

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Tracey's Tots Daycare Co - Fort Dodge	Enrollment: 40	License ID: 7448
Street: 109 S 8th ST	City: Fort Dodge	IA Zip Code: 50501
Mailing Address: PO Box 7		County: Webster
Mailing City: Churdan	IA Zip Code: 50050	
Director's Name: Tracey Wilson	Center Phone Number: 515-576-5437	
On-Site Supervisors:	E-Mail Address: traceydwilson53@gmail.com	

Date of Complaint: 04-14-2026**Date of Visit:** 04-16-2026
☒ Scheduled

 ☐ Unannounced

 ☐ NA

☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found

 ☐ Compliance with Regulations Found
RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE☒ **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 ☒ NoDid this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No**Summary of Complaint:**

A complaint was received that an employee of Tracey's Tots Daycare - Fort Dodge engaged in the use of a prohibited discipline when being physically aggressive with a child.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

237A.7 Information regarding a child in a child care center or their relative is confidential. If this information is released by visual, verbal or written means, written consent from the parent or guardian is in the file or a court order allowing the release of the information.

109.7(1) All staff (within first three months of employment):Iowa's training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse.At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions.Certification in First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute, or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Minimum health and safety trainings, (Essentials) approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.

109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline:Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint.Punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, or food or rest is not to be used.No child is subject to verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks about child or child's family.

Inspection Findings:

04-15-26 A copy of a video was received from DHHS co-worker Ashley Oberg which showed a 40 second interaction between the employee and the child identified in the complaint. The video opens

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

with the child laying supine on the floor with the employee kneeling and holding the child's legs in the crook of the right arm and against the employee's torso. The child is seen to attempt to hit the employee and pull the employee's hair. The child then rolls to the side and the employee releases the child. The child grabs a green plastic bin and throws it at the employee while continuing to lay on the floor. The employee deflected the bin then takes hold the child by both ankles and walking backward drags the child across the floor on the child's back for an estimated 6-8 feet. During that action the child grabbed a chair which the employee took from the child and tossed to the side. The employee and the child struggle with the employee attempting to grab the child's feet while the child attempts to kick the employee. The employee does succeed in grabbing the child by the ankles and turning the child onto the child's stomach holding the child's right arm behind the back, and leaning the employee's left arm on the child's shoulders to hold the child down. The child is held in this position for approximately 9 seconds until the child struggles and the employee lessens the pressure so that the child is able to roll to their back. The child again attempts to kick the employee, and the employee attempts to grab the ankles and control the child. It is at this point that the video ends. It is noted that the interactions of the incident did appear to have preceded the start of the video, and continued after the video ended.

A date and time to visit the center was discussed with Ashley who stated she would contact the center.

04-16-26 A visit was made to Tracey's Tot's Daycare - Fort Dodge where DHHS co-worker, Ashley Oberg, and I met with the center director and owner Tracey Wilson. Tracey was informed of the complaint and stated she was aware of the concern though she was not at the center at that time. Tracey stated that she was told that the child had been in a "mood" while at school and kicked an adult in the chest at the end of the day when getting ready to transition to the daycare. Tracey stated that an aunt to the child was contacted who was able to go to the school and calm the child sufficiently that it was agreed the child could attend the center. Tracey stated that the child did come to the daycare where the child got upset and attacked the classroom teacher. Tracey stated that there were two teachers in the classroom, EH and NS, at the time with the one who was observed in the video, EH, being a 16 year old part-time employee, and the other, NS, was an adult full-time employee being the one to video the interaction. Tracey did share that the employee observed in the video was seen at the hospital and it was reported the employee had a concussion, a swollen knee, and other injuries.

Tracey was able to provide the child's file which had limited information consisting of the enrollment form, and a parental statement of health. Tracey stated that the child had been previously enrolled in 2025 but discontinued during last summer. Tracey stated that the child returned to the program on 03-20-26. Tracey did state that she was aware that the child does have a history of behavioral acting out, and does work with additional services at school, but the center does not have any information regarding what services are being provided and how the center can be consistent in providing support to the child.

Tracey was able to provide the employee file for both employees identified as having been working in the classroom. The file for the part-time employee, (EH), observed in the video identified the employee started in September 2025. The file did contain documentation of required background checks, a physical, and various statements of acknowledgement. There was no documentation that the employee had completed any of the required trainings.

The file for the other employee, (NS), contained the required background checks, physical, and required training certificates.

Tracey reported that neither employee was currently at the center with EH not being scheduled until later, and NS having given notice and no longer being employed with the center. Tracey did state that she was aware that NS had recorded the video on a personal cell phone and had shared that video with the child's guardian, mother, the other employee (EH), another former employee, and that several others had also said they had seen the video. Tracey was able to provide contact information for both. Ashley stated that she would attempt to contact the employee identified in the complaint for an interview.

Tracey was directed to remove EH from the schedule until such time the the complaint review was fully completed.

04-22-26 An email was received from DHHS co-worker Ashley Oberg that she had been able to speak to EH who acknowledged misuse of force stating she was initially on the floor trying to offer the child some different options for de-escalation, but "ended up getting into a wrestling match more so". Ashley reported that EH denied having any formal de-escalation training or discipline training. EH also reported she was not aware of any specific strategies that suit the child best. EH reported she has babysat some cousins in the past, but no professional experience.

Based on the information obtained this complaint is SUBSTANTIATED for violation of Licensing Standard 237A.7 Information regarding a child in a child care center or their relative is confidential. If this information is released by visual, verbal or written means, written consent from the parent or

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

guardian is in the file or a court order allowing the release of the information.

-- Tracey reported she was aware that the employee, NS, had recorded a video of the interactions between the child and the employee (EH) identified in the complaint. Tracey reported that she was aware that NS had shared that video with the guardian, mother, EH, another former employee, and several others who had reported seeing the video. There was no documentation that the parent or legal guardian of the child had provided consent, nor was there any court order present authorizing the release to anyone that was not the legal guardian or parent of the child.

Based on the information obtained this complaint is SUBSTANTIATED for violation of Licensing Standard 109.7(1) All staff (within first three months of employment):

- * Iowa's training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse.
- * At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions.
- * Certification in First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.
- * Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute, or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.
- * Minimum health and safety trainings, (Essentials) approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.

-- In reviewing the employment file for the employee identified in the complaint (EH) the only documentation present included the required background checks, a physical, and various acknowledgements. The employee had not completed the required trainings which would have provided some base understanding working in child care including child development and behavior management.

Based on the information obtained this complaint is SUBSTANTIATED for violation of Licensing Standard 109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline:

- *Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.
- *Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet.
- When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint.
- *Punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, or food or rest is not to be used.
- *No child is subject to verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks about child or child's family.

-- All parties provided consistent and credible information that the video which was observed was of the interactions between the employee and the child identified in the complaint. The video does clearly show the employee making use of physical discipline and restraint which would be prohibited. The observed interactions included the employee holding the child's legs while the child was on the floor, dragging the child across the floor for an estimated distance of 6-8 feet on the child's back, and pinning the child to the floor by holding one of the child's arms, and placing an arm on the child's back. There was no information in the child's file to identify that engaging in this type of restraint was part of a treatment plan, and the employee stated that she had received no formal training regarding restraint, discipline, or supporting this child's behavioral management needs. In addition to the inappropriate restraint, and potential for physical injury, the interactions observed were such that a reasonable and prudent person would or should have know that the interactions would or could result in inducing fear, discomfort, and pain.

Special Notes and Action Required:

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

This complaint is substantiated for violation of the identified licensing standards. The following actions are required and/or recommended.

REQUIRED:

1. The center director was instructed that the employee identified in the complaint would not be scheduled to work in the center until such time that the complaint review was fully completed.
2. The center director shall contact the employee that created the video to provide verification that the video has been deleted from the employee's personal device(s), and to obtain contact information for all individuals to whom the video was disseminated that would not have authorized access. The center director shall then contact those individuals to also provide verification that all copies have been destroyed.

RECOMMENDED:

1. The center is currently working with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) and information will be provided to that agency and consultant(s) working with the center to assist in developing an orientation process that includes training, and documentation to ensure that all staff receive orientation and basic instruction regarding providing care to children in the classrooms to which the employee will be assigned prior to beginning working in classrooms.
2. It is also recommended that the center director work with the CCR&R consultant to identify and review behavior management plans that would align with the center philosophy regarding providing care and responding to behavioral concerns with children. The center should then have all staff complete that training to ensure a uniform approach to behavior management.

Consultant's Signature:

Ray Salsbury

Date:

04-23-2026