Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Little Stars Child Care Center **Enrollment:** 30 **License ID:** 51440

Street: 2250 W Ridgeway AVE **City:** Waterloo **IA** **Zip Code:** 50702 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 2250 W Ridgeway AVE

Mailing City: Waterloo **IA** **Zip Code:** 50702

Director's Name: Vacant **Center Phone Number:** 319-883-6747

On-Site Supervisors: Cornelis "Necey" Muhammad **E-Mail Address:** directorlsccc22@gmail.com presidentlsccc@gmail.com

Date of Complaint: 12-30-2024 **Date of Visit:** 01-09-2025

[ ] Scheduled **[X]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended

[ ] PROVISIONAL license from **to**

[ ] SUSPENSION of License

[ ] REVOCATION of License

Complaint Details:

Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

On 12/30/24 two separate, but identical concerns were reported regarding Little Stars Childcare Center in Waterloo. It is reported that a staff member, Kierra W., was written up for not following licensing standards. She was not providing the children anything to drink until they finished their meal/snacks. Kierra became upset and started yelling and cussing in front of the children. She went into the infant room and may have kicked things over. The children were so scared they quit eating.

On 01/06/25 another concern was received regarding the same incident involving Kierra W. and concerns for her safety around children. It was reported she was cussing and yelling in the center in front of children and refused to leave the center. It was reported she was disrespecting the director, which is reportedly quite common.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.10(16)a The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

Inspection Findings:

On 01/07/25 I attempted a phone contact with Ibrahim Shehata, the owner, to discuss the reported allegations. He did not return my call.

On 01/09/25 I made an unannounced visit to Little Stars Childcare Center in Waterloo. I met with Lynn Weidler, the director. I informed her of the reported allegations. Ms. Weidler confirmed there was an incident that occurred at the center on 12/27/24. On 12/30/24 she wrote Kierra W. up for not following licensing standards. She was withholding drinks from children while they ate. She states Kierra became upset and refused to sign the write up form. She was upset because Ms. Weidler was going to pull her as the lead teacher. She states she often feels threatened by Kierra's actions. She is argumentative and combative. She refused to leave the office and told Ms. Weidler that she did not need to listen to her because she was leaving her position as director at the center. Ms. Weidler states she went in every room and caused a scene. Other staff members had to step in to assist her.

I interviewed five additional staff members that were present the day of the reported incident. All of them confirmed that Kierra was noticeably angry the day of the reported incident. Four of the five staff members reported that Kierra was yelling and swearing at the center and in front of children. Staff members reported that the children were frightened by her behaviors. They also reported that Kierra was disrespectful and insubordinate to Ms. Weidler. The staff members reported that is a common occurrence from Kierra. I was informed children did not finish breakfast because of the stressful environment that was created. The staff members described her behaviors as out of control.

I interviewed Kierra W. She states she was upset because she was going to be demoted and not be the lead teacher. She refused to sign the paper. Kierra states she was not getting loud. She was emotional and there was a lot of crying, but she was not yelling. She went into other rooms to get other people's opinion. She said she accidentally said "shit" bur denied using any "F bombs". She said she apologized for swearing. Kierra states she was told she can go home and relax for the day. She called for a ride. She said she was not that out of control. She feels picked on because she is always being asked to go home when they are low in ratio.

I spoke with Ms. Weidler and asked if Kierra had been written up any other times. I was informed she had been. I asked to see the paperwork. I was provided a stack of twelve written concerns for Kierra's behavior at the center going back to April 2024.

I informed Ms. Weidler that while my complaint is open Kierra is not to be the lead teacher or be left alone in the room with children.

On 01/09/25 I received phone calls from two staff members informing me that after I left the center Ibrahim Shehata, the owner, came to the center and "interrogated" all the staff members I spoke with. He was asking staff members what they said to me and who reported this to me. Staff members were told not to talk with me.

I am going to point out that this should not be occurring. Staff members are required to talk with me when I come to the center, whether it is for a complaint or a licensing visit. Staff members have the right to talk with me confidentially and should not be "interrogated" by administration.

On 01/10/25 I received an email from Muhammad Shehata, asking me to call him.

On 01/13/25 I made a collateral phone contact with Muhammad Shehata, an administrator for the center. Mr. Shehata asked me to clarify a different licensing standard. I informed Mr. Shehata I did tell Ms. Weidler that I did not want Kierra to be a lead or alone in rooms while this complaint is open.

I asked Mr. Shehata's opinion about how Kierra acted at the center. He replied her actions were not exemplary of Little Stars. Her actions were completely unacceptable to act that way in front of children. He stated she would be on a teacher improvement plan.

I asked Mr. Shehata if there were recordings of what occurred at the center that I could review. He stated they do not have any sound. I told him I would still like to see the recordings to see her body language. Mr. Shehata said he would check for video recordings and get back to me.

On 01/16/25 I emailed Muhammad Shehata to ask if he had the video recordings for me to view. I never heard back from Mr. Shehata.

Special Notes and Action Required:

109.10 (16)a. Supervision. The center director and on-site supervisor shall ensure that each staff member, substitute, or volunteer knows the number and names of children assigned to that staff member, substitute, or volunteer for care. Assigned staff, substitutes, and volunteers shall provide careful supervision. VIOLATED. I spoke with several staff members who verified that Kierra's actions on 12/30/24 included yelling and swearing in front of the children. She was disrespectful to Ms. Weidler and they described her as out of control. Muhammad Shehata described her behaviors as completely unacceptable.

I reviewed twelve written write-ups on Kierra W. for concerns on her behaviors while at work. Because of her history of unacceptable behaviors in classrooms, I am going to maintain that she cannot be alone in classrooms with children. She can be a lead teacher if you decide you want her in that role.

Currently, the status of the center's license is unchanged. If you would like to respond to this report, please do so in writing and I will include the information in the licensing file.

Consultant's Signature:

Rebecca Frost

Date:

01-27-2025