Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Bridge to Beginnings: A Child's Place Preschool **Enrollment:** 180 **License ID:** 51015

Street: 610 Maiden Lane **City:** Muscatine **IA** **Zip Code:** 52761 **County:** Muscatine

Mailing Address: 610 Maiden Lane

Mailing City: Muscatine **IA** **Zip Code:** 52761

Director's Name: Mikelle Cooke **Center Phone Number:** 563-506-9068

On-Site Supervisors: Mary Wetzel **E-Mail Address:** bridgetobeginnings@gmail.com

Date of Complaint: 05-27-2024 **Date of Visit:** 06-05-2024

[ ] 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:

-Four staff members are using cocaine.
-Several staff members are using marijuana.
-Several staff members are drinking (even at the center).

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

106.6(7) Use of controlled substances and medications: All owners, personnel, and volunteers shall be free of the use of illegal drugs and shall not be under the influence of alcohol or of any prescription or nonprescription drug that could impair their ability to function.

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.

Inspection Findings:

This worker arrived at the center on 6/5/2024 and 6/7/2024. The nurse consultant, Toni Krana, attended these visits with me. The following is based upon face-to-face interviews with the director, on-site supervisor, and other staff throughout the center, review of administrative items, and observations while on-site.

109.11(3)a. Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. VIOLATED.
-The director admitted to having alcohol in the center. She stated that she only drank after hours; however, it was accessible to the children. When looking through Mikelle's office drawers (since the office is accessible to children/cabinets are unlocked.) she stated, "Hopefully there isn't a bottle of vodka in there." When I didn't find one, she then stated, "Thank God I must have drunk it already.

-This worker was denied access to a large restroom on the 2nd floor during the first visit. The director and on-site both shared that they "lost the key." Mary attempted to open the door with a different key but couldn't get it. This worker was unable to unlock the door the following visit with her fingernail. It was a privacy door lock. It is very concerning that the director and on-site supervisor denied HHS access to an area in the center.

106.6(7) Use of controlled substances and medications: All owners, personnel, and volunteers shall be free of the use of illegal drugs and shall not be under the influence of alcohol or of any prescription or nonprescription drug that could impair their ability to function. NOT VIOLATED.

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-Alcohol:
-Several staff shared that they do drink outside of work; however, they have not come to work under the influence or drank while at work.
-This worker received a SnapChat that someone had taken of the directors. On the snap it stated, "It's been a long week, so we just do what we want in the center." In the picture is a kid's table filled with a bottle of Svedka Blue Raspberry Vodka, a six pack of Smirnoff Red White and Blue, an eight pack of Carbliss, a pack of Marlboro, two beers and two additional alcohol bottles.
-The director admitted that they drank at the center, but only after hours.

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Cocaine:
-The reporter and two employees gave the exact same names for individuals who were allegedly using cocaine. They are not under the influence while at work. This worker did not find cocaine at the center.

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Marijuana:
-The on-site supervisor shared that she was aware of individuals using marijuana outside of work hours and no one showed up impaired. Several staff shared that some staff use marijuana but only outside of work hours and no one has showed up impaired.

Special Notes and Action Required:

The director and on-site supervisor must:
1. Ensure that there is no illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription/non prescription drugs at the center.
2.. Ensure that the director, on-site supervisor and staff are not under the influence or illegal drugs, alcohol or any prescription or nonprescription drug that could impair my ability to function.
3. Review the center's policy on substance abuse with all staff, "Substance Abuse: Any Staff members reporting for work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances will be asked to leave immediately." The director must intervene as all owners, personnel, and volunteers shall be free of the use of illegal drugs and shall not be under the influence of alcohol or of any prescription or nonprescription drug that could impair their ability to function. Should the director not intervene there may be grounds for revocation if it is determined that the center is operating in a manner which the department determines impairs the safety, health, or well-being of the children in care.

Addendums:

- Addendum1: Mikelle Cooke requested; an addendum be completed. Mikelle Cooke (Director), Todd Savage (Bureau Chief, Childcare Licensing), Heidi Brown (Child Care Licensing Consultant and Toni Krana (CCNC Nurse Consultant) had a meeting and communicated via email. The following addendum was agreed on by all parties:

  -Restroom: The building is multi-use. The director stated that they do not use this restroom for childcare purposes. This worker would recommend working with the landlord to establish an actual lock doorknob instead of a privacy knob to ensure that school aged children/staff/general public do not have access to this area.

  -Alcohol: This worker received a SnapChat posted by Mikelle via text on her work phone. The caption states, "It's been a long week...we do what we want." This was added to an already open complaint. This is a standard protocol. The picture shows: Carbliss (8 pack), Smirnoff Bottles (6 pack), Svedka Blue Raspberry Vodka, a Michelob Ultra Can and Marlboro Cigarettes. These bottles are sitting on a child size table. Based on the picture you cannot determine the time it was taken. A picture of this Snap has been uploaded to the center's file. Mikelle agrees that having alcohol at the center during or after business hours is not a responsible decision.

  -Substance Abuse: Several staff shared that some staff use marijuana but only outside of work hours and no one has showed up impaired. This was NEVER A CITATION. There was no evidence of impairment.

  -Discipline: The center uses an item like https://www.target.com/p/regalo-2-in-1-play-yard-and-baby-gate/-/A-89102727 to prevent the children from climbing on the cots. They are not used to corral the children. 8:59 a staff picked up a child by one arm and placed child under their arm to carry them. Staff then roughly put the child down in a chair. 9:25 the same staff pushed a table about one foot into a child. The child was sitting on a chair. When the staff pushed the table towards the child. You could tell that it moved towards the child approximately 1 floor tile (12 inches). This could be frightening for a young child. 11:29 the same staff grabbed a child by their arm and sat them down on the ground. This worker had encouraged Mikelle to watch the footage to determine if the staff member was teachable or needed to be terminated. Mikelle chose to cease employment.

  -Ratio: The director denies that one-year olds are in the same room as children that are older. It is possible that the staff did not know the exact ages of the children; however, there were multiple reports of this. Iowa Code 109.10(16) requires that the center director and on-site supervisor ensures that each staff member or volunteer knows the number and names of children assigned to that staff member or volunteer for care.

This Addendum is approved by supervisor on 7/14/2025 9:17:20 AM

Consultant's Signature: **Date:**

Heidi Brown 07-10-2024