Association for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health**

785-218-8236 • [www.kaimh.org](http://www.kaimh.org)

# Professional Development

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Individuals seeking to become an early childhood professional, and those currently working in the field seeking to enhance their knowledge and skills, can find professional development opportunities by searching for online or community-based events on the following websites (alphabetized):

**Child Care Aware of Kansas**  
[www.ks.childcareaware.org](http://www.ks.childcareaware.org)

**Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities**  
[www.kccto.org](http://www.kccto.org)

**Kansas Children's Service League**  
[www.kcsl.org](http://www.kcsl.org)

**Kansas Inservice Training System**  
[www.kskits.org](http://www.kskits.org)

**Kansas Train**  
[www.train.org](http://www.train.org)

Other training options may be available in communities, check carefully.

# Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™

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The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE) and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in ECE. The CDA is based on a core set of competency standards that guide early care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children.

**The Council for Professional Recognition**  
[www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)



# Early Childhood Development and Services Pathway

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The Early Childhood Development and Services pathway focuses on the careers relating to the needs of children birth to age five. The goal is to provide high school students with relevant contexts for learning through pathways to postsecondary success. The pathways link what students learn in high school to the knowledge and skills they need for success in postsecondary education and careers. Pathways are designed to provide a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education (technical colleges, community colleges and universities), apprenticeship opportunities, the military, and/or the workplace. Early childhood workforce training begins in Kansas schools through Family and Consumer Sciences.

Visit [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org), for Human Services career cluster information.

**Kansas Quality Network**  
[www.ksqualitynetwork.org](http://www.ksqualitynetwork.org)

Kansas Quality Network (KQN) is a website offered by the Kansas Department for Children and Families, that directs child care providers, families and communities to resources available for the advancement, support and recognition of continuous quality improvement efforts in child care in Kansas. KQN provides information on child care assistance and other services available to children and families, including eligibility requirements for early childhood education programs. KQN supports parents with information about how to choose child care for their families that goes beyond health and safety and assists child care providers in enhancing their professional skills by providing professional development and other opportunities that will help provide better early learning experiences for children.

# Grants & Scholarships

When planning to attend college check with the financial aid office at the college or university. They will guide you towards grants and scholarships that are available to you.

Find grants and scholarships:

- ▶ Through local civic clubs and community service organizations
- ▶ Search the internet to find what's available in your local community
- ▶ Connect with a high school guidance counselor
- ▶ Contact Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities (KCCTO) for more information - [www.kccto.org](http://www.kccto.org)
- ▶ Connect with your local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) - [www.ks.childcareaware.org](http://www.ks.childcareaware.org)

## Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- ▶ The FAFSA is available beginning October for the next school year. Fill it out as soon as possible to meet the school deadline.
- ▶ The FAFSA process is quicker and easier when you have a username and password. You can create one at [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](http://StudentAid.gov/fsaid)
- ▶ Filling out the FAFSA will require information on your finances; gather them before beginning. Find out what you will need at [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](http://StudentAid.gov/fsaid)
- ▶ For free FAFSA assistance, log on to [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov)

## Additional Links

**Financial Aid Home Page**  
[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

**Federal Student Aid**  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

**National Student Loans**  
[www.nsls.ed.gov](http://www.nsls.ed.gov)

**Scholarship search**  
[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**Financial aid and scholarship information**  
[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

**U.S. Department of Education,  
Office of Postsecondary Education**  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/index.html>





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