Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Endeavors

Provider No.: 28320

Address: 205 SE Oralabor RD, Ankeny, IA, 50021

County: Polk

Director's Name: Melinda Gomez

On-Site Supervisor: Mary Ramirez

Phone Number: 5159630500

E-Mail: ankenydirector@littleendeavors.com

HHS Visit Date: 04/15/2026

Licensing Period: 05/01/2025 to 05/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 03/09/2026

Comments: Ankeny Fire Marshal. For licensing, these inspections are due at least every three years. The City of Ankeny typically does annual inspections.

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

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	32	24	118	32	206
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An off-year inspection was conducted on 4/15/26. The director was present throughout the inspection and the General Manager arrived in the middle of the inspection.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Little Endeavors in Ankeny opened for business in the Fall of 2001. Ownership changed in 2015. Todd Figley and Eric Kohlsdorf are the owners of this center and the other two Little Endeavors programs located in Grimes and Waukee. Kelle Baker is the general manager of all three programs. The director of this center as of 4/2025 is Melinda Gomez. Melinda was previously the on-site supervisor and she has a lot of experience working in child care. The on-site supervisor as of 8/2025 is Mary Ramirez. Mary has experience and training to meet the qualifications for on-site supervisor.

Little Endeavors offers care for infants (six weeks) up to age 12. Hours of operation are 6:30 am-6:00 pm. The center is using the Learning Beyond Paper Learning Curriculum. There are a total of 13 classrooms, although not all of the classrooms are in use at this time. Total child enrollment on the day of the inspection was 57 children.

During the inspection, some of the infant children were awake. They were being held by staff while being bottle fed, having tummy time on the floor, and in exersaucers. Most other children were napping when the inspection took place. Toys and other classroom equipment are being cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected (after each use diapering tables) daily. Staff discussed where they relocate to for monthly fire and tornado drills.

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NUTRITION: The center serves children an AM snack, lunch, and a PM snack. The food menu rotates every four weeks and met CACFP requirements. The center employs a full-time cook and the center has a full-size kitchen. Children eat in their classrooms at the child-size tables and chairs.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS: The center owns two passenger vans that they use to transport school-age children to/from the center/school and for field trips. For all transportation needs, a first-aid kit and children's emergency contacts are taken along. Younger children will go on field trips that are within walking distance in the community. The center may also, at times, bring agencies in for presentations to children.

PLAYGROUND: The center has two playground areas, one for younger children and one for older children. The playgrounds are entirely fenced in. Monthly playground inspections are conducted.

For more severe child behaviors and addressing those, management focuses on being there for each other and teamwork. The director shared that she has informed the staff she is always available for assistance if needed and they just need to contact her. Staff focus on talking to children and provide them an opportunity to calm down in a "calm down" corner if needed. Monthly staff meetings are held where child behaviors are touched on with staff.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center continues to have a good mix of tenured and newer staff.

Staff are professional and work well together as a team. The teachers are prideful of their classrooms and take ownership of their rooms.

There is good communication between staff and management.

There is good communication between staff and parents. The center uses Pro-Care for daily sheets and communication to parents. Weekly newsletters are also provided to parents .

The center has a website and a Facebook page.

The center has a secure entrance.

The administration team shows their appreciation for staff. Staff are eligible for incentives. The administration team work well together, they are a strong team.

The center employs a full-time cook.

All three Little Endeavor directors meet monthly in person and weekly by Zoom to review policies, procedures, etc.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
One staff member had only four professional development hours showing in I - Power and in the file for 2025. Six is the minimal needed. It was noted this person already has five hours for 2026.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
One child was missing a physical and another child was past due for an updated physical.

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109.11(2)b: Program space must meet the following conditions: Room must be arranged so as not to obstruct the direct observation of children by staff. Individual covered mats, bed, or cots and appropriate bedding will be provided for all children who nap. Equipment and materials are maintained in a sanitary manner. Sufficient spacing must be maintained. The center will have sufficient toilet articles for each child for hand washing.
Several children napping on cots in one classroom did not have sheets on the cots.

109.11(8)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.
The last HVAC inspection was supposedly on 4/29/25 (noted at last year's inspection when it was scheduled) however, this invoice could not be located on the day of the inspection.

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served. Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum. Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
A couple of older lesson plans were posted in the preschool classrooms. One lesson plan was also incomplete for the week.

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.
All infant bottles should be labeled with the children's names on them.

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

The below standards above should be corrected as soon as possible, but no later than next year's inspection.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was last completed in 2/2022 (IT WILL BE DUE AGAIN IN 2/2027). All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The last annual furnace inspection was scheduled for 4/29/25, but this invoice could not be located on the day of the inspection in 4/2026.

I-Power and IQ4K were discussed at the visit. All staff need to have I - Power profiles and be uploading their training certificates if these aren't automatically uploaded. The GM continues to look into IQ4K and the plan is to participate in this program in the future.

The current director will be stepping down in the near future to pursue other things. The GM is in the process of setting up interviews and hiring a new director. The director qualifications form will need to be sent to this consultant as discussed at the inspection prior to an official hire.

The center is in process of officially participating in CACFP (food program).

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Date: 04/16/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

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**.