

Credit as an Asset



Course Overview

Credit is an essential building block for asset building. Without a solid credit score and credit history, it is extremely difficult for individuals to qualify for loans to buy a home, a car, start a business or even rent an apartment. Furthermore, the prevalence of predatory and payday lenders creates easy opportunities for individuals to fall into debt and damage their credit, thus hindering their ability to build other assets and financial security. This course is an interactive, hands-on training for community builders -financial coaches and counselors, housing counselors, microenterprise practitioners, IDA practitioners, financial education trainers, workforce development specialists and more - to help their clients build the credit needed to achieve financial self-sufficiency and build wealth. Credit Builders Alliance (CBA) will provide an overview of today's credit reporting industry and then dive into tools, strategies and information to help you and your organization build and integrate credit building activities and products into your work and outcomes.

Credit as an Asset leverages the expertise and experience of CBA's vast community of nonprofit practitioners to identify credit building best practices across sectors and target markets. The training helps participants understand credit building and credit education as a foundational component of any successful financial capability program for underserved clients. Participants receive the knowledge and tools to incorporate into existing programs or to develop new credit building and education programs.



What Is Credit Building?	DEFINE CBA's Credit Building philosophy
View Credit As an Asset	VALUE Credit Building as Asset Building
Know the Score	UNDERSTAND Credit Reports to inform Credit Building ACTION PLANNING
Get the Good Stuff Going	TAKE a PRODUCT-BASED approach to Credit Building
Deal with Debt	ENHANCE Credit Building efforts by addressing client debt appropriately
Make Credit Building Count	TRACK client credit outcomes to MEASURE and COMMUNICATE Credit Building successes

Learning Objectives

This interactive, training is designed to help participants:

- Understand credit building as an essential and viable activity, foundational to the successful implementation of any financial asset building strategy for low-income and underserved individuals and families;
- Explore tools and develop skills in order to design, implement, and measure credit building programs based on client needs and goals as well as organizational missions and capacities; and
- Engage with and learn from CBA's growing Credit Building Community about best practices in credit education, access to responsible financial products, and measuring and communicating client credit outcomes.

About CBA

Credit Builders Alliance (CBA) is an innovative non-profit social enterprise dedicated to building the capacity of a diverse and growing network of hundreds of nonprofits (CBA members) across the country that help low- and moderate- income households build strong credit and other financial assets. CBA was created by and for our nonprofit members as a bridge to the modern credit reporting system to help millions of individuals with poor or no credit participate in the mainstream financial system by building credit.

Our mission:

To help organizations move people from poverty to prosperity through Credit Building.

CBA serves as a unique and vital bridge between our members and the major credit reporting agencies (CRAs). Our core services, CBA Reporter and CBA Access, provide nonprofits with both the ability and critical technical assistance to report loan data to the CRAs and to pull low-cost client credit reports for the purposes of financial education, outcome tracking, and underwriting. In addition to these core services—which are essential to helping individuals and families build credit histories and scores—CBA offers practitioners hands-on credit building training and consulting services, innovative tools, and forums for sharing with and learning from each other.

Our membership is comprised of nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) loan funds, microenterprise development organizations (MDOs), and small credit unions as well as multiservice/integrated services organizations such as community action agencies, affordable housing organizations, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Economic Opportunity Centers, and local Catholic Charities and United Way affiliates, among many others. Through our members, CBA services touch estimated hundreds of thousands of clients in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas through programming tailored to the specific needs and assets of different populations in their local communities. In order to ensure its efforts remain grounded in the work members do every day, 50% of CBA's Board seats are held by practitioners in the credit building field

Overview of the Units

Unit	Purpose/Overview
Welcome and Introductions	Welcome and Introductions. Set expectations for the training and intended outcomes.
Course Introduction: What is Credit Building and Why is it important?	Understand the importance of <i>Credit as an Asset</i> and create a basic understanding of the philosophy and rudimentary elements of what credit building is and what it is not .
CBA's Credit Strength Roadmap®	
Step 1: Consider the Goal	Learn about the importance of connecting credit building with asset building and other financial goals. Understand how to help your clients shift their thinking about credit from a barrier to an asset. ACTIVITY: Consider sample client profiles and how to connect credit building to their goals.
Step 2: Know the Score	Discover the intricacies of credit reports and scores. Learn how to use them strategically as tools for credit building with your clients. ACTIVITY: Review a sample credit report to assess credit building readiness.
Step 3: Get the Good Stuff Going	Develop a deeper understanding of how to build positive credit using safe and affordable financial products. Learn how to assess credit building products, identify products in your community and best practices for building a healthy credit profile. PEER LEARNING: Share your experiences and resources with your peers.
Step 4: Deal with Debt	Understand debt management from a credit building perspective. Explore how to help your client manage debt in a way that will create a foundation for healthy credit building. ACTIVITY: Practice helping clients prioritize debts based on their credit and asset building goals.
Step 5: Make Credit Building Count	Learn how to help your clients track, measure, and leverage credit building success so that they can achieve their asset building goals. Consider outcome tracking strategies at a programmatic level as well.
Recap, Commitments & Follow Up	Training recap and review. PEER LEARNING: Discuss how to incorporate credit building into the work that you do and what follow up opportunities exist to continue on your credit building training journey.