Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Emmetsburg YMCA Kids Club

Provider No.: 52817

Address: 602 Call St, Emmetsburg, IA, 50536

County: Palo Alto

Director's Name: Amy Kuehler

On-Site Supervisor: Paige Paplow

Phone Number: 7122982120

E-Mail: akuehler@spencerymca.org

HHS Visit Date: 04/29/2026

Licensing Period: 08/21/2025 to 07/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 08/14/2025

Comments:

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	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM		
Tuesday	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM		
Wednesday	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM		
Thursday	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM		
Friday	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [ ] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General				50	50
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced visit was made to the Emmetsburg YMCA Kids Club on 04-29-26 where I met with Lynnea McCarthy, and Erin Cogdill as the on-site supervisor, Paige Paplow was not in. Paige is well qualified for the position with a bachelor's degree, and prior experience working in early childhood care with other programs overseen by the Spencer YMCA. The program was given permission to open on 08-21-25. The program is operated out of space in the Emmetsburg elementary school but is overseen under the Spencer YMCA board of directors. The program offers before/after school and summer programming for school age children only. There are currently 50 children enrolled in the program served by 5 staff. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The program makes use of the school cafeteria and gymnasium both of which have designs typical of their intended use with large open spaces and trestle tables in the cafeteria. Due to the multiple use nature of the spaces the program is not able to maintain dedicated activity centers but does have materials that can be brought out for daily use. Both areas were observed to be clean with no issues related to maintenance. Restrooms are located just off the cafeteria space and while the children are of an age that they do not need assistance in the restrooms staff do need to be aware of positioning to ensure that they are able to maintain direct line of sight to the entrances and be available to provide assistance if needed. Both spaces have multiple exits that open onto both interior and exterior locations. All exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

During the visit there were mixed elements with regard to engagement and supervision of the children. I was able to observe the program as school was dismissing and children were arriving. The group initially met in the cafeteria area

where the staff sat at a table backed by the primary access corridor. This did have an effect of making it difficult to determine which children were arriving as part of the program and which were co-mingled either visiting with peers or passing through. The program did move to the gymnasium once that area was clear of other children which did provide the children with opportunity to engage in self-directed play while additional children continue to arrive. The staff present did maintain a sign-in sheet checking children off as she observed them when they arrived. While this does show that the teacher knows the children by name/face recognition it does have high potential for a child to be missed given that the children do not formally check in with the teacher. During the first 10 minutes of programming the teacher was alone and while ratio was maintained with no more than 15 children being present at any given time it did create issues for supervision. The teacher was only able to engage in observational supervision of the children resulting in some of the children making questionable choices in their play such as several picking up a peer, and other play that had high potential to result in conflict or injury. Several children were observed to leave the area on their own and return, and one was allowed to leave on their own after asking to visit their school locker. While the children are of an age where they may be allowed to leave classrooms during the school day DHHS Licensing Standards do require that children are maintained within sight and sound of staff at all times. These concerns were alleviated when additional staff arrived. At that time the program moved to implementing the schedule of providing the children with a snack, going outside to play, and later returning to the cafeteria space to engage in games, art/craft, and other quiet table based activities. All staff appeared to have good relationships with the children playing and talking with them when on the playground and later when doing the table activities. There were no significant behavioral issues observed during the time of the visit and the staff were able to address the minor concerns with simple redirection.

Health and safety practices were also mixed on the day of the visit. The additional staff that arrived after the program started did not wash their hands immediately upon arrival as required. Later however they wash them prior to snack service, and also directed the children to wash their hand prior to snack service. The school is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the facilities and the staff do have access to supplies to allow for the staff to clean surfaces as needed such as sanitizing tables before snacks. The program does maintain a first aid kit which was stocked with materials to address most common first aid needs, but also has access to the school office and nurse for more extensive materials if needed. During the school year medications are not administered due to the limited hours of operation, and the program does have policies for medications during the summer full day programming if needed.

Due to the limited hours of operation during the school year meals are not served but snacks are provided. The snacks generally consist of single serving prepackaged items. On the day of the visit the snack provided consisted of two cracker options from the same grains food group. It was reviewed that snacks should include two credible items from different groups and options for self stable items such as single serving fruit cups, 100% juice, or making arrangements for access to milk from the school were discussed. The program does have a snack menu that consists of a rotation of what snacks will be offered each day. During the summer the program will participate in the Summer Lunch Program offered by the school.

The program does have access to the school playground. The school is responsible for the maintenance of the facilities and it was reviewed that staff should routinely inspect playground equipment and restrict children from using any damaged elements and report those to the school for repair.

In reviewing administrative records copies of required notices for No Smoking, Consultant Contact, and Mandatory Abuse reporting were present. A copy of the License Certificate was not present as required. Other required postings for emergency evacuation, emergency contact numbers, handwashing, daily schedule, and planned curriculum were also present. All child files contained all required documentation. All staff files were reviewed in the prior year all background checks were complete and those same staff are still with the program. Staff training was also verified in the I-Power Training Registry.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.10(5): Staff hand washing: The center shall ensure staff demonstrate clean personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease
-- Staff were observed to wash their hands immediately upon arrival as required.

109.10(14)a: The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

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-- Careful supervision is interpreted as children being within direct line of sight and sound of staff at all times. During the visit several children were observed to leave the programming area unaccompanied both on their own, and with staff permission. This does create a significant risk for children to elope from the program, engage in inappropriate behavior, or be in a position of requiring assistance that would go unnoticed.

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

Requirements for hand washing were reviewed.

Options for improving overall supervision of the children were discussed.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Date: 05/04/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Ray Salsbury

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**.