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

Name of Center: Conmigo Early Education Center **Enrollment:** 81 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 26659

Street: 828 Scott Ave **City:** Des Moines Iowa **Zip** 50309 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 828 Scott Ave, Des Moines, IA, 50309

Director's Name: Kay Strahorn **Phone Number:** 515-242-0225

On-Site Supervisor(s): Ashley Miranda **E-Mail:** KGonzalez@herdsm.org

Date(s) of Visit: 03-01-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 03-09-2023

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

Date Inspected: 08-22-2022

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **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: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 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	16	20	67	37	140
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2023 to 04-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV **Date:** 03-06-2024

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced off year visit was completed 3-1-24. The director and assistant director were present for the visit.

Conmigo Early Education Center is housed in the Hispanic Educational Resource Center. This bi-lingual educational center provides a variety of services to the children and families of the community including ESL classes, parenting courses and childcare. On July 1, 2011 the name of the center was changed from Xochipilli to Conmigo Early Education Center. The word Conmigo means "with me".

The child care program was first offered in 1995. Since then the space used for the program has grown and been remodeled a few times. Access to the building is obtained by entering a door code, or ringing the buzzer and identifying yourself before being buzzed in. The hours of operation are 6:30 am-5:00 pm.

Kay Strahorn is the Director, starting in this role in August of 2022. Kay has a Bachelor's degree in Early childhood and elementary education.
Kay has 17 prior years of experience in childcare settings. Ashley Miranda is the assistant director as of 8/2023. She also functions as the family development coordinator. She has a bachelor's degree in bio-medical sciences and has worked for this center in years prior. Both meet qualifications for their positions.

The center offers care to children who are infants up to school age. The center continues to offer summer care to school age children, however does not provide before or after school programming to the school age children. There are 6 enclosed classrooms used year round, and during the summer months the school age children are able to use the open area in the middle of the center, which is used for large motor play during the school year.

The center hours are from 6:30 am - 5:30 pm.

Room observations/activities: The center has partnered with Drake Head Start for slots between the infant, toddler and two year old rooms. This has allowed for the center to receive additional resources for the children and families. The center has a Universal Pre-K classroom and this is the only Universal Pre-K classroom in the state of Iowa that is bi-lingual. The center partners with the DSM public school district to provide this program. The center uses the Creative Curriculum as well as the Frog Street curriculum. The application used to communicate with parents is called DO-JO. The classrooms were observed to be well-stocked with a good variety of age/developmentally appropriate play centers and toys. There was good structure maintained in the rooms. The staff were responsive and nurturing. This center is using bleach/water/soapy water for cleaning and sanitizing. Discussion took place with regard to the need for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection processes to take place under the changing table mats on a regular basis as there was a good amount of debris observed today. There are handwashing posters in the restrooms which were clean and had necessary sanitary items.

Nutrition Practices: There is an on-site kitchen and dedicated kitchen staff. This center participates with the CACFP food program and receives meals from the DSM public schools as well. Menus are posted and kid allergies are noted. The

kitchen was clean and organized. Menus are rotated every 4 weeks. Meals and snacks are served in the classrooms.

Health and safety: Allergies are posted in rooms, however are covered for confidentiality. Medications are stored securely and given to the child by certified medication passers. Emergency medications are stored securely in the classroom. All rooms have a basic first aid kits; Some rooms were missing posted emergency exit diagrams, which the director indicated she would ensure they are reposted. Fire/Tornado drills were documented as completed monthly except Feb 2024. The center is in the process of completing bids to replace HVAC; the director stated professional HVAC has inspected the current units, no receipt was available on day of the visit. There are carbon monoxide detectors located throughout the center.

Playground: There are two enclosed playground areas, separated by ages; and enclosed with chain link fencing. There are shade structures and play equipment in good condition for both playground areas. Safety surfacing is pour in place. There is also natural shade in the larger playground area.

Transportation: NA

Administrative Review: Postings for Mandatory reporter, handbook accessibility, consultant contact, license, emergency exit plans and non-smoking signs were observed as required. Eight child files were reviewed; with one needing an annual update and four missing emergency dental information. Five employee files were reviewed, two needing updated SING checks were completed during this visit; one is in need of repeated background (FBI/Fingerprint) checks and one employee needing updated mandatory reporting training.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is working toward IQ4K quality rating.

This center provides a diverse program to the children and their families in the community. The teachers are very committed and dedicated to helping build a successful foundation for these children so they can succeed in life. The staff are very professional and view this as a career and not just a job. They are proud of their rooms, and they are proud of what they do to make a difference in the lives of the children they work with every day.

There are several long term staff at the center, at 27 years, 20 years and 10 years working at the center.

The center continues to participate in the TEACH program and one staff is currently working toward their Associate's degree and one working toward their CDA.

The center has partnered with several agencies in the community to offer resources and additional services to the children and families. The center offers parenting classes at the center through Iowa State Extension, which are currently being offered on-line, however have not taken place in awhile. The center has a strong partnership with Drake Head Start and United Way.

The center takes pride in embracing two cultures at one time. This is a very unique program. Most of the staff are bi-lingual.

The center has a Facebook page and a Website.

The center offers hearing, vision and dental screenings for the children.

The center has OT and Speech therapy rooms located in the building so parents do not have to take time off of work to transport their child for these therapy sessions through Children's Resource.

The center has class Do-Jo on i pads in the classrooms for easy communication with parents.

The staff can wear uniforms making them easily identifiable.

The center has cameras in all of the classrooms and outside.

The center has a Family Support Worker which is a great benefit for the administration team and families.

The center has strong partnerships with ECQUiP, United Way and Drake Head Start, the director meets routinely with these partners.

The new administration team works well together.

The center has a home atmosphere and is a safe place for the children.

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

109.9(1)b: All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.
Number not in compliance: 3
Two SING checks were completed during the visit.

109.9(1)e: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
Number not in compliance: 1

109.9(2): All files are updated at least annually and when a change occurs.

109.9(2)b: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care.
Number not in compliance for dental: 4

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.

Discussion took place regarding the need for regular/routine cleaning/sanitizing and disinfecting of the surface under the changing table mats as a good amount of debris was visible. The director indicated to staff the need to start this as a part of their cleaning in the evening.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing is now due every five years if testing is under the 4.0 cutoff. The center last completed radon testing in September of 2022 and all rooms fell below the 4.0 cutoff.

The menu's reflect the center is following CACFP guidelines. The center is on the food program. The center has lunch served by the DSM public school district.

The center director should consider choosing a month which to update staff and child files to maintain necessary information and certifications.

The center did have a gecko located in the classroom, a gecko is a reptile and is not allowed per licensing requirements. The director indicated the gecko would be removed from the center.

*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.