



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

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF  
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS

DATE OF REPORT  
9/18/2023

DVN  
001596849

FACILITY NAME

URBAN LEAGUE OF METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS

FACILITY ADDRESS

1437 LAUREL ST

CITY

ST LOUIS

ZIP CODE

63112-3718

PHONE NUMBER

(314) 389-8800

COUNTY

ST LOUIS CITY

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

OMALLEY, PATRICK

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)7.

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

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

On September 18, 2023, the Office of Childhood (OOC) received an allegation that on Friday, September 15, 2023, Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis teacher Kayla Bell squeezed Child A's (4-years-old) arm and shoulder. After conducting an investigation, Compliance Inspector (CI) Patrick O'Malley has found this allegation to be substantiated based on the following evidence:

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)7., which states the following: "Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting, or pulling hair shall be prohibited."

On September 21, 2023, CI O'Malley conducted an unannounced inspection of the facility and conducted interviews with Child A, Ms. Bell, director Kellie Kelly, and teacher Ronda Strong. Child A stated that Ms. Bell grabbed their arm; Child A demonstrated by grasping their left shoulder with their right hand. Child A stated that Ms. Bell squeezed Child A's arm, which hurt. Child A did not cry, but they told Ms. Bell to stop. When asked how long their arm hurt, Child A shrugged. Child A stated that their arm no longer hurt.

Ms. Bell stated that she heard Ms. Strong's classroom being loud on the afternoon of September 15, 2023. Ms. Bell entered the classroom and saw Child A sitting on the floor, ripping a book apart. Ms. Bell asked Child A to sit down at a table; Child A stood up and said, "No." Ms. Bell grasped Child A by the shoulder, moved Child A to the table, and told them to sit down. Ms. Bell stated that she held Child A's shoulder for less than five seconds. Ms. Bell denied squeezing Child A's shoulder.

Ms. Strong stated that her back was turned to her desk when she heard Child A say, "Ouch." She turned around and asked Child A what was wrong. Child A said that Ms. Bell had hurt Child A's arm. Ms. Bell said, "You just gonna lie on me?" Ms. Strong looked at both of Child A's arms and did not see any marks or bruises. Ms. Strong asked Child A if their arm still hurt and Child A shook their head. Ms. Strong denied seeing Ms. Bell touch Child A. Ms. Strong stated that Child A was usually truthful and did not complain excessively.

Ms. Kelly stated that she entered the classroom and Child A ran up to her; Child A reported that Ms. Bell hurt Child A's arm. Ms. Kelly asked Child A to demonstrate how their arm was hurt; Child A squeezed Ms. Kelly's arm hard with both hands. Ms. Kelly reported Child A's allegation to Child A's parent and contacted the Child Abuse and Neglect hotline. Ms. Kelly stated that Child A was usually truthful.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

The facility shall notify all staff members of the violations which were substantiated, and specify the actions to be taken by all staff in order to comply with all violations cited. A copy of the memo, letter, or staff meeting agenda shall be submitted to the Office of Childhood.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

3/27/2024

|                                                 |  |                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>DISPOSITION</b><br>SUBSTANTIATED             |  | <b>DISPOSITION DATE</b><br>11/14/2023 |
| <b>APPROVING SUPERVISOR</b><br>CHRISCO, MARLA L |  |                                       |
|                                                 |  |                                       |