

Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder

Level I

LEVEL I | LEVEL II | LEVEL III | LEVEL IV | LEVEL V | LEVEL VI

What is the Career ladder?

The Career Ladder identifies the six career levels of early childhood professional development. The Career Ladder may be used by early childhood professionals for tracking and planning professional growth. You may enter the Career Ladder at any level, and there are many different paths to take to develop your career. Each level combines education and experience. The Northern Lights core competencies provide the foundation for this system.

Who should begin at Level I?

Those who are new to the field of early childhood. If you don't have any education about child development or young children, and you don't have experience working with young children in groups, this is where to start. If you have taken child development courses at your high school or regional technical center you may also begin at Level I.

You may also begin at Level I even if you've worked in early childhood for a while. The process of achieving Level I will give you training in all five core competency areas for early childhood professionals and help you create your professional development plan (IPDP) if you don't have one already.

What do I need to do to achieve Level I?

To achieve Level I you must successfully complete *The Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals* course or equivalent. You also need to have one year of experience. Experience can be gained during or after taking coursework. Finally you need to have started your Individual Professional Development Plan.

Why is completing Level I important?

When you complete Level I you gain valuable training and are recognized for your commitment to learning. Also, for staff new to the field, Vermont Early Childhood Program Licensing Regulations require successful completion of Level I (or equivalent) within one year of employment.



"The Fundamentals Course really helped me grow as a child care provider."

Resources:

Northern Lights Career Development Center
<http://northernlights.cdc.org>

- see *Career Ladder*
- see *Resources* to find your local Resource Development Specialist
- see *Curricula* to get details on the Fundamentals course
- see *Core Competencies*

Bright Futures Information System (BFIS)
<http://brightfuturesinfo.org>

Community College of Vermont
<http://www.ccv.edu/>

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center
<http://northernlightscdc.org>
Phone: 802-241-4661

See the reverse side for more information on Level I

Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder Level I (continued)



Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals

This 45 hour course helps you achieve Level I. It is based on the Level I core competencies for early childhood professionals and covers the following topics:

- Observation and Child Development
- Health and Safety
- Learning Environments
- Professionalism
- Issues in Diversity
- Infants and Toddlers
- Preschoolers
- Afterschool Care
- Families
- Regulations and Specialized Care
- Working with Challenging Behaviors
- Positive Guidance

This course gives you a chance to reflect on your work with children, to apply what you learn in class to the children you care for, and to get support from an experienced mentor while you are working with children.

Where is the course offered?

The *Fundamentals* course is offered annually in each region of the state. If you missed taking the course in your region, you may take the course in a neighboring region. The courses are listed in the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) Course Calendar and a schedule is on the Northern Lights website.

How much does it cost?

The course is low cost and varies by region. Please contact your local Resource Development Specialist for information about course fees.

How do I apply for a Level I certificate?

When you have completed the coursework and have a year of experience, you can get the application for Level I from the Northern Lights website or contact us to request one.



Did you know...

The *Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals* -

- can be the first step to a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
- includes the training to become a basic specialized care provider
- helps you learn how to create your Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

More Resources

CDA credential information
www.cdacouncil.org

BFIS Course Calendar
www.brightfuturesinfo.org



<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Phone: 802-241-4661

Northern Lights Career
Development Center
PO Box 120 Wasson Hall
Waterbury, VT 05676