Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: The Learning Journey

Provider No.: 7224

Address: 15111 214th ST, Council Bluffs, IA, 51503

County: Pottawattamie

Director's Name: Lisa Wilcox/Assistant director Jordan Hiffernan

On-Site Supervisor: Mindy Roesler

Phone Number: 7122563978

E-Mail: lhiffernan@aol.com, Jordan.wooten@hotmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 08/29/2025

Licensing Period: 07/01/2024 to 07/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 06/01/2023

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

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	15	17	30	11	73
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced licensing visit was made to The Learning Journey on 8/29/25. The Learning Journey is located adjacent to Lisa Wilcox's parents' home on private property. The center was a very large garage that was renovated. The center opened in July 2008. Lisa Wilcox and Jordan Wooten are the directors. Mindy Roesler is the on-site supervisor. Mindy or Candace is in charge when Jordan is gone. Lisa has her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Jordan has a Bachelor's Degree in Business. Child care services are offered to infants to school age children from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. There are 72 children enrolled in the program. I met with Jordan during my visit.

Observation of rooms:
The center is a locked facility. Staff and parents have fob keys to get inside the building. Each fob key has its own code so the center can easily stop the fob key, if needed. Upon entering the building, there are punch cards for parents to clock their children in and out. Lisa makes the curriculum. The daily schedule and lesson plans were posted in every room. Fire and tornado emergency diagrams were posted by one door, but they need to be posted by every door and every programming area. Please post these and email me when this has been resolved. The program rooms were in ratio. The infant room is from six weeks to 18 months. There were 11 kids and three staff. They have one jumper, but staff reported they don't use it often. They have bouncers, but once a child is able to sit up, they don't use bouncers anymore. They only allow a child to be in it for 10 minutes and they watch the clock to keep track of time. There was only one evacuation crib and at least one more was needed although it is not required. It would be good to have an evacuation crib for every four children; however, the center can decide how best to evacuate the infants in the event of an emergency when they practice their monthly fire drills. The emergency door was blocked by small toys that were being played with. Please keep the emergency door free of any obstructions. The room was bright and colorful with a variety of developmentally appropriate toys. The toddler room had 11 kids and three staff. The room was bright and colorful with a variety of toys. Some of the children were napping and some were eating. Their hands were washed with a rag after eating. There were separate rags for each child. There were thermometers in the refrigerator/freezer. The preschool area is a large room that was broken into three groups. All three groups were for three- and four-year-olds. One group had 12 kids and one staff. The second group had 11 kids and one staff. The third group had seven kids and one staff. All of the children washed their hands before lunch. The refrigerator had a thermometer. The room was bright and colorful. The children were having fun playing. There is a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment in each room. Each room had lesson plans/activities. Plastic bags were accessible to children last year which are a health and safety hazard. The center moved these plastic bags higher in the room so they are not within reach of the children. These plastic bags are used to store programming supplies, specifically circle time for weekly activities. The staff were nurturing and attentive to the needs of the children. The center uses the Tadpole app to communicate with parents and infant daily sheets. The center has purchased new toys.

Nutrition:
Meals are prepared on site and menus are posted on a four-week rotation as well as on Tadpoles. The kitchen was clean.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Proper storage was not being used on two items. There are thermometers in the refrigerator/freezers. All dishes, including bottles, are washed in the kitchen. The center is on the federal food program.

Health and safety:
The center follows the medication management procedures when a child is prescribed medication. Monthly fire/tornado drills are practiced and documented. Radon tests were completed in June 2025 and all test results were under a 4.0 pCi/L. Refer to your handbook for information on radon and the frequency of testing as this has changed. The center follows the water testing protocols that are required. Staff test the water daily and Lisa tests weekly, monthly, and yearly. The building is all electric so no fuel burning inspection is required. Carbon monoxide/smoke detectors are combined in every room. There was a first aid kit in every room. Toys are rotated regularly because Lisa buys new toys frequently. All cribs and cots had sheets that are washed weekly or more often, if needed. The center began using Purell for sanitizing and disinfecting which has been a big help for the center. They no longer need to mix any sanitizers or disinfectants which has been an issue in the past. Use the three-step bottle procedure 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing and 3. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting. Public Health comes out yearly to review the immunizations.

Playground:
The center has a very nice playground with a climbing structure. Monthly playground safety inspections are documented. The center uses pea gravel for surfacing.

Transportation:
The center doesn't provide daily transportation services. The center walks the children to the street for them to catch the bus to and from school.

Administrative records:
Jordan maintains daily contact with the staff and has staff meetings on an almost monthly basis. Five children’s files and two staff files were reviewed. All files are in excellent condition.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Lisa and Jordan are very enthusiastic and proud of their program. They provide quality child care services and are an excellent resource to the community. Lisa maintains frequent contact with Jordan. Jordan is always very friendly, organized, and helpful during my visits. The center has special programming and visitors that come to the center for presentations and interactive hands-on learning. The center uses the Tadpole child care app for communicating with parents - daily sheets, etc. The center transitioned children and staff to this site from the Learning Journey II site that closed.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.10(13)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. The emergency diagrams are not posted by every door. Please post emergency diagrams by each programming door and each exit for the building.

109.13(5)b: Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent transmission of disease, infestation, and spoilage are followed. Staff preparing food that have injuries on hands wear protective gloves. Staff serving food use clean serving utensils and have clean hands/wear protective gloves. There were two open packages that had not been sealed properly. Please make sure all food is sealed and labeled in an airtight container.

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

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended for 7-1-2024 to 7-1-2026.

Date: 09/08/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Tausha Bottorff

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**.