**Iowa Department of Human Services**
**CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE**

**Name of Center:** Y's Kids at Highland **Enrollment:** 21 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 46510

**Street:** 812 Idaho ST **City:** Waterloo Iowa **Zip** 50703 **County:** Black Hawk

**Mailing Address:** 425 Lafayette ST, Waterloo, IA, 50703

**Director's Name:** Mindy Sternhagen **Phone Number:** 319-234-7589

**On-Site Supervisor(s):** Schantellee Jackson **E-Mail:** ywcakids@ywcabhc.org
mindy@ywcabhc.org

**Date(s) of Visit:** 11-20-2024

**Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** X **Administrative Change**

**LICENSING VISITS**

**New Application** **Re-Application** X **NA**

**Signed Application (470-0722) Received** **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

**FIRE INSPECTION** **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

**Date Inspected:** 09-08-2022

**Comments :**

**LICENSE TYPE:** X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

**Financial Type:** Profit X Non-Profit NA

**Accredition:** Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

**Program Serves:** Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age X School-Age
Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

**SCHEDULE:** Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

| **HOURS:** | *Year-round* | *School-Year* | *Summer Only* |
|---|---|---|---|

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Age | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | 0 | 0 | 10 | 32 | 42 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**QRS Rating:** N/A

| RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE: | |
|---|---|
| X | **FULL** license from 12-01-2023 to 12-01-2025 |
| | **PROVISIONAL** license from |
| | **DENIAL** of initial application |
| | **SUSPENSION** of license |
| | **REVOCATION** of license |

**Licensing Consultant:** Becky Frost **Date:** 11-26-2024

**I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

N/A

**II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:**

On 11/20/24 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Y's Kids at Highland Elementary in Waterloo. I met with Schantellee Jackson, the on-site supervisor for the program. She has been employed with the YWCA since 2010. Mindy Sternhagen is the interim director for the program. Ms. Sternhagen has been with the program since 2002. She has a BA in Elementary Education and her CDA. Typically, two staff members are present during the morning hours and two staff members are present during the afternoon hours.

The program is in Highland Elementary. They operate out of the cafeteria area. The program is also able to use the gym. The before and after school program operates Monday through Friday from 6:30-8:30 am and 3:35-6:00 pm. The program serves children who are in preschool through fifth grade. There are currently 19 children enrolled.

The cafeteria is an open space that allow for free play and organized activities. Natural lighting is available in the cafeteria. Centers are stored in cabinets in the cafeteria and in an office area near the gym. The centers I observed include games, magnets, table toys, crafts, art, Legos and transportation.

I visited the program during the afternoon hours. They were in ratio. The number of children at the program at any one time is changing constantly because of children arriving and leaving.

The children use two bathrooms in the entrance of the cafeteria. The girl's bathroom has five toilets two birdbath sinks and the boy's bathroom has two toilets, three urinals and two birdbath sinks. Handwashing procedures were posted in both locations. There are additional bathrooms located in the school.

The program has a cell phone and emergency numbers were programmed in the phone. There is also a poster in the staff binder with the program's address and phone number. Emergency numbers for the children were available. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits in the cafeteria. The evacuation diagram was posted by two exits in the gym but should also be posted near the office space. This was cited in last year's report also. A daily schedule was posted on the front of the staff binder. You should post this on the parent board.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Drills have been completed so far this school year. There were missing tornado and fire drills in the morning of March 2024. There were missing afternoon tornado drills in September and October 2023 and January 2024. There were missing afternoon fire drills in September through November 2023 and January and May 2024. The children are required to practice fire and tornado drills every month. There are children who only attend during the morning hours and children who attend only during the afternoon hours. This is why it is important to practice fire and tornado drills in the morning and afternoon every month.

I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in November 2024 and is only good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in the office used for storage. Outlets were protected. The

fire marshal inspection occurred on 09/08/22.

The YWCA offers an afternoon snack. Snack is provided by the school for the program. Snack menus were posted and were available for review. Disposable products are used so dishwashing is not necessary. Snacks are eaten in the cafeteria. There is a refrigerator in the storage office for the YWCA program. A thermometer was present. The school places the snack in a refrigerator in the school kitchen. This area is locked so I was unable to look for a thermometer. The children are offered breakfast through the school once they are released from the program.

The center uses Sani-T to sanitize the food tables.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the cafeteria. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously posted. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

The program uses the elementary school's playground. Woodchips are used for surface cushioning. There are multiple pieces of climbing equipment located in the play area. Some of the items available include slides, tunnels, bars, rings, a climbing wall, and steppingstones, a see saw, and a balance beam. They also had spinning toys. There is a large grassy area for the children and a concrete area for the children. Shade is provided by trees.

There is a gym available when the children cannot go outside.

I spoke with the staff members about emergency preparedness plans. Staff members did not know evacuation locations. They are not trained on emergency preparedness plans. Licensing standards mandate that all staff members are trained on emergency preparedness plans every year. You must start doing this and have documentation available to verify staff members are trained.

Staff members were great. They have worked together for at least two years and have terrific teamwork. One staff member was actively engaged in a game with children. Staff members talked with children about using their words. They were flexible and offered choices to the children. The children appeared to be enjoying their time at the center.

While I was present the janitor was cleaning the area. He was blaring music on a speaker while children were present. It was distracting and made it difficult for the child and staff member to talk. I was unable to talk with the staff members while the custodian was present because the music was so loud. Staff members state this occurs every day. This needs to stop. This should not be occurring. This is the second year I have noted this in my report. My expectation is for someone to contact the school. Staff members should not have to compete with music playing from a custodian to communicate with the children they care for.

**III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:**

Ms. Jackson and Clarinda Perkins, the assistant for the program, have worked together for multiple years and have a good working relationship.

The program meets a need for parents who require care for their children before and after school.

The YWCA continues to offer before and after school care in multiple schools in the community. This allows children to stay on site at the school and parents do not have to worry about transportation.

Ms. Jackson and Ms. Perkins express concerns about the continual changes in the administrative office. They feel the program would benefit from a steady administrative team. They need stability and so do the families. They appreciate Ms. Sternhagen stepping in to cover.

**IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:**

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.
I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Drills have been completed so far this school year. There were missing tornado and fire drills in the morning of March 2024. There were missing afternoon tornado drills in September and October 2023 and January 2024. There were missing afternoon fire drills in September through November 2023 and January and May 2024. The children are required to practice fire and tornado drills every month. There are children who only attend during the morning hours and children who attend only during the afternoon hours. This is why it is important

to practice fire and tornado drills in the morning and afternoon every month.

**V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

I need administration to contact the school about a custodian who blares very loud music in the area where the childcare program is located. This makes it difficult for staff members to communicate with children. I had a difficult time communicating with staff members during my visit. It is inappropriate and it needs to be addressed.

Please make sure staff members are trained on emergency preparedness plans every year.

An administrative change is being made to remove Sherrie Roberts as a director. Mindy Sternhagen remains the interim director.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.