



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

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS

DATE OF REPORT
9/26/2022

DVN
002443298

FACILITY NAME

YOUNG EXPRESSIONS CHILD CARE CENTER AND PRESCHOOL, LLC

FACILITY ADDRESS

2939 PATTERSON RD

CITY

FLORISSANT

ZIP CODE

63031-1415

PHONE NUMBER

(314) 837-3700

COUNTY

ST LOUIS

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

SPAULDING, STEPHANIE

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)1.

Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)3.

Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises.

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(A)

In case of accident or injury to a child, the provider shall notify the parent(s) immediately. If the child requires emergency medical care, the provider shall follow the parent's(s') written instructions.

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(B)

Information regarding the date and circumstance of any accident or injury shall be noted in the child's record.

5 CSR 25-500.102(1)(E)

Caregivers shall have knowledge of the needs of children and shall be sensitive to the capabilities, interests, and problems of children in care.

5 CSR 25-500.082(6)(A)3.

Adult supervision shall be provided at all times when children are outside. For children three (3) years of age and above, staff/child ratios may be one and one-half (1 1/2) times the indoor staff/child ratios. The required indoor staff/child ratios shall be maintained on the premises at all times.

5 CSR 25-500.082(6)(A)4.

The play area shall be safe for children's activities, well-maintained, free of hazards such as poisonous plants, broken glass, rocks or other debris and shall have good drainage.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

Compliance Inspector (CI) Stephanie Spaulding investigated an allegation that two children who attend Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool were found in the street behind the facility. Based on video footage and interviews with Parent A, Parent B and staff of Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool, this allegation is found to be substantiated and the following rule violations are being cited.

5 CSR 25-500.102(1)(E) - Caregivers shall have knowledge of the needs of children and shall be sensitive to the capabilities, interests, and problems of children in care.

On September 26, 2022, director, Dorcas Walker stated that Child A attempted to exit the playground space last week on Thursday, September 22, 2022 and she had told staff to keep an eye on the children and stand at "posts" on the playground while outside.

On September 27, 2022, caregivers, Taryn Moore and Faith Brandon confirmed that they were aware of "posts" on the playground to ensure supervision due to Child A and Child D previously attempting to get out of the playground space. In addition, caregiver, Melissa Taylor stated that September 26, 2022 was her first day at the facility and she had not been told by anyone about "posts" on the playground to prevent elopement due to a prior incident on September 22, 2022.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)1. - Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision.

AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)3. - Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises.

AND

5 CSR 25-500.082(6)(A)3. - Adult supervision shall be provided at all times when children are outside. For children three (3) years of age and above, staff/child ratios may be one and one-half (1 1/2) times the indoor staff/child ratios. The required indoor staff/child ratios shall be maintained on the premises at all times.

On September 26, 2022, director, Dorcas Walker and caregiver, Melissa Taylor confirmed that on September 26, 2022 Child A and Child B eloped from Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool via the preschool and older children's playground.

On September 26, 2022, community member, Shanika Vinson confirmed that on September 26, 2022 Child A and Child B were located within 3-5 feet from Patterson Road via the back of the strip mall where Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool's playground is located.

On September 26, 2022, CI Spaulding also observed video footage and took screenshot photos of the incident involving Child A and Child B eloping on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding observed Child A and Child B leave the preschool playground at 10:41:09 on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding observed Child A and Child B leave the big kids' playground at 10:41:43 and 10:41:46 on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding then observed director, Dorcas Walker come onto the playground at approximately 10:47:51 on September 26, 2022.

On September 27, 2022, caregivers, Taryn Moore and Faith Brandon confirmed that they were made aware of Child A and Child B eloping from the preschool playground at Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool on September 26, 2022.

On September 27, 2022, CI Spaulding observed the path that Child A and Child B traveled when they eloped from the playground at Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding observed three air conditioning units, multiple electrical wires and utility boxes, hazardous debris, and two business access doors in the path that Child A and Child B traveled when they eloped from the playground at Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool on September 26, 2022. In addition, CI Spaulding confirmed that Child A and Child B were located 3-5 feet from Patterson Road in Florissant, MO before being retrieved and returned to the facility. CI Spaulding photographed and observed a ditch with a sewer drain located within the path that Child A and Child B traveled when they eloped from Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding also observed the speed limit to be 35 mph on Patterson Road.

On September 27, 2022, CI Spaulding took a one minute and 34 second video of Patterson Road to identify how busy the roadway is with traffic. CI Spaulding observed twenty-four vehicles pass by the area that Child A and Child B were located on September 26, 2022 when they eloped from Young Expressions Child Care Center and Preschool and were found 3-5 feet from Patterson Road.

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(A) - In case of accident or injury to a child, the provider shall notify the parent(s) immediately. If the child requires emergency medical care, the provider shall follow the parent's(s') written instructions.

AND

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(B) - Information regarding the date and circumstance of any accident or injury shall be noted in the child's record.

On September 26, 2022, director, Dorcas Walker stated that she attempted to contact Parent A and Parent B about Child A and Child B leaving the facility on September 26, 2022.

CI Spaulding determined that Child A and Child B eloped from the preschool playground at 10:41:09 on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding determined Child A and Child B eloped from the big kids' playground at 10:41:43 and 10:41:46 on September 26, 2022. CI Spaulding determined that when director, Dorcas Walker come onto the preschool playground at approximately 10:47:51 on September 26, 2022, Child A and Child B had been returned to the facility. Parent A stated that she was contacted by a police office about Child A getting out of the playground on September 26, 2022 at about 12:00 pm and was never contacted about Child A and Child D getting out of the playground on September 22, 2022. Parent B stated that she was never contacted by the facility on September 26, 2022; and Parent BB stated that he had two missed calls from the facility at 11:58 am and 11:59 am and then spoke to a police office at 12:00 pm on September 26, 2022 about Child B eloping from the playground of the facility.

In addition, CI Spaulding asked for documentation regarding the incident on September 22, 2022 regarding Child A and Child D and documentation of the incident regarding Child A and Child B on September 26, 2022. Director, Dorcas Walker stated that there was no documentation in any of the children's files regarding the incident on September 22, 2022 or September 26, 2022.

5 CSR 25-500.082(6)(A)4. - The play area shall be safe for children's activities, well-maintained, free of hazards such as poisonous plants, broken glass, rocks or other debris and shall have good drainage.

On September 26, 2022, CI Spaulding observed the outdoor play space. There were several areas of the older children's playground fence in which multiple wooden boards were broken.

On September 27, 2022, caregiver, Faith Brandon stated that the latches on the playground gates were broken and therefore, Child A and Child B were able to get out of the playground on September 26, 2022.

On September 27, 2022, caregiver, Taryn Moore stated that she used her jacket as a means of locking the preschool gate because there was no latch on the gate to prevent children from getting out of the playground space.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

All staff and volunteers must obtain two clock hours on supervision. Training may be obtained from the Missouri Workshop Calendar. The training calendar can be found at <http://www.moworkshopcalendar.org/>. Verification of training completion shall be from the Open Initiative Toolbox report.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

10/31/2022

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

The facility shall conduct a staff meeting to review the center's policies and all licensing rules and regulations regarding supervision. The facility must provide the Office of Childhood with a statement, signed by all staff members (paid employees and paid/unpaid volunteers), to indicate they understand and agree to follow those rules and regulations.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

11/1/2022

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

A plan shall be put in place to ensure that staff are conducting daily checks of the outdoor play space, including the fence and gates to ensure they are kept in good condition. A copy of the plan shall be submitted to the Office of Childhood.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

11/1/2022

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

The facility shall develop and implement a plan as to how parents will be notified immediately of any accident, injuries or of any significant behavioral concerns of a child that occur at the facility. The plan shall include how these are to be documented and kept in the child's file. The plan shall be reviewed with all staff members (paid employees and paid/unpaid volunteers) and all staff members shall sign a statement that they understand and agree to adhere to the policy. These statements shall be submitted to the Office of Childhood.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

11/1/2022

DISPOSITION

SUBSTANTIATED

DISPOSITION DATE

10/13/2022

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

CHRISCO, MARLA L