Health and Human Services

# Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Ready, Set, Grow Learning Center

Provider No.: 47826

Address: 1723 W Milwaukee AVE, Storm Lake, IA, 50588

County: Buena Vista

Director's Name: Diana Ramirez-Galarza

On-Site Supervisor: Karla Rosales

Phone Number: 7122132101

E-Mail: readysetgrowbv@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 07/14/2026

Licensing Period: 08/01/2026 to 08/01/2028

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**Fire Inspection:**

Date Inspected: 03/11/2024

Comments:

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**Report Visit Type:**

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

**License Type:**

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

**Quality initiative:**

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

**Program Duration:**

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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| HOURS: | *Year-round* | *School-Year* | *Summer Only* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM | | |
| Tuesday | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM | | |
| Wednesday | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM | | |
| Thursday | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM | | |
| Friday | 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM | | |
| Saturday | | | |

**Program Population Served:**

- [X] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [X] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Aged | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | 28 | 27 | 26 | 76 | 157 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**1. Basic Overview**

On July 14, 2026, I completed an unannounced annual visit to the Ready Set Grow Childcare Center. During the visit, I met with the new director, Diana Ramirez-Galarza. Diana has many years of experience working at this center and brings a strong foundation in early childhood education. She has extensive training in the Iowa Early Learning Standards, which provide guidance for promoting children's development across key domains such as social-emotional skills, communication, physical development, and early academic readiness. These standards help ensure that classroom activities and interactions are developmentally appropriate and support children's growth in a consistent and intentional way. Diana has also been trained in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is an evidence-based framework that focuses on creating predictable routines, teaching clear expectations, and reinforcing positive behaviors. Through PBIS, staff emphasize prevention, supportive guidance, and consistent responses to help children build social-emotional skills and learn appropriate behaviors. Diana's leadership in implementing both the Iowa Early Learning Standards and PBIS contributes to a structured, nurturing learning environment where children can thrive. Diana models these skills for her staff.

The program operates in a standalone building and is structured as a non-profit organization overseen by a board of directors. Ready Set Grow provides care for infants through school-age children, offering a range of developmentally appropriate services across age groups. At the time of my visit, the center had 32 children enrolled, with 27 children present. This enrollment reflects a consistent utilization of services and allows staff to maintain appropriate ratios and individualized attention within the program. The building contains two defined spaces currently used for classroom programming. One room is dedicated to infant care, while the second, larger area is divided into two classrooms: one serving toddlers ages 18 to 36 months, and the other designated for preschool and school-age children. The infant room is arranged using a low, mobile fence that separates the primary programming area from the sleep area, where cribs are located. The fence includes a

gate that is easy for staff to operate, allowing safe and efficient transitions between areas. A restroom with a changing station is located directly off the infant classroom, providing convenient access for diapering and hygiene needs. The remaining classrooms make use of a restroom situated off a common corridor, allowing older children to access facilities safely and independently as appropriate. I observed a diapering procedure during my visit, and it was completed in a sanitary and appropriate manner. Staff followed proper hygiene practices throughout the process, ensuring a clean and safe environment for the child.

Activity centers were arranged in a way that allowed clear sightlines throughout the classrooms, with furniture and play structures positioned to support supervision and smooth movement. Toys, materials, and equipment in each area appeared to be well-maintained and appropriate for the developmental levels of the children using them. Each classroom displayed its daily schedule and curriculum plan, and the center is currently using a shared theme across programs, with individual classrooms adapting activities to meet the developmental needs of their specific age groups.

Classrooms featured a variety of visual supports, including children's artwork, early literacy materials such as letters, numbers, and sight words, as well as photos of staff and families. These elements contributed to a welcoming atmosphere and helped foster a sense of belonging for the children. Staff were observed actively engaging with children in play, supporting learning activities, and responding to individual needs. The program uses a positive behavior support approach, incorporating strategies such as smooth transition activities, clear reminders of expectations, consistent acknowledgment of positive behaviors, and appropriate redirection. Staff maintained calm, supportive tones and demonstrated nurturing interactions that encouraged children to self-regulate and participate safely in the classroom environment.

The center has access to a small kitchen area, which was clean and organized. Appropriate food storage and handling procedures were in place. They are participating with the CCAFC Food program.

Outdoor play occurs in a small, fully fenced playground space. The climbing structure was in good repair at the time of the visit. Pea gravel is used as fall surfacing; however, additional surfacing is needed to meet recommended depth levels. First aid kits were available and stocked with supplies needed to treat minor injuries. Staff were observed taking the kits outdoors during playground time, ensuring emergency materials were readily accessible.

The center completes regular fire and tornado drills, as well as routine playground safety checks. Ready Set Grow receives support from Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR) and has recently achieved Level 1 in IQ4K. The program also utilizes the Bright wheel app to facilitate communication with families. The center is overseen by an engaged board of directors who stay informed about daily operations and provide ongoing guidance.

Annual fuel burning inspection was not available during my visit. This building is currently rented, and the director will ensure that these are completed.

This center has no basement, so no radon testing is needed.

A current program goal is to increase enrollment and continue progressing toward achieving Level?2 IQ4K certification, building on the foundational quality practices already in place.

**2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program**

The center is certified at IQ4K Level?1, which means it has met Iowa's foundational quality criteria in areas such as nutrition practices, staff training and orientation, family engagement, teaching standards, safety policies, and annual self-assessments. Level?1 reflects that the program is operating above basic licensing requirements and has established the core practices needed to continue advancing in the IQ4K quality rating system.

Over the past year, the center, its staff, and the board have made noticeable investments in strengthening the overall quality of the program. During this visit, I observed a calmer, more organized environment, with classrooms following consistent routines and schedules. These improvements reflect the ongoing efforts of leadership and staff to enhance daily operations and create a more structured and supportive setting for children.

The director and staff work closely with CCRR and demonstrate openness to ongoing guidance and professional growth. They consistently express a desire to learn and improve their practice in order to provide the highest quality care possible.

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

**3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard**

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must: Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water. Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic.

Please ensure weeds and thistles are not in the green space on the playground.

Please add more pea gravel to the surfacing underneath the climbing structure.

109.11(8)c All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.

**4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance**

**5. Special Notes/Recommendations**

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management
I discussed with Diana regarding her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance.

Diana is trained in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and actively models this positive behavior approach for her staff. PBIS emphasizes teaching expectations, reinforcing appropriate behaviors, and creating predictable routines, and Diana's leadership helps staff apply these practices consistently throughout the center. The program also uses cameras as an additional monitoring tool to support supervision and provide opportunities for coaching when needed. Diana spends time in each classroom observing interactions and offering assistance, which strengthens staff confidence and consistency.

During conversations with staff, they shared that they feel comfortable reaching out to Diana or to one another when they need a break or extra support. This reflects a collaborative atmosphere in which staff feel respected and part of a unified team. The overall environment suggests strong teamwork and shared commitment to providing quality care.

A full license is recommended at this time.  Please provide a written response identifying a plan to correct and maintain those issues cited as not meeting licensing standards and a date of anticipated compliance.  At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Great job entering all training in IPOWER.

Date: 07/16/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.