

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center:	Joyful Journeys Daycare/Preschool	Enrollment:	82	License ID:	29248
Street:	2300 27th St	City:	Spirit Lake	IA Zip Code:	51360
County:	Dickinson				
Mailing Address:	PO Box 422				
Mailing City:	Spirit Lake	IA Zip Code:	51360		
Director's Name:	Meridith Ennema	Center Phone Number:	712-336-2228		
On-Site Supervisors:	Morgan Bradley	E-Mail Address:	joyfuljourneypreschool.ilc@gmail.com		

Date of Complaint: 08-01-2025**Date of Visit:** 08-04-2025☐ 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:**

On 08/01/25 several concerns were reported regarding incidents that occurred in the summer of 2024 including a staff member grabbing a child down the hallway, making a child lie on a cot for discipline, yelling at children and force feeding the children.

There were concerns about mold on the East wall of the center as well as the refrigerators. There were further concerns about fecal matter on a table but no evidence to suggest that it was not cleaned up immediately.

There was video evidence shared about a staff who is not able to infants in her care and has sought out help from an older child to assist. As well as a staff member using a crib for punishment for a child.

There was also reported concerns of food not being properly cooked.

Another concern was that staff are not in ratio and that there is no director or onsite staff.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.6(1) Centers with multiple sites have a qualified director or on-site supervisor at all sites. Information on the director's qualifications is submitted to the consultant prior to employment and is sufficient to make a determination. Center director meets qualifications or is "qualifiable" with a plan established to meet qualifications.

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109.8(2) Ratio maintained in center as required: Brief absence of staff person permitted for 5 or less minutes when another staff person is present. At least one staff is present in every room where children are resting. If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained. Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained. When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present. For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center's hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center. Ratio exceeded for school-age children when school classes unexpectedly start late, are dismissed early, or cancelled. For no more than four hours, care is limited to children already in the program and licensed capacity is not exceeded.

109.10(14)a The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

109.11(3)a Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

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.

109.12(4)b Each infant and toddler shall be diapered in a sanitary manner as frequently as needed at a central diapering area. Diapering, sanitation, and hand-washing procedures shall be posted and implemented in every diapering area. There shall be at least one changing table for every 15 infants.

109.13(5) Centers shall ensure that food preparation and storage procedures are consistent with the recommendations of the CACFPs.

Inspection Findings:

Center Director 109.6(1)

Centers with multiple sites have a qualified director or on-site supervisor at all sites.

Information on the director's qualifications is submitted to the consultant prior to employment and is sufficient to make a determination.

Center director meets qualifications or is "qualifiable" with a plan established to meet qualifications. NOT VIOLATED Although the center is in the process of hiring a full-time director, Meridith Ennema is in the director role and does qualify.

109.8(2)

Ratio maintained in center as required:

Brief absence of staff person permitted for 5 or less minutes when another staff person is present

At least one staff is present in every room where children are resting.

If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained.

Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained.

When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present.

For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center's hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center.

Ratio exceeded for school-age children when school classes unexpectedly start late, are dismissed early, or cancelled. For no more than four hours, care is limited to children already in the program and licensed capacity is not exceeded. NOT VIOLATED

Visit by myself and other HHS staff were unannounced, and the center was in ratio.

109.12(4)b

Each infant and toddler shall be diapered in a sanitary manner as frequently as needed at a central diapering area. Diapering, sanitation, and hand-washing procedures shall be posted and implemented in every diapering area. There shall be at least one changing table for every 15 infants. NOT VIOLATED

Through conversation with multiple staff there has never been a time where a child had a diaper that was full of feces and not attended to ASAP.

109.11(3)a

Center shall ensure that:

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Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free.

Sufficient lighting shall be provided.

Sufficient ventilation.

Sufficient heating.

Sufficient cooling.

Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children. NOT VIOLATED

Through conversation with the Pastor and board members the daycare center is not responsible for cleaning the bathroom that was observed to have some cleaning issues. This was addressed ASAP with the person assigned to clean this bathroom and on the next visit was free from any hazard and sanitary.

109.13(5)

Centers shall ensure that food preparation and storage procedures are consistent with the recommendations of the CACFPs. NOT VIOLATED

It is unclear on the time frame and what temperature the food being served was. Director will ensure the cook is using a food temperature gage for proper cooking time.

On 08/04/25 I completed an unannounced visit at Joyful Journeys along with another staff member from HHS. The following is based upon face-to-face interviews with current director Meredith Ennema, onsite Morgan Bradley as well as multiple employees. We also met with the Pastor of the church and two board members. We also viewed video of two of the complaints regarding a staff member who is in the infant room and completed a facility tour. Other HHS staff met with parents of a child involved. I further returned to this center on 08/11/25 and observed the facility again.

109.10(14)a

The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision. RULE VIOLATED One member of the staff (JE) in the infant room is not able to pick up infants and therefore cannot provide appropriate supervision in this room.

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. RULE VIOLATED

Through video evidence and interviews with staff it was determined that a staff member (CS) did use a crib as a discipline tool. This is not appropriate. She is no longer in this position in this room.

Through multiple staff interviews along with parents of the child involved and the staff member herself it is determined that staff member (TT) has been force feeding children so that at least sample food that is provided in a day. One child did vomit and was afraid of (TT) .

Special Notes and Action Required:

This worker request that staff (TT) complete a training regarding infant and toddler feeding through IPOWER.

This worker requests an update on staff (JE) who clearly through video evidence cannot pick up an infant off the floor. The facility employee handbook has specific information on being able to lift and carry a certain amount of weight and needs to address these concerns.

Please send me completion of corrective actions completed by 10/01/25.

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Consultant's Signature:

Leann Steinhauer

Date:

08-28-2025