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

Name of Center: Happy Face's Daycare Center **Enrollment:** 38 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52187

Street: 1709 Pierce ST **City:** Sioux City Iowa **Zip** 51105 **County:** Woodbury

Mailing Address: 1709 Pierce ST, Sioux City, IA, 51105

Director's Name: Patricia Aquino **Phone Number:** 712-454-7705

On-Site Supervisor(s): Luceli Leon **E-Mail:** happyfacesdaycare23@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 07-25-2025

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:** 05-24-2023

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

Date Inspected: 06-05-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit 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	8	5	15	12	40
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2025 to 09-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer **Date:** 08-06-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 07/25/25 I completed an unannounced visit at the Happy Faces Daycare, during which I met with Director Patricia Aquino and Onsite Supervisor Luceli Leon. Patricia has nine years of experience in the childcare field and demonstrated a clear understanding of licensing requirements and daily operations. Luceli brings additional experience from both early childhood care and the school system, contributing to a well-rounded and knowledgeable leadership team.

The center provides bilingual childcare services for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old and operates Monday through Friday, from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Communication and activities are offered in both English and Spanish to meet the needs of diverse families.

All areas of the program were observed during the visit. This included classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety procedures and administrative review.

There are currently 38 children enrolled in the program. The center uses four classrooms. There is an infant room (6 weeks to 2 years), a transition room (primarily for 2-year-olds), a preschool room and a school age room. Staff were observed to be very hands-on and actively engaged with the children in their care. Interactions were consistently positive and supportive, reflecting a nurturing and developmentally appropriate approach.

The center itself is well-organized and clean, with a thoughtful separation of rooms. This layout supports a smooth flow of daily activities and allows children to learn and play in environments suited to their developmental needs. Classrooms contain sinks for handwashing and allows ample space for children to move and explore.

Each classroom was observed to be clean, well-maintained, and arranged to eliminate blind areas. Classrooms contain sinks for handwashing and allows for ample space for children to move and explore. Children have direct access to restrooms. A theme-based curriculum is used across the program. Each room includes various activity centers including a library, art area, blocks, puzzles, puppet and grocery store/dress up/dramatic play. There were sufficient age-appropriate toys and materials in good repair. Staff interactions were nurturing, hands-on, and positively engaged throughout the day. Daily schedules were posted, and educational visuals (numbers, colors, alphabet, children's artwork, and helper charts) were prominently displayed.

Each room contained a stocked first aid kit that was inaccessible to children and clearly labeled.

The infant room could use new screens on the windows and this could possibly be paid for by the Growing Iowa Grant that is coming September 1, 2025.

No medication was in use at the time of the visit; however, appropriate medication storage practices were in place. Daily sheets were completed for children under age two. Monthly fire and tornado drills were completed. Radon testing was completed, and results were within a normal range. The annual furnace inspection was completed and up to date.
The playground is surfaced with pea gravel; currently, no climbing equipment is present. The center has plans to expand and

enhance this outdoor area. I observed staff outside interacting with the children and ensuring that there was a staff member present in all areas of the playground. I did note some issues with the playground gate as there is a space between fence and ground that a child could squeeze under. It is recommended that the director speaks to the landlord regarding these issues.

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Meals, including breakfast, lunch, and snacks, are prepared onsite. Menus are rotated monthly and were posted and accessible during the visit. Nutritional practices observed were consistent with CACFP guidelines.

The program's goals include expanding the outdoor play area and completing the IQ4K application process.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

A unique aspect of this center is that most of the staff are family members. This contributes to a strong sense of unity, trust, and collaboration within the team. The familial connection among staff helps create a warm, welcoming environment for both children and families.

Staff collaboration, bilingual support, and use of the Bright wheel app further enhance the center's effectiveness in communication and care delivery

Staff is very dedicated and provides good supervision of the children in their care.

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

109.9(2)d: 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.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended to continue to work with CCRR consultant for support, and Growing Iowa Grants that come out September 1, 2025.

The center needs to email consultant confirming that all aspects below standards have been corrected by 10-01-24.

Please enter all staff's information in IPOWER.

A full license is recommended at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.