

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FOR UTAH'S YOUTH AND EARLY  
LEARNING PROFESSIONALS

HOW TO  
PARTICIPATE IN THE  
**UTAH CAREER  
LADDER  
SYSTEM**



THIS BROCHURE IS VALID UNTIL JUNE 30, 2025

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Those who choose to work with young children have the unique opportunity to shape a new generation. Increasingly, research demonstrates the importance of high-quality care on the long-term emotional, behavioral and cognitive development of young children. Providing professional development opportunities is one key way to develop workforce and program quality.

## GOALS

- Increase the quality of early childhood and youth care through highly trained staff
- Support and retain child care professionals in the field
- Provide access to a variety of training opportunities



## CAREER LADDER SYSTEM

Utah's Career Ladder system provides supportive coursework, a registry to track professional accomplishments and a system of professional recognition for youth and early learning professionals across the state. Anyone interested is eligible to participate in the system. Those that choose to participate must create a profile at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov>.

## LEVELS ON THE CAREER LADDER

There are 12 levels offered on the Career Ladder. Levels may be earned by taking approved Career Ladder face-to-face or online classes, completing trainings that offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs), completing a demonstrated competency (Level 4) or earning early childhood or youth related college credits and degrees. More information on each level's requirements can be found on the Office of Child Care (OCC) website at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/careerladder/index.html>.

| Level 1   | Levels 2-3  | Level 4   | Levels 5-8  | Level 9   | Level 10   | Level 11   | Level 12  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| 30 hours of basic training plus First Aid and CPR | 40 hours of training in 4 of 8 subject areas for each level | Complete and maintain a current demonstrated competency | 40 hours of training in specialized topics for each level | Associate degree in related field (or equivalent) | Bachelor's degree in related field (or equivalent) | Master's degree in related field (or equivalent) | Doctorate degree in related field (or equivalent) |

### Apply for a Level

To apply for a new level individuals must ensure that documentation of all level requirements has been submitted to the registry at <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/user/profile/ladder>.



*"Thank you for your commitment to improving the quality of care and education you provide every day. Your hard work and dedication to learning new skills through professional development help us create better learning environments for children across the state. Your efforts are essential to the families and communities you serve, and we appreciate everything you do to grow as a professional in the field."*

—Heather Thomas, Utah Office of Child Care

## APPROVED CAREER LADDER COURSE OFFERINGS

### Course Catalog

The course catalog includes all of the approved Career Ladder courses offered through Care About Childcare as well as community and online partners. To access the face-to-face and online course lists, visit <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/catalog>.

### Course Calendar

Affordable courses are offered through Utah's Care About Childcare agencies and our community partners across the state. These courses support the requirements of the Career Ladder System. For information on courses, visit <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/calendar>.

### Endorsements

The Career Ladder System recognizes professional development through endorsements, which are awarded for completing 40 clock hours (or equivalent) of courses in a specialized topic area. Visit the course catalog to view course offerings in each endorsement area. To apply for an endorsement, visit <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/user/profile/endorse>.

### Utah Afterschool Network

For professionals working with school age children, the Utah Afterschool Network offers a variety of professional learning opportunities, including conferences, courses and online training. For more information on current offerings, visit <https://utahafterschool.org/>.

### Track and Record Courses on Your Transcript

Courses may be tracked and recorded within your Utah Registry for Professional Development profile. Courses taken through Care About Childcare and many other local partners will automatically be added to your transcript. If you would like to document other professional development, you may upload new documentation of courses, certificates or degrees on your profile page at <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/user/profile/transcripts>.



## SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID AND INCENTIVES

### Scholarships and Financial Aid

Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care (OCC) funds multiple initiatives to increase access to professional development for youth and early learning professionals that meet eligibility requirements: <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/scholarships.html>.



- T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program (see next page for more details)
- Child Development Associate (CDA) Fee Reimbursement
- Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) Credential Fee Reimbursement
- National Administrator's Credential (NAC) Fee Reimbursement
- Demonstrated Competency Observation Fee

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE

Professionals who meet eligibility requirements may apply for a Professional Development Incentive when they complete a new level in the Career Ladder System. To apply for a Professional Development Incentive, visit <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/scholarships.html>.

| Level 1 | Levels 2-3                | Level 4 | Levels 5-8                | Level 9 | Level 10 | Level 11 | Level 12 |
|---------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| \$100   | \$200<br>(for each level) | \$300   | \$400<br>(for each level) | \$500   | \$1,000  | \$1,500  | \$2,000  |

# HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



## Early EdU Online College Courses

Office of Child Care offers online college-level courses to early childhood professionals working in licensed child care programs through Southern Utah University. Each three-credit course costs participants less than \$75. One or more courses will be offered each spring and fall semester. For more information, visit <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/highered.html> or email [earlyedu@utah.gov](mailto:earlyedu@utah.gov).



## T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Program

Office of Child Care supports Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood, a scholarship program offered through the Utah Association for the Education of Young Children (UAEYC). The program provides higher education scholarships for teachers and administrators working in care programs in Utah who have a desire to obtain an Associate or Bachelor's degree. For more information, visit <https://uaeyc.org/t-e-a-c-h> or email [teach@uaeyc.org](mailto:teach@uaeyc.org).

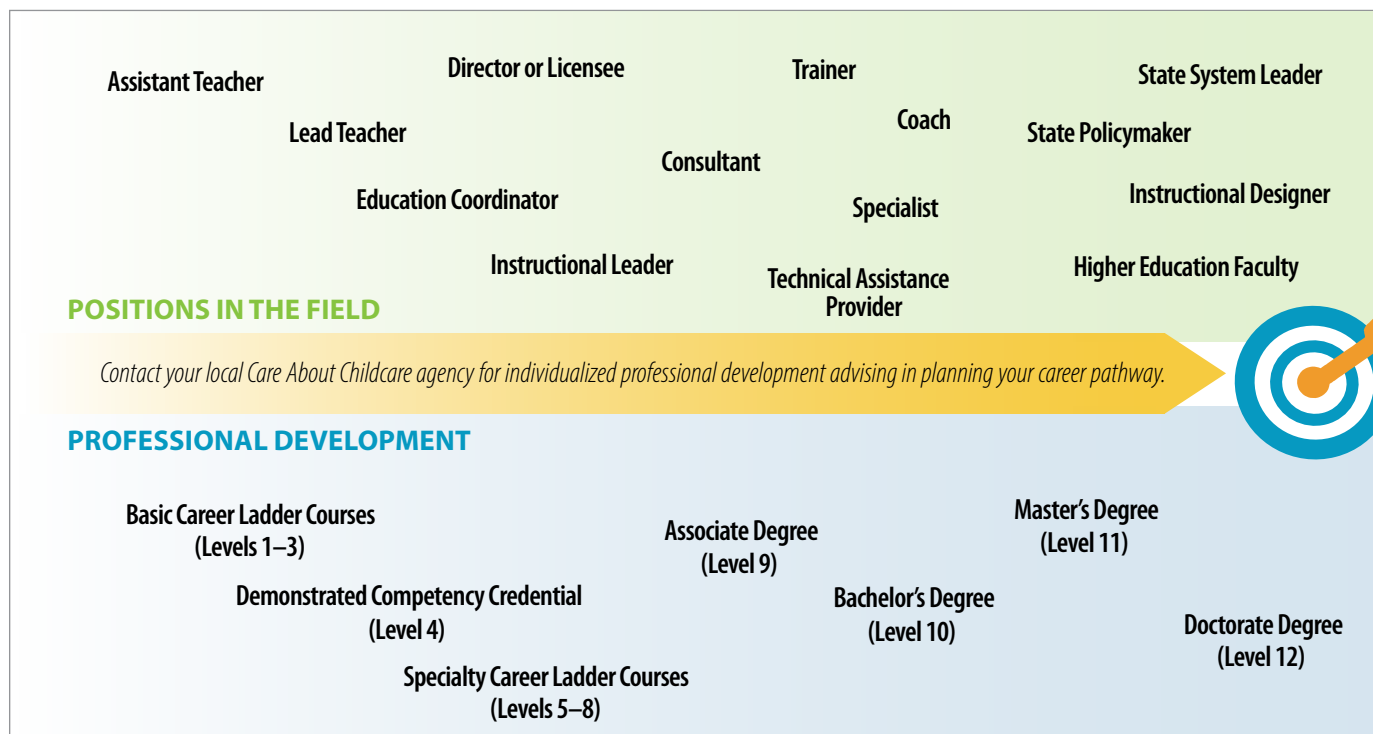


## Early Childhood Degree Programs in Utah

Many colleges and universities across the state offer degrees related to early childhood education. A list of programs can be found at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/highered.html>. Additional information on degree program offerings can be found on each college or university's website.

## NAVIGATE YOUR CAREER PATHWAY

### Journey Toward Excellence in an Early Childhood Career\*



\*Positions and related educational requirements vary between employers.