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

Name of Center: Growing Tree Early Learning Center **Enrollment:** 14 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52027

Street: 10000 Meredith DR **City:** Urbandale Iowa **Zip** 50322 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 10000 Meredith DR, Urbandale, IA, 50322

Director's Name: Cindy Kniss **Phone Number:** 515-309-3390

On-Site Supervisor(s): Ashley Defenbaugh **E-Mail:** Enrollment@growingtreeelc.com jodi@growingtreeelc.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-28-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 10-28-2022

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

Date Inspected: 06-04-2020

Comments : Fire inspections are due at least every three years. The fire marshal was out recently, however a report has not been submitted.

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

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	20	12	33		65
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 10-31-2022 to 02-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Debbie Hammer **Date:** 04-10-2023

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An off-year visit was conducted on 2/28/23. The owner/director, Cindy, was present throughout the visit.

Growing Tree Early Education Center opened at this location on 10/31/22. This location/center was previously known as Tender Heart Preschool and Childcare. The owner of Tender Heart sold the center to the new owner, Cindy Kniss. Cindy Kniss is the owner of two other centers in Iowa and will be the director of this center at this time. Cindy has a Bachelor's degree in Education and has been the owner/director of Formative Years childcare center center in Ames, Iowa since 2017. Cindy meets qualifications to be the director. Ashley Defenbaugh is the on-site supervisor as of December of 2022. Ashley has three prior years of experience in a childcare setting prior to taking this role and meets qualifications for this position.

The center was built in 2001. The center serves children six weeks in age to roughly five years in age and they use Creative Learning Curriculum with children. The new owner added a wall to divide an open area, creating 5 enclosed classrooms. The preschool classroom has a capacity for 18 children, the three year old room has a capacity for 15 children, the two year old classroom has a capacity for 12 children, the toddler classroom has a capacity for 12 children and the infant classroom has a capacity for 8 children; the total capacity for the center is 65.

The center hours are 6:30 am to 5:30 pm.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

There was a seamless transition between owners of this center, the children did not have any disruption of care.

Two of the staff who worked for the previous owner are still employed at this center, both having worked at this location for 17 years.

There is a secure entrance into the center, the new owner installed a new security door system.

The new owner has completed updates and renovations to the center with new flooring, new paint on the walls, new appliances in the kitchen and a wall added to separate the open space. The center will be getting new materials and furniture for all of the classrooms through Lake Shore.

The center uses the Bright Wheel app for real time communication with families.

The owner is looking into a partnership with the school district to provide the SWVPP.

The owner will apply for an IQ4K rating in the next year.

The center partners with AEA.

The families have been appreciative of the changes at the center and have talked about how their children have grown and learned.

The staff work well together and are a good team. They are knowledgeable and work hard.

The administration team works well together.

The curriculum is strong.

The owner will be adding infant and toddler space to the playground area and a shade structure.

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

There were no aspects of operation that fell below the standards noted or observed during the visit.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing in all classrooms is now due every five years and was last tested 5/5/21 - 5/7/21. Results were below the 4.0 cutoff.

The center has a emergency preparedness plan completed and an emergency evacuation kit.

The owner will be installing a new furnace.

The center is following CACFP guidelines.

*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.