Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: A to Z Learning Center & Day Care-Donald **Enrollment:** 77 **License ID:** 21731

Street: 307 E Donald St **City:** Waterloo **IA** **Zip Code:** 50703 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 307 E Donald St

Mailing City: Waterloo **IA** **Zip Code:** 50703

Director's Name: Chris York **Center Phone Number:** 319-232-4325

On-Site Supervisors: Jessica Moffett **E-Mail Address:** atoz307donald@gmail.com, atoz4828@gmail.com

Date of Complaint: 01-03-2023 **Date of Visit:** 01-04-2023

[ ] 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 01/03/23 A concern was reported regarding A to Z Learning Center and Day Care on Donald Street in Waterloo. It is reported that staff members at the center are caring for children while under the influence of marijuana and alcohol. It is alleged the center smells like pot and staff members have alcohol on their breath. Staff members go to their vehicles and come back smelling like pot. When asked to identify names the reporter replied “everyone” and did not give specific names.

It is alleged staff members leave children alone in rooms. It is alleged a same sex couple expose the children to kissing and slapping each other on the bottom. It is alleged that staff members slap children across the head, pull on their arms and hit the children. There were no reported injuries. It is reported the center is not clean, sheets are not washed, and bottles are not washed. The center allows sick children to stay at the center. Staff members play inappropriate music was swear words in front of the children. It is alleged that the center bills for children who are not there and put the money in their own pockets. Staff use the center debit/credit cards for their own use.

On 01/06/23 a second referral was received with similar allegations.

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.

109.11(3)a Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.

109.12(2)a Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.

Inspection Findings:

On 01/03/23 I had an email correspondence with Vera Wallican, from the Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Wallican was going to visit the center on this date and would stay in touch with me.

On 01/03/23 I received a phone contact from Vera Wallican from the Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Wallican states during her visit there was one staff member with twenty children on the main floor. The second staff member was standing outside of the room and returned when Ms. Wallican arrived. Ms. Wallican states on the upper level there was a child in a crib in the toddler room unsupervised. When Ms. Wallican arrived a staff member went into the room and got the child. Ms. Wallican states there was no indication of marijuana or alcohol use by staff members.

On 01/04/23 I made an unannounced visit to A to Z Learning Center and Day Care on Donald Street in Waterloo. I met with Jessica Moffett, the on-site supervisor for the program. I informed her of the reported allegations. Ms. Moffett states she spoke with Vera Wallican when she was at the center. Ms. Moffett states Ms. Wallican visited while school-age children were present on the main level. She states there were two staff members in the room, but one staff member stepped right outside the door to talk with a parent. She still had visual observation of the room.

Ms. Moffett states she also heard about the child left alone in a crib in the Alligator room (one-year-olds). She states the staff members were shifting children to the nursery since it was the end of the day.

Ms. Moffett states she has not had any concerns with her staff members using drugs or alcohol. She states she trusts everyone who works at the center, and no one has complained to her. She states if she smelled pot or alcohol on someone, she would send them home. She has never seen anyone smoke pot in the parking lot or anywhere on the premises. She has not seen alcohol and she has not seen anyone vape. They have two staff members who smoke cigarettes, and they are not allowed to do this on the center property. She reports she has talked with parents about smelling like pot. Ms. Moffett states they are not allowing parents pass the entrance.

Ms. Moffett states they do have a couple of workers who are gay and in a relationship. She states they are not affectionate with one another at the center and the children would not know they are a couple. She states she does not think parents know about their relationship. She states staff members only know because of their working relationship.

Ms. Moffett states they do not play inappropriate music around the children. They may play music that is set to the beat of a popular song, but it has child friendly words and no cussing. Ms. Moffett states the music is child friendly and she would not allow bad music to be played.

Ms. Moffett states she has never witnessed any staff member use physical discipline on the children. Workers have never reported concerns. She states several of their staff members are related. She states she has a good relationship with her staff members, and she thinks they would be comfortable talking with her about their concerns.

Ms. Moffett states every room has a cleaning schedule and the rooms are cleaned everyday when they close. They take the garbage out and vacuum. She states both of their vacuums were broken she took them in yesterday to get fixed. They washed bedding at least once each week and more if needed. Bottles are washed in the rooms using the three-step method.

The did recently have Hand Foot Mouth disease in the center but the child was sent home right away. If they have siblings, they are sent home too. If they come healthy and spike a fever while they are present, they are sent home and they must stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours.

Ms. Moffett states to her knowledge children are not left alone in rooms. Staff members know the ratios and that they must be maintained. They know to contact her if children need to be moved around.

Ms. Moffett states they only bill for the children who are here. No staff member is pocketing any money. They turn in all their receipts to Chris York, the director. Ms. York has access to everything. They have very few private pay families.

Ms. Moffett states she would never knowingly allow any of the reported concerns to happen.

I walked through the center. All the rooms were within ratio. I spoke with Tonya D., the teacher in the Alligator room. I asked her about leaving a child alone in a crib in the room. She states they were transferring children to the infant room and one of the children was asleep in the crib. She was in the infant room and kept the door to the Alligator room wide open with the light on so she could see the child. I informed her this was not allowed. Every child occupied room must have a staff member even if

they are sleeping.

There were no behavioral indicators that any staff member was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

On 01/06/23 a second referral with the same allegations were made. I made arrangements with Vera Wallican from the Department of Health and Human Services to make a joint visit to the center on 01/18/23 to interview the staff members.

On 01/18/23 I made an announced visit to A to Z Learning Center and Day Care on Donald Street in Waterloo. Vera Wallican was also present. We interviewed every staff member employed by the center about the allegations. Eleven staff members were interviewed. Every staff member denied the allegations to be true. There were no behavioral indicators that any staff member was under the influence of drugs or alcohol during our visit.

Ms. Moffett states she would never let staff members walk around the center caring for the children if they were under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

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 in a crib alone in the Alligator room while they slept. A child occupied room must always have a staff member present.

NOT VIOLATED. There was no evidence that the other reported allegations involving supervision are true, including staff members being under the influence of drugs and alcohol at work.

109.12(2)a-d. Discipline does not allow for corporal punishment; punishment that causes humiliation, fear, pain or discomfort. Discipline does not allow for punishment or threat of punishment associated with a child's illness, lack of progress in toilet training, or in connection with food or rest. Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. NOT VIOLATED. There is no evidence to support these allegations. All staff members were interviewed, and no one reported concerns.

109.11(3)a(1)(10). Center and premises are sanitary, safe and hazard free. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce the risk of injury or harm to children and reduce the transmission of disease. NOT VIOLATED. There is no evidence to support these allegations. I walked through the center and did not observe any concerns. Staff members denied allegations.

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:

01-31-2023