Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Community United Child Care Centers-Valley Park **Enrollment:** 239 **License ID:** 16036

Street: 1026 E Seerley BLVD **City:** Cedar Falls **IA** **Zip Code:** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 1026 E Seerley BLVD

Mailing City: Cedar Falls **IA** **Zip Code:** 50613

Director's Name: Jay Mattson **Center Phone Number:** 319-277-7303

On-Site Supervisors: Sara Koester **E-Mail Address:** admined@cuccc.org

Date of Complaint: 05-12-2025 **Date of Visit:** 05-20-2025

[ ] 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 05/12/25 a concern was reported regarding an incident that allegedly occurred at CUCCC-Valley Park in Cedar Falls. It is reported that a two year old child was left alone on the playground unsupervised for approximately fifteen minutes on 05/12/25.

It should be noted that I was on leave and did not receive this complaint until 05/19/25.

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:

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

On 05/12/25 I had received an email from Sara Koester, the on-site supervisor for the program informing me that a child had been left outside for fifteen minutes.

On 05/19/25 I emailed Gaga Barzut, from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). I requested any information she had on the reported concern.

On 05/20/25 I made an unannounced visit to CUCCC-Valley Park in Cedar Falls. I met with Sara Koester, the on-site supervisor for the program. Ms. Koester states she had previously met with Gaga Barzut from HHS. Ms. Koester states the center has a policy that staff members are supposed to count the children as they walk through every doorway. Ms. Koester states the lead teacher in the classroom was on leave when this happened. The center had video evidence of the child being left outside unsupervised for fifteen minutes.

Ms. Koester provided me written statements from Chevelle H. and Hailey S.

Hailey was the second staff member on the playground with Chevelle H. Hailey took seven children and went inside to get lunch ready. This left Chevelle with seven children on the playground. Chevelle came inside a few minutes later with her children. Hailey was passing out lunch to the children she noticed they only had thirteen children and they were supposed to have fourteen children. They realized a child was missing. Chevelle went out to the playground and found him and brought him inside.

On 05/22/25 I had a collateral phone contact with Gaga Barzut from HHS. Ms. Barzut updated me on the information she had gathered. She made a visit to the center on 05/14/25 and spoke with Sara Koester, the on-site supervisor and Lacy Vaughn, the assistant program director. Ms. Vaughn states the watched the video recoding and did not see Chevelle count the children prior to going inside from the playground. Ms. Barzut and I made arrangements to meet with Chevelle H on 05/23/25 at the HHS office.

On 05/23/25 Ms. Barzut and I interviewed Chevelle H. at the HHS office. Chevelle states on 05/12/25 the lead teacher for the classroom was on vacation. She said they went outside before lunch. Another classroom was outside with them. Hailey took the other children inside first to get lunch ready. She states the staff member from the other classroom took her children inside. Chevelle states she counted the children as she went through each door. She states earlier in the day she only had six children so it did not “hit her” that she actually had seven children.

Chevelle states the Hailey realized they were missing a child. Chevelle went outside and the child was sitting on the slide with a baby doll. She took him inside for lunch and then nap. He was not upset. He acted like nothing was wrong.

Chevelle states the policy is they are supposed to count the children when they go through each door and touch their heads. She states sometimes they use a rope to walk children. She could not remember if she touched the children’s heads on the day of the incident.

Chevelle states she no longer works at the center.

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. A child was left outside unsupervised on the playground for fifteen minutes. This was verified by administration on a video recording and two staff members admitted the child was left outside.

The center has a policy to count the children and touch their heads through every doorway.

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:

06-18-2025