



**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF CHILDHOOD - CHILD CARE COMPLIANCE**

**COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF  
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS**

**DATE OF REPORT**

3/6/2020

**DVN**

002244324

**FACILITY NAME**

GROWING MINDS ACADEMY & DAYCARE, LLC

**FACILITY ADDRESS**

11889 BENHAM RD

**CITY**

ST LOUIS

**ZIP CODE**

63138-1308

**PHONE NUMBER**

(314) 741-0700

**COUNTY**

ST LOUIS

**ASSIGNED SPECIALIST**

CHRISCO, MARLA

**RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)**

**VIOLATION(S)**

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(3)

Only constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline shall be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions.

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(7)

Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting or pulling hair shall be prohibited.

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(8)

No discipline technique which is humiliating, threatening or frightening to children shall be used. Children shall not be shamed, ridiculed or spoken to harshly, abusively or with profanity.

**CONCLUSION SUMMARY**

CCFS Chrisco investigated an allegation that the following incident occurred at the facility:

On February 28, 2020, Ms. Alitta Buchanan was working in the school age/preschool room. At one point, Child A, age 7 years old got upset and went over to Ms. Alitta and began fighting her. Ms. Alitta grabbed Child A by the hair as a means to restrain her. During this time Ms. Alitta can be seen on camera tapping her hands but not raising her arm in a striking motion. Ms. Alitta can be seen at one point also tapping Child A on the top of the head. Ms. Alitta pushed Child A's head down towards the floor and was holding her head down in that position to calm her down. Ms. Alitta can also be seen grabbing Child A by the top of the shirt. During the time while Child A was attacking Ms. Alitta, two other children, Child B, age 8 years, and Child C, age 8 years began fighting Child A trying to help Ms. Alitta. Ms. Alitta was trying to stop Child A and the other children during this time. The facility does have video coverage of the incident.

After conducting the investigation, CCFS Chrisco found the following licensing rules were violated:

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(3) which states, "Only constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline shall be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions."

AND

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(8) which states, "No discipline technique which is humiliating, threatening or frightening to children shall be used. Children shall not be shamed, ridiculed or spoken to harshly, abusively or with profanity."

AND

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(7) which states, "Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting or pulling hair shall be prohibited."

On March 12, 2020, CCFS Marla Chrisco interviewed director Dominique Wallace, assistant director Artrice Jackson-Mason, Child B, Child C, Child D and Child E. All persons interviewed stated that on the morning of February 28, 2020 before the school age class went to school, Child A got mad at Ms. Artrice and started hitting and kicking her. Ms. Alitta grabbed Child A by her hair and head and was pushing her head down to the floor. Child A continued to hit Ms. Alitta and then Child B and Child C came over and started hitting Child A to help Ms. Alitta. Ms. Alitta tried to stop Child B and Child C from hitting Child A and then threw Child A by her head over the arm of the couch to try to stop Child A from hitting her. CCFS Chrisco also observed video footage of the incident showing the above actions taking place. Child A was not in attendance at the facility, and could not be interviewed.

On April 09, 2020, CCFS Marla Chrisco conducted a phone interview with Parent A. Parent A stated that on February 28, 2020, when Parent A picked up Child A from the daycare, Child A told Parent A that a teacher held Child A down while two other children were hitting Child A. Ms. Dominique Wallace the director, didn't know what had happened. Parent A went up to the facility on Monday, March 02, 2020 to watch the video footage and she saw Ms. Alitta grabbing Child A by her hair and pushing Child A down to the floor. Parent A was very upset but since Ms. Wallace fired Ms. Alitta and reported the incident to licensing, she let Child A still attend the facility but she has since pulled Child A out of the facility and Child A is not returning. Child A was not available to be interviewed.

On April 09, 2020, CCFS Marla Chrisco conducted a phone interview with teacher Ms. Alitta Buchanan. Ms. Alitta stated that on the morning of February 28, 2020, she was in the school age class in the morning when normally she was in the two's room but another staff called in sick. She does not remember why Child A was upset but Child A started hitting and kicking her. She was trying to stop Child A from hitting her and trying to calm Child A down and that's why she was pushing Child A's head down. She was not trying to hurt Child A. She also told Child B and Child C to stop hitting Child A. Ms. Wallace, director told her to leave for now because Parent A was upset after watching the video. Ms. Alitta left the premises and no longer works at the facility.

**CORRECTIVE MEASURES**

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
The facility shall conduct a staff meeting to review the center's policies and all licensing rules and regulations regarding age-appropriate discipline. The facility must provide the Section for Child Care Regulation with a statement, signed by all staff (paid employees or unpaid volunteers), to indicate they understand and agree to follow those rules and regulations.	Yes	10/6/2020

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
All staff (paid employees or unpaid volunteers) must take the 1.0 clock hour DHSS online training course titled, "Making a Difference: Protecting Health and Keeping Children Safe" available at <a href="https://health.mo.gov/safety/childcare/onlinetraining.php">https://health.mo.gov/safety/childcare/onlinetraining.php</a> Verification of attendance shall be through the Toolbox report.	Yes	5/26/2020

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	4/17/2020

**APPROVING SUPERVISOR**  
CLARK, ANGELA