



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

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS

DATE OF REPORT
9/24/2020

DVN
002684242

FACILITY NAME

CROUTHERS ACADEMY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

FACILITY ADDRESS

555 ROCKWOOD ARBOR DR

CITY

EUREKA

ZIP CODE

63025-1015

PHONE NUMBER

(314) 396-2280

COUNTY

ST LOUIS

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

WILMESHER, LAURA

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

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.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

Child Care Facility Specialist (CCFS) Laura Wilmesher conducted an investigation regarding the allegation that a worker swatted a child's hand in retaliation to the child's aggression toward the worker on September 24, 2020. After conducting the investigation, CCFS Wilmesher finds this allegation is substantiated. This conclusion is based on the following evidence of licensing rule violations which occurred at the facility:

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 September 25, 2020, CCFS Wilmesher conducted interviews with director Claire Johnson, board president Leslie Crouthers, and caregiver Amanda Kuene. Claire Johnson stated that Amanda Kuene, co-teacher of Krystye "Kay" Celmer, informed her on September 24, 2020, that Child A was throwing a typical two-year-old tantrum, and swung at Kay. Kay then hit Child A on the hand. Claire Johnson stated she checked Child A's hands and did not see any red marks. Claire Johnson stated she took immediate action after she was informed of the incident, and she walked Kay out and she was fired. Claire Johnson stated she will be following up with each teacher individually to discuss how to handle challenging behavior, as a response to the incident.

Leslie Crouthers stated that Parent A was informed immediately of the incident and apologized to her. Leslie Crouthers stated that although Kay Celmer denied having hit Child A, they were not going to tolerate that kind of action, and they walked her out and fired her immediately. Leslie Crouthers stated she called the hotline for the incident, as well as left a voicemail message for the facility's CCFS, Alyssa Riley.

Amanda Kuene stated that on September 24, 2020, Child A was upset because another toy was taken from him, so he went over to her co-worker, Kay Celmer, however she was changing a diaper at the time. Amanda Kuene stated that Child A picked up the other child's shoe and tossed it, and then moved his hand down in Kay's direction. Amanda Kuene stated Kay Celmer then grabbed Child A's hand and smacked the top of his hand with her other hand. Amanda Kuene stated she informed Claire Johnson, who then called Kay out of the room. Amanda Kuene stated this was the only time she had witnessed Kay Celmer grab or smack a child.

CCFS Alyssa Riley confirmed that on September 24, 2020, Leslie Crouthers left her a voicemail message, reporting the incident to SCCR.

On October 14, 2020, CCFS Wilmesher conducted an interview with Krystye "Kay" Celmer who denied having hit Child A on the hand. Kay stated when Claire Johnson came to the room and told her to get her belongings, she had no idea what she was being walked out for, but she assumed she was being fired. Kay stated she asked Claire why she was being fired, and she was told that someone saw her hit Child A on the hand. Kay stated she told Claire and Leslie (who was on speaker phone with Claire at the time) that she did not hit Child A on the hand. Kay Celmer stated she has never hit any child, and that when Child A attempts to hit her, she holds his hand in her hands and tells him, "Please don't hit; hitting hurts."

CCFS Wilmesher received documentation of the incident from the facility as well, which stated that Amanda K. observed her co-teacher Kay Celmer smack a child's hand, and that Kay was terminated immediately.

The reporter for this complaint is from another agency and therefore was not interviewed.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

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The facility shall conduct a staff meeting to review the center's policies and all licensing rules and regulations regarding 19 CSR 30-62.182(1)(C) Discipline. The facility must provide the Section for Child Care Regulation 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

11/30/2020

DISPOSITION

SUBSTANTIATED

DISPOSITION DATE

10/26/2020

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

CLARK, ANGELA