

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Early Childhood Care and Education Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTION 1: I want to work in a childcare center but was told that I have to have an Early Childhood credential. How do I get that?

ANSWER: There are several ways to get an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Credential.

- The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) offers several credentials that will help you meet the requirements to work in a child care program. They are
 - ECCE Technical College Certificate (TCC),
 - ECCE Technical College Diploma (TCD),
 - ECCE Associate Degree.

All ECCE Credentials offered through the TCSG are accepted by Bright from the Start (BFTS), which is the licensing body for Georgia. The fastest credential to earn is a TCC. You can then go forward and earn higher credentials or stop at any point. All credentials are earned by successfully completing all classes and meeting all other college requirements. Note - Simply taking the courses does not satisfy the requirements—the credential has to be awarded by the college

Offered at Technical Colleges

Certificate
(TCC or CDA)
ECCE Diploma
ECCE Associate Degree

Offered at some 4-yr colleges

Birth through Kindergarten Bachelor Degree

While some colleges in the TCSG offer all of the credential options listed below, others do not. **You should talk with an ECCE instructor/advisor at the technical college you want to attend to find out if the credentials offered there meet your professional and financial needs.** To find out who to contact at a specific college, go to [tcsg http://www.tcsg.edu/](http://www.tcsg.edu/) and click on Campuses (at the top of the screen). You will see a map of the state of Georgia indicating where the technical colleges are located. Once you determine the college(s) near you, scroll down to that college on the list below the map and click on the appropriate college web link. The college web page should

provide information on the ECCE program and how to contact an instructor or advisor for the program.

The ECCE credentials listed below are all accepted by Bright from the Start.

ECCE TECHNICAL CERTIFICATES OF CREDIT (TCC)	ECCE DIPLOMA	ECCE ASSOCIATE DEGREE (AAS)
<p>ECCE Basics TCC</p> <p>CDA Preparation TCC</p> <p>Child Development Specialist TCC</p> <p>Early Childhood Exceptionalities TCC</p> <p>Family Child Care Specialist TCC</p> <p>Infant/Toddler Child Care Specialist TCC</p> <p>Program Administration TCC</p> <p>School Age and Youth Care TCC</p> <p>Introduction to Child Care Terminal TCC*</p> <p>Arts Integration TCC</p>	<p>Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma</p>	<p>Early Childhood Care and Education Associate of Applied Science degree</p>

- *The Introduction to Child Care Terminal TCC is a new, short 3-course program with very limited availability. It is only suited for those who want to meet the BFTS minimum standards and have **NO** plans to continue their education. The classes in this TCC will not apply to any other TCC, Diploma or Degree and are only offered at limited colleges.
- With the exception of the above “Introduction to Child Care” TCC, all other TCCs listed include some courses that will count toward other TCCs, an ECCE diploma, or an ECCE associate degree.

- If you wish to be an assistant teacher in a Georgia Pre-K classroom, the technical college certificate credentials shown above will satisfy the educational requirements. The ECCE AAS degree will articulate toward a Bachelor degree at some colleges and universities in Georgia.
- Again, regardless of which ECCE program you are considering, you will get more specific and detailed information by contacting an ECCE advisor/instructor at the technical college rather than the college's general admission counselors.
- The CDA is another way to satisfy the BFTS ECCE credential requirement. The CDA is only awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. to applicants who have
 - completed 120 clock hours of specific training, and
 - been properly observed and evaluated by their representative.

For information on the CDA, contact the Council at [CDA](http://www.cdacouncil.org/)
<http://www.cdacouncil.org/> or call 1-800-424-4310.

To learn more about the difference between a TCC and a CDA, see Question 10.

QUESTION 2: If I want to be a lead teacher at a child care center in a regular classroom (not a Pre-K classroom), do technical colleges have the courses that I need to take?

ANSWER: Yes. Child Care Licensing Rules require lead teachers to have credentials such as a TCC, a diploma, a CDA, or an associate degree by December 1, 2012. See Question 1 for specific information about the credentials offered by Georgia Technical colleges.

QUESTION 3: Are any of these courses and programs offered online?

ANSWER: Technical colleges offer classes as web enhanced, hybrid (part face-to-face and part online) and totally online. Some of the courses and credentials are offered completely online. However, just because it is offered online at one college does NOT mean it is offered online at another. To find out about online offerings, go to [GVTC http://www.gvtc.org/](http://www.gvtc.org/). Click on Courses and/or Programs to see a list of online courses/programs by college.

QUESTION 4: Does the Program Administration Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) satisfy the 40-hour training requirement for program directors?

ANSWER: Yes, the Program Administration TCC satisfies the 40-hour training required by the BFTS Child Care Licensing Rules for program directors. The Program Administration TCC also includes the following courses:

- ECCE 1103 Child Growth and Development
- ECCE 2320 Program Administration and Facility Management; and
- ECCE 2322 Personnel Management.

QUESTION 5: If I only take ECCE 2320 - Program Administration and Facility Management, will it also satisfy the 40-hour training required by the Child Care Licensing Rules for program directors?

ANSWER: Yes, the class ECCE 2320 Program Administration and Facility Management will also satisfy the 40-hour training required by the Child Care Licensing Rules for program directors. Please remember to satisfy the TCC requirement for BFTS, both ECCE 2320 and ECCE 2322 must be taken to earn your credit for the TCC.

QUESTION 6: In addition to federal financial aid (usually Pell) and Georgia and HOPE Scholarships/Grants, can I get additional financial support for tuition and mandatory fees?

ANSWER: If you meet certain eligibility requirements, you can apply for financial support from two the Bright from the Start DECAL Scholars programs (SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES, and AWARDS for Early Educators). To be eligible, you must

- already work in a licensed childcare center or registered family daycare home, and
- be enrolled in an ECCE program of study, and
- meet the programs' requirements regarding your current wages, your position and hours of employment, length of your employment, and the work setting.

At a public two- or four-year institution, SCHOLARSHIPS will pay 80% of the fees that HOPE or PELL do not cover. At private institutions, SCHOLARSHIPS will pay up to \$2,028 per semester after HOPE and PELL have been applied. Payments are paid directly to the institution on your behalf. SCHOLARSHIPS does not cover courses offered through Continuing Education. You also receive a \$250-\$500 cash stipend directly from SCHOLARSHIPS to assist you with books and other school expenses each semester you are enrolled. Finally, if you are working on the CDA (a national credential), a one-time CDA assessment fee scholarship is available through SCHOLARSHIPS.

INCENTIVES is a salary bonus program that rewards education and tenure (the length of time you stay at one job). The more you increase your education level, and the longer you stay at your job, the more bonus! You can get up to 2 payments for an entry-level credential and up to 4 payments for higher academic credentials and degrees.

AWARDS for Early Educators is a federally-funded, time-limited program with 3 levels of awards (\$1,200, \$1,500, and \$2,500). Each level provides a single payment award for earning a higher credential or degree.

Level	Completed Credential/Degree in past 12 months	Payment
1	Child Development Associate™ Credential (CDA) (All CDA funds have been awarded)	
	Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)	\$1,200
2	Technical College Diploma (TCD) Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS)	\$1,500 \$1,500
3	Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree	\$2,500 \$2,500

DECAL Scholars programs are administered by Care Solutions, Inc. For questions about either program, please call Care Solutions directly at 1-800-227-3410 or go to <http://www.decalscholars.com>.

QUESTION 7: If I complete a required online orientation at one TCSG college, do I have to go through another online orientation at a different TCSG college?

ANSWER: It depends on the college. Each college makes the decision about what to require students to do or to take before enrolling in an online course. The online orientation is designed to maximize your success. The college may also require you to demonstrate specific skills, or to have certain equipment before taking an online course.

QUESTION 8: Does the Infant/Toddler Child Care Specialist TCC satisfy the Pre-K assistant teacher credential requirements?

ANSWER: Yes, in addition to two Infant and Toddler specific courses, the Infant and Toddler Child Care Specialist TCC includes ECCE 1101 Introduction to Early Childhood Care; ECCE 1103 Child Growth and Development; and ECCE 1105 Health, Safety and Nutrition. Therefore, this TCC is one way to satisfy the Georgia's Pre-K assistant teacher credential requirement. For detailed information on the specific educational requirements for Georgia's Pre-K, please visit the Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning website at [Decal http://www.decal.ga.gov/](http://www.decal.ga.gov/)

QUESTION 9: I am interested in talking to someone about entering an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Program. Whom do I contact or how do I find information about ECCE programs?

ANSWER: Each college that offers an Early Childhood Program has instructors and teachers who will be happy to answer your questions. It is best to talk directly to an ECCE instructor at the college you want to attend. You can find out which colleges offer which ECCE programs by going to this link

<https://tcsg.edu/find-a-college/programs/>

Click on the specific college to learn more about the program (note: ECCE is Personal/Public Services Technologies). You can also call the college to speak to an instructor or the program director for the Early Childhood Care and Education programs. You will get more detailed and specific information from the ECCE department rather than a general admissions counselor.

Question 10: What is the difference between a TCC and a CDA?

Answer: The TCC is a certificate awarded by the Technical Colleges in Georgia. The CDA is a certificate awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. Both types of certificates meet the minimum credential requirement established by BFTS to work in a Georgia childcare center. The following is a summary of differences:

TCC	CDA
Typically 3-5 classes (9-15 college credits)	120 hours of specific training classes
Various topics which can include Health and Safety, Child Development, Language and Literacy, Curriculum Development, Exceptional Children, Program Administration, and so much more!	Available in one topic: Basic information of child care
Fee is college tuition (See question # 6 for more information)	Fee is class tuition + assessment fee (See question # 6 for more information)
Easily moves into other credentials (except the Introduction to Childcare Terminal TCC)	May move into other credentials with additional requirements
Does not expire	Must be renewed every 3 years
Easily recognized in Georgia, and may be recognized by other states	Nationally recognized

Revised and printed in May 2018. This information has been reviewed by Bright from the Start professional development staff and administration. TCSG information provided and reviewed by Representatives Lowery and Moore.