



Vermont Northern Lights  
Career Development Center

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# The Northern Lights Atlas

Early Childhood and Afterschool  
Professional Development News

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Welcome to the newest edition of The Northern Lights Atlas!  
Please pass it on (hint: cut-and-paste works too)

*Press CTRL + click to follow any web or email sites here*

## Recent Website Updates

(live links on the left)

**Always hit REFRESH  when looking at the website to see the latest version.**

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS** change regularly - at the bottom of the HOME PAGE.
- **PRINCIPLES OF VERMONT'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM** can now be found on our home page!
- Check out the **CAREER LADDER GRID** page for
  - information about the required Observations of the practitioner,
  - **APPLICATIONS** for the each Level are in the *last row*
- Look at **CURRICULA: LEVEL I AND II** to find the detailed curricula and resources for the course Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals and the 7 modules, "Beyond the Fundamentals" that connect to the Level II competencies. The Module: Program Management has recently been revised.
- **NEW!** Inside the CAREER LADDER GRID under LEVEL I and LEVEL II are the **PORTFOLIO REVIEW** options to achieve a Level I or II certificate. Please note: these options are currently *not* approved by Child Care Licensing Division as an option for to meet teaching assistant or associate requirements.
- **PLANNING YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT-IPDP** has new easy to use format and resources added - check it out!
- **Find previous issues of The Northern Lights Atlas** newsletter on the About Us page.

## Website Links

Have you saved the Northern Lights Career Development Center website to your Favorites so that you have a quick link from your computer?

### Northern Lights Websites

Home page

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Career Ladder

[http://northernlights.vsc.edu/career\\_ladder.html](http://northernlights.vsc.edu/career_ladder.html)

Level I and II Curriculum

<http://northernlights.vsc.edu/curriculum.html>

Level I and II certificate linked on Career Ladder under: Portfolio Review pages:

[http://northernlights.vsc.edu/levelone\\_portfolio.html](http://northernlights.vsc.edu/levelone_portfolio.html)

[http://northernlights.vsc.edu/leveltwo\\_portfolio.html](http://northernlights.vsc.edu/leveltwo_portfolio.html)

Planning Professional Development (IPDP)

<http://northernlights.vsc.edu/career2.html>

About Us

<http://northernlights.vsc.edu/about.html>

"Just wanted to say...LOVE the new version of the core competency IPDP form! it is much more user friendly. Nice work, and thanks :)"

-Cathy Siggins, instructor and early educator

### Other Important VT Websites

- Child Development Division: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/CDD/>
  - find the STARS application, quick links to the BFIS login pages and more
- VAEYC: <http://vaeyc.org/>
  - Spring speaker at Champlain College and more
- NEW! VT Child Care Providers Association: <http://vccpa.org/>
- VT Childcare Industry and Careers Council: <http://www.vtchildcareindustry.org/>
- VT Center for Afterschool Excellence: <http://vermontafterschool.org/>

## Frequently Asked Questions

### QUESTION: "What counts?"

**ANSWER:** When talking about professional development workshops and trainings, the answer is: The group learning activity counts when it meets all these criteria: it is lead by a qualified instructor, it is interactive, follows adult learning principles, has clear learning objectives that are assessed and the activity is properly documented. Discussion groups, staff meetings, IEP meetings, for example, don't meet these criteria. Contact Northern Lights if you have questions!

### QUESTION: "I just got my CDA and 4 STARS. Now how do I get my Recognition Bonus for my CDA? Is it automatic?"

**ANSWER:** Having a current CDA is one criteria to achieve a Northern Lights Level certificate. The Child Development Division (CDD) reviews Level certificates to see if they also qualify for a Recognition Bonus. You can find the applications for a Level certificate on the Northern Lights website under CAREER LADDER. [http://northernlights.vsc.edu/career\\_ladder.html](http://northernlights.vsc.edu/career_ladder.html)

See the Career Ladder link on that page- the last row of the Career Ladder grid has the application for each Level. When you achieve a Level certificate Northern Lights will also do an initial screening of your application to see if it meets the Child Development Division (CDD) requirements for a Recognition Bonus. If it does, then Northern Lights will pass your application on to CDD to consider a recognition bonus.

### QUESTION: "What IPDP form should I use?"

**ANSWER:** All IPDP formats are valid as long as the IPDP is current and includes a) self reflection in all areas of the field; b) specific goals; c) strategies and resources to achieve those goals; d) a timeline with specific month & year. IPDPs also need to show the writer practiced reflection when creating her IPDP.

## Did You Know?

**VT Center for Afterschool Excellence is the new home of VT School Age Network!** Starting March 1, 2011, the Vermont School Age Care Network moved under the umbrella of the *Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence*. This move was carefully explored by both organizations who agreed that this is a wonderful opportunity to serve the Afterschool providers in Vermont. (see the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence, *website* on page 1). All aspects of the Vermont School Age Care Network's activities are continuing at the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence. The Center has become the National AfterSchool Association affiliate, our professional development workshops, technical assistance and member services are continuing and growing and Sue Kamp continues to coordinate these projects. For more information, contact Sue at [skamp@sover.net](mailto:skamp@sover.net) or (802) 363-8405.

**How many afterschool programs are there in Vermont?** The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence completed a mapping project and issued a report (February 2011) about Vermont's afterschool and expanded learning opportunities. You can find the maps on their website (pg. 1). There are many types of Afterschool programs: Child Development Division licensed afterschool child care, Vermont Department of Education 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Programs, Boys and Girls clubs, YMCA, Teen Centers and others. Some programs fall into more than one type. So how many are there? There are 368 programs serving over 7000 children ages 5-12 (primarily). Check out the website to learn more about afterschool in Vermont and nationally.



Staff of Creative Minds children's program in Newport Center, after an IPDP training.



## News!

### NEW Sponsors

*These organizations now use the BFIS Calendar and participants benefit because attendance is entered in their personal BFIS Resume.*

The Arts Bus

Bellows Falls Child Care

Ed-U-Care

Springfield Learning Garden

### NEW Approved Instructors

Misty O'Brien – Affiliate I  
Michelle Bullock – Affiliate I  
Linda Mitchell – Specialist II  
Cynthia Daniels – Specialist I  
Crissy Webster – Affiliate I  
Christel Michaud – Certified  
Jeff Hess – Certified  
Sharon Halnon – Certified

### Recently Renewed Instructors

Christel Michaud - Certified

### Level Change

Carol Barbierrri – Affiliate I to Certified

“My staff like when they have their framed (career level, credential and STARS) certificates hanging up in their classroom.”

– Program director

Some participants discussing strategies in the *Orientation to Instructing Adults* workshop at Child Care Resource in Williston



## More...Did You Know?

**Advocacy Days at the State House!** February 23 was *Vermont Afterschool for All Legislative Day* and March 16 was *Early Childhood Day at the Legislature*. On both days, practitioners from the field met policy makers at the state house, had lunch with them at Capitol Plaza, heard from national and regional speakers, got the latest scoop on upcoming legislation, and enjoyed networking and discussion groups with their colleagues. Northern Lights staff were glad to meet many of you on these important days.

**Northern Lights connects to you!** Northern Lights keeps track of how well we connect to you. For example, we have been tracking the number of unique webhits to our website since 2006. Back then there were 5,432 and in 2010 there were 52,814! The number of Level certificate applications also continues to grow. There were 101 more in 2010 than in 2009. Northern Lights is charged by the Child Development Division with helping programs and staff understand and use the professional development side of BFIS (Bright Futures Information System). Between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2010, 18 more sponsors were added, making a total of 106 different sponsors using the BFIS course calendar and submitting attendance to be entered into BFIS. During that same time period, Northern Lights staff entered over 1000 calendar items and 1200 attendance entries into BFIS; distributed 500 BFIS Quality and Credential cards; and entered 700 documents that you sent us to put into your BFIS accounts. Northern Lights staff also offered 22 presentations about professional development, compared to 12 presentations over the first six months last year. Wow! For a summary of our mid-year report see the Northern Lights home page.

**BFIS and Northern Lights are not the same!** Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) is a data management system created by the Child Development Division (CDD). Northern Lights is charged by the CDD to put data into the system and help promote the professional development side of BFIS. (see page 1 for the two different web pages)



The following certificates have been awarded since January 2011

**Level I Certificate**

Patricia Grant - Manchester Center  
Michelle Zick - Sheldon  
Angela Paquette - Richford  
Katrina Whitcomb - Bristol  
Sheila Roby - Cavendish  
Michelle Sherwin - Whiting  
Helvi Furlan - Mendon  
Jessica Reynolds - Georgia  
Jennifer Phillips - Newport Center  
Gail Short - Landon, NH

**Level II Certificate**

Katrina Whitcomb - Bristol  
Doris Sterling - Grand Isle  
Jacqueline Tillotson - Peacham  
Terri Pratt - Burlington  
Michelle Marchant-Sheldon - Swanton  
Kristen Jennings - Starksboro  
Cindy Fagnant - Hyde Park  
Melissa Roy-Edwards - St. Johnsbury  
Victoria Harshman - Hardwick  
Lynn Roberts - Fairfax  
Rachel Warden - Winooski  
Holli Boise - Middlebury

**Level III-A Certificate**

Teresa Fowler - Castleton  
Debra Wyman - Manchester Center  
Amanda Mobbs - Milton  
Anneka Bickford - Lyndonville  
Paula Nadeau - Waterbury

**Level III-B Certificate**

Michelle AnneMarie Scott - White River Jct.  
Jacqueline Swantak - East Corinth  
Ammie Collins - Fairlee  
Gweyn Young - Swanton

**Level IV-A Certificate**

Mira George - St. Johnsbury  
Mary Anna Abuzahra - Plainfield  
Heather Goodell - Johnson  
Cheryl Wells - Alburg  
Stacy Bengtson - Wolcott  
Deanna Gonyaw - Barton  
Alisha Adams - Swanton

**Level IV-B Certificate**

Jennifer Sprague - White River Jct.  
Melissa Young - St. Albans

**Level V-B**

Denise Mellia - Stowe

**Program Director Credential - Step 1**

Ashlee Hernandez  
Lynn M. Luman  
Jennifer Lestage  
Tanya LaChapelle  
Laura Cramer

**Program Director Credential - Step 2**

Paula Nadeau  
Bethany Caruso

## Coming Soon!

**Support for Department of Education educator license through Peer Review** Thank you to all who have provided feedback. Your input has been used to help us develop a system of support for those who may want to achieve a Vermont teaching license through Peer Review. We will be putting the final pieces in place over the next 2 months and plan to launch the program in Fall 2011. We will keep you updated about this project on the Northern Lights website, by e-mail and in the Northern Lights newsletter.

We are still seeking early childhood professionals who have experience with or knowledge of Peer Review to be on our mentor list. If you are interested in more information about being a Peer Review mentor please contact Sherry Carlson at [scarlson380@comcast.net](mailto:scarlson380@comcast.net).

The ***Culminating Seminar for Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Directors*** is a requirement for Step 3 of Vermont's Program Director Credential. This 10-week, 3 - credit course will meet in a hybrid format from May 17-July 12. There will be 6 weekly online classes, and 2 full-day Saturday classes, which will meet on June 4<sup>th</sup> and July 9<sup>th</sup> at the Trelevan Farm in Vergennes, VT. This course is targeted to program administrators who have completed Steps 1 and 2 of the Program Director Credential. Enrollment packets are now available. For information, contact Maureen Young-McCarthy @ (802) 885-8374 or e-mail [maureen.young-mccarthy@ccv.edu](mailto:maureen.young-mccarthy@ccv.edu)

***The Southeastern Vermont Early Childhood Career Coaches Forum*** is coming in June! This tri-regional event is being co-sponsored by CCV, VSAC, Northern Lights, Windham Child Care Association, Springfield Area Parent Child Center, Springfield Early Childhood Leadership Collaborative, and Child Care Project. The forum is targeted towards people who currently provide career coaching and advising to early childhood professionals in Windham, Windsor, and North Windsor Counties. Participants will promote and share expertise and resources and learn more about the current changes to the system of early childhood professional development and program improvement in Vermont.

***Updated Career Advising Guide:*** Is now under development - with early childhood AND afterschool career pathways in one booklet. Look for it this summer.

***Updated Planning your Professional Growth (IPDP booklet):*** Is now under development . Look for it this summer.

“ I never knew that BFIS rocks!”

- a workshop participant on learning about the course calendar and her own Credential Account in BFIS.