Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Zuma Zoo Daycare

Provider No.: 46951

Address: 108 E Irwin St, Montezuma, IA, 50171

County: Poweshiek

Director's Name: Shelly Phipps

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 6416233457

E-Mail: alexa@zumazoodaycare.com

HHS Visit Date: 03/03/2026

Licensing Period: 10/01/2026 to 10/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/23/2025

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	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:00 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	8		18	18	44
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Zuma Zoo Daycare opened April 2016. The center is located within a single standing building which has a secured entrance. The center serves children ages infancy through ten years. Alexa Wheaton is the owner. Alexa has a BA in Elementary Education. Shelly Phipps is director.

An unannounced visit was completed on today's date. All areas subject to HHS licenses rules were observed. The center has three program classrooms: an infant classroom, a room that serves two and three's and a classroom that serves preschool children and also school age children. Mandatory postings were up in the entry way. Classroom schedules are posted by classroom doorways. Classrooms for ages two and up had lesson plans. Alexa creates the lesson plans for the center.

Shelly assisted with today's visit. The infant classroom serves children ages six weeks up to children turning two years. The room is divided into two areas, non mobiles and mobiles. There were seven infants present. Two staff were working in this classroom. There were twelve children in the 2/3's classroom. Two staff were working in this class. There were no children present in the preschool/school age classroom. Children were observed in classrooms and on the playground.

The center has a kitchen. Alexa and another staff do food preparation for all meals. The center serves breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Menus were reviewed and follow CACFP guidelines. The cupboards, refrigerator and freezer had ample food for meals and snacks.

The center has a fenced in outdoor playground. There is one climbing structure on the main area of the playground. There is an area for the smaller children. There are some climbing structures in this area also. The older children go to the school's playground at times for outdoor play also. Monthly playground inspections have been completed. With the spring season

coming, mulch needs to be added. There were eight infant swings hung from a structure. These swings are hung right beside one another, so close they touch. This creates a safety hazard as infant's fingers could get pinched in between the swings. Some of the swings need to be spaced apart so there is ample space to eliminate the safety hazard.

The center has a van.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Alexa has a Bachelors degree in Elementary Education. The center is located close to the elementary school. Alexa works part time hours at the center.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
Director didn't take required professional development hours in 2025. She has taken enough hours to for 2026.

109.9(1)a: All files contain:Copy of a department criminal history record check form or any other permission form approved by Department of Public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history record checkCopy of a request for child abuse information form, when applicable.Copies of results of Iowa record checks conducted through the SING for review by the department upon request.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any department issued documents sent to the center related to a record check, regardless of findings.
Staff hired in October 2025 didn't have federal record checks sent until January 2026. Federal record checks needs to be completed at time of hire/start date.

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must:Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water.Include safe play equipment and an area of shade.Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic.
Infant swing set presents a safety hazard. The swings are placed right beside one another with no space in between the swings. Swings need to have enough space in between that infants' bodies, hands, heads cannot be injured.

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

NA

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The center has a full license.

The floor in the 2/3's classroom needs attention. There are carpet squares that are pulling up. The condition of the floor makes it difficult to clean and can also present a tripping hazard. The carpet squares need replaced or that section of the room needs different flooring.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact me (phone 515-362-7823; email melinda.larson@hhs.iowa.gov) so that we may discuss the issue. If necessary, I can make a notation in your record. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report. If you have the need for any additional information discussed during my visit, please contact me

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and I will forward the information to you. Thank you.

*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.

Date: 03/06/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant

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**.