Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Southwest Valley Early Childhood Center-Villisca **Enrollment:** 50 **License ID:** 51174

Street: 219 Central Ave **City:** Villisca **IA** **Zip Code:** 50864 **County:** Montgomery

Mailing Address: 219 Central Ave

Mailing City: Villisca **IA** **Zip Code:** 50864

Director's Name: Amber Mullen **Center Phone Number:** 712-826-5982

On-Site Supervisors: **E-Mail Address:** amullen@southwestvalley.org jlyddon@southwestvalley.org

Date of Complaint: 11-25-2025 **Date of Visit:** 12-08-2025

[ ] Scheduled **[X]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] 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 ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

On 11/24/25, staff member N.M. dragged a seven-year-old male onto the floor which resulted in a rugburn on the stomach.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

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:

Iowa Department of Human Services

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On 11/25/25, Southwest Valley Early Education Center – Villisca Director Amber Mullen contacted me to let me know that a staff member, N.M, dragged a seven-year-old child onto the ground which resulted in a rugburn on his stomach. N.M. admitted to Amber pulling the child back. N.M. is now placed on administrative leave. Amber has photos that the child's mother sent to her last night and photos Amber took earlier this morning. The center has video cameras; however, they were not working and the recordings could not be retrieved. N.M. later submitted his resignation. Amber reported had N.M. not resigned, he would have been terminated.

On 12/8/25, my coworker met with the seven-year-old child. He reported there were no other teachers in the room when the incident happened. There was one other student but the other student did not see what happened.

My coworker visited the center and spoke with Amber. Amber reported to my coworker that after the incident was reported to her, she interviewed N.M about the injury. N.M. stated that the seven-year-old child did not react as though he had an injury. He was being disruptive and was at risk of causing injury to himself or others, throwing items, and pushing over furniture. N. M. tried to hold him in his lap. N.M informed Amanda that the child could have sustained a rugburn during the process of trying to get away from N.M. Amber reported no previous concerns with N.M.'s supervision. Amber also reported that the IT department was unable to retrieve the video recording.

On 12/10/25, my coworker talked with N.M. about the injury on the child. He shared he has been employed with the center for approximately three years. N.M. had taken over supervising the child after another staff member needed a break due to the child's challenging behaviors. N.M. felt the child was making unsafe choices including throwing toys, knocking over furniture, and throwing shoes at N.M. The child attempted to get off N.M.'s lap and N.M. pulled him back. N.M. assumed that was when his skin was scraped against the rug resulting in the injury. The child did not report any pain, marks, or injuries and N.M. did not observe any injuries.

On 12/16/25, my coworker talked with staff member A.W. who was working with the child prior to N.M taking over. A.W. described the behaviors the child was demonstrating which led to her needing a break. She stated she attempted several strategies before requesting the break. A.W. reported that in her time working with N.M., he had built good relationships with the kids, and she has never seen him be aggressive in any way.

Because N.M. didn't follow protocols for discipline, the center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.12(2)A-D AS IT PERTAINS TO DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN.

Special Notes and Action Required:

1. Director Amber Mullen notified HHS once the incident was brought to her attention.
2. Amber and all staff cooperated with the HHS process brought forward due to this complaint.
3. Amber has met with staff individually and talked about not putting hands on children unless they are a threat to themselves or others. They are not to put hands on children if it is related to destruction of property. Amber has made it clear that staff should seek her out first before putting hands on children.
4. Amber reported they all recently took the PBIS training; however, it was prior to this incident.
5. Amber reported that although they are unable to retrieve the video from this incident, the camera system is now working and able to record properly.

Consultant's Signature:

Tausha Bottorff

Date:

01-06-2026