

Creating The CDA Professional Portfolio

What to Include in Your CDA Professional Portfolio

1) Start With a Portfolio Checklist

Before you write anything, it helps to know exactly what you'll need so you can gather items as you go.

Use this as your starting point:

<https://www.childcareed.com/r-00702-updated-checklist-for-earning-your-cda-credential.html>

How to implement:

- Print the checklist (or copy it into a notes doc)
 - Highlight anything you already have
 - Circle anything you need to collect from families or your program
 - Set a goal: "I'll complete 2 sections per week."
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2) Set Up Your Portfolio Sections (Tabs or Digital Folders)

Whether you're using a binder or an e-portfolio, set up your sections early so you're not scrambling later.

How to implement (simple setup):

- Create a folder called **CDA Portfolio**
- Inside it, create folders like:
 - **Education**
 - **Family Questionnaires**
 - **Resource Collection**
 - **Professional Philosophy**
 - **Supporting Documents**

If you're doing an e-portfolio, this FAQ helps a lot:

<https://www.childcareed.com/r-00796-cda-e-portfolio-faqs.html>



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3) Write Your CDA Portfolio Statements

This is where many candidates get stuck because it's not just "writing," it's writing *to the CDA expectations*.

Use this writing guide: <https://www.childcareed.com/r-00742-how-to-write-your-cda-portfolio.html>

How to implement:

- Copy the prompts into a document
- Write in short, clear paragraphs
- Use real examples from your classroom (simple is fine!)
- Read it out loud to make sure it sounds like you

Quick tip: If you can answer, "What would I do on a real Monday morning?" you're writing in the right direction.

4) Use a CDA Portfolio Sample

Samples help candidates understand what "done" looks like.

Use this sample resource: <https://www.childcareed.com/r-00714-cda-portfolio-sample.html>

How to implement:

- Compare your draft to the sample format
 - Check for:
 - clear headings
 - complete sentences
 - specific examples
 - professional tone (friendly, but not text-message style)
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5) Build Your Resource Collection Items

Many candidates do best when they treat this section like a weekly routine.



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How to implement (easy plan):

- Pick **1 resource item** each week
- Add it to the correct folder/section immediately
- Write 2–3 sentences explaining how you would use it with children/families

Then double-check you're meeting requirements with:

<https://www.childcareed.com/r-00702-updated-checklist-for-earning-your-cda-credential.html>

6) Final Review Before You Submit

This is where you catch missing pieces and clean things up.

How to implement:

- Use the checklist again:
<https://www.childcareed.com/r-00702-updated-checklist-for-earning-your-cda-credential.html>
- Confirm every item is:
 - included
 - labeled clearly
 - easy to find (tabs/folders named correctly)
 - saved in a safe place (backup copy)

For digital portfolios, use: <https://www.childcareed.com/r-00796-cda-e-portfolio-faqs.html>

Common Mistakes

Mistake: Writing too generally

Fix: Add one real example: “For example, during circle time I...”

Mistake: Waiting until the end to organize

Fix: Set up folders/tabs first, then drop items in as you go.



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Mistake: Not using a model

Fix: Compare to a sample: <https://www.childcareed.com/r-00714-cda-portfolio-sample.html>

Mistake: Confusion about e-portfolio rules

Fix: Use the FAQ: <https://www.childcareed.com/r-00796-cda-e-portfolio-faqs.html>



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