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

Name of Center: Helen G. Nassif YMCA **Enrollment:** 9 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51939

Street: 207 7th AVE SE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52401 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 207 7th AVE SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52401

Director's Name: Tanisha Phelps **Phone Number:** 319-366-6421

On-Site Supervisor(s): Allyn Phelps, Jacob Perks **E-Mail:** phelps@crmetroymca.org

Date(s) of Visit: 10-30-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 12-09-2021

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **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: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			36	116	152
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-14-2022 to 12-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 11-14-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

The YMCA currently operates the following two childcare programs in Linn County: Marion YMCA and Helen G. Nassif YMCA. Specifically, Helen G. Nassif YMCA commenced operations on 11/7/2022. The program is located inside the Helen G Nassif YMCA Cedar Rapids. The program operates year-round Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:00pm. During the academic year, the program operates a preschool-age program with childcare component. During the summer, this program expands to offer both preschool-age and school-age summer programming. Current enrollment is 9.

YMCA - multi-site director is Tanisha Phelps. Ms. Phelps has been the multi-site executive director of all the YMCA childcare sites since January, 2019. Ms. Phelps has a BA degree in interdisciplinary studies, over 9 years of experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. On-site supervisor Allyn Phelps has 6 years experience working with children and continues to participate in much child development related training. On-site supervisor Jacob Perks has a MA degree in strategic leadership, over 5 years experience working with children and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 10/30/2023, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The YMCA currently operates the following two childcare programs in Linn County: Marion YMCA and Helen G. Nassif YMCA. The YMCA provides a variety of full-time and part-time childcare options to help meet the needs of families. YMCA accepts multiple funding sources.

YMCA has the following website for the community and families to access information about the program: http://www.crmetroymca.org/Cedar_Rapids/YMCA/Welcome/For_Youth_Development/Child_Care.php.

The mission of YMCA is "...to put Christian principals into practice through program that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all..."

Marion YMCA and Helen G. Nassif YMCA operate under a board of directors. Management and ownership of the YMCA childcares has remained consistent. This includes multisite director Ms. Phelps who has been with the YMCA childcares for over 4 years. Management continues to develop systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Ms. Phelps discussed having a team of staff that includes several college students who are reliable, invested in the program and work well together.

Marion YMCA and Helen G. Nassif YMCA have emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. YMCA Linn County childcares have successfully navigated through the 2008 Linn County Flood, 2019 Polar Vortex, 2019 health (Covid-10) pandemic, 8/10/2020 Derecho Storm and 2023 days with compromised air quality.

Helen G. Nassif YMCA is located within the Helen G. Nassif YMCA Cedar Rapids facility. Building and grounds are maintained. Helen G. Nassif YMCA has a strong partnership with Helen G. Nassif YMCA Cedar Rapids. YMCA custodial staff, YMCA board members, and YMCA administrative personnel help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day. There is an AED on-site Helen G. Nassif YMCA has numerous unique features including an on-site aquatic center which is accessible at times to the childcare children. The program utilizes wheeled carts/shelves for ease of programming in shared spaces. Ms. Phelps discussed future goals to update the program's handbooks and better address transportation needs.

According to the program's website, "...child care and early learning programs at the Y focus on holistically nurturing child development by providing a safe and healthy place to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships and build self-reliance through the Y values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility...The Helen G Nassif YMCA is proud to offer a high level of child care services to the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area. From 3 years old to 5 years old , we strive to meet the needs of all families in our community. No one will be turned away due to the inability to pay..." The preschool program is currently being offered in their own separate classroom space focusing on kindergarten readiness with teacher inspired ideas. When school-age childcare operates on-site (e.g. summer break, extended school breaks), the program supports a "Junior Counselor" philosophy for the older school-age children. School-age curriculum includes reading activities (e.g. reading buddies), and when/if needed, homework/learning supports. Preschool and school-age curriculum also incorporates off-site field trip experiences (e.g. local swimming pools, Lost Island Theme Park, local bowling), on-site guest speaker events, large gross motor activities, themed days, and seasonal parties.

Helen G. Nassif YMCA continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities (e.g. Grandparents Week). The YMCA sponsors many community family/youth events including Parents Night Out event, Scholastic Book Fair event and "Trunk-or-Treat".

The YMCA collaborates well with many community partners including local small businesses, health professionals, local school districts, and other childcare owners/directors (locally and nationally). Helen G. Nassif YMCA receives full food service from Horizons Family Service Alliance provider. The program has a unique collaborative partnership with The Arc of East Central Iowa in which the YMCA childcare programs are able to access The Arc's outdoor inclusive play space.

YMCA promotes a "safe shoe" policy to help prevent foot/leg injuries as well as help ensure each child can easily participate in each day's activities.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. This program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Preschool activities observed included large gross motor games (e.g. Duck, Duck, Goose), small group work (e.g. building with Magna Tiles, dramatic home living play, sorting colors) and lunch/food service (e.g. staff encouraged mealtime social graces). Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have choice in their programming experiences. One staff was overheard talking with two children about using "safe hands" with babies during dramatic home living play. Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up, food service rituals) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative environment. Staff were observed providing children with positive redirection when needed, meaningful discussion and encouragement (e.g. hugs, many high 5s). Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

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

109.9(2)c: All files contain information regarding the specific health and medical needs of a child including information regarding any prescribed treatment. For school-age programs in the child’s school, all files include a statement signed by the parent that the immunization information is available in the school file.
- Two preschool-age child files reviewed (IO, AD) lacked documentation of a current physical exam.

109.11(7)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.
- A UL Standard 2023 carbon monoxide detector was not found to be in use on each floor on the day of the monitoring visit.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The program's license remains in full status. Thank you for the visit.

*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.