



**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF CHILDHOOD - CHILD CARE COMPLIANCE
COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS**

DATE OF REPORT
8/2/2021

DVN
000171335

FACILITY NAME

THE CHILDREN'S PLACE, INC.

FACILITY ADDRESS

6401 ROCKHILL RD

CITY

KANSAS CITY

ZIP CODE

64131-1122

PHONE NUMBER

(816) 363-1898

COUNTY

JACKSON

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

SNODGRASS, PENNY

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)(C)10.

Children shall not be placed in a closet, a locked or unlit room, or any other place which is frightening.

5 CSR 25-500.182(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.

5 CSR 25-500.182(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

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has determined this allegation to be substantiated.

On August 2 and August 3, 2021 Compliance Inspector (CI) Penny Snodgrass interviewed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ann Thomas, Day Treatment Clinical Manager Blair Ballard and staff member Wanda (Ann) Harris at the facility. Additional phone interviews were conducted with staff members Tamika King, Lorraine Williams and with Supervisor Pam Simpson. Child B (four-years-old), C and D were interviewed at the facility. Child A (five-years-old) was not available for an interview. Parent A (Parent of Child A) and Parent B (Parent of Child B) were interviewed by phone.

Based on observation and interviews this allegation is substantiated because there is evidence that staff member Lorraine Williams shut two children, Child A and Child B in the Pink Panther classroom bathroom on separate occasions using this as a form of discipline. There is also evidence that Lorraine Williams made a video in order to protect herself because Child B said if she touched him again he was going to tell his momma. The video is of Lorraine Williams asking the children in the Pink Panther classroom if she was touching Child B.

CEO Ann Thomas stated that on July 27, 2021 Ann Harris asked her to come and supervise the classroom, Pink Panthers 4 and 5 year old room. Ann Harris felt that she needed to be in this classroom more to protect the children. Ann Harris stated that Lorraine Williams made a video to protect herself because Child B said to Lorraine if you put your hands on me again I'm going to tell my mom. Ann Thomas stated that it was reported to her by Ann Harris on approximately June 21, 2021 that Child A had a fit and ran into the bathroom and that staff member Lorraine held the bathroom door shut with her foot against the door jam so Child A couldn't open the door to get out. Ann Harris also stated that Lorraine held the handle on the bathroom door so Child A couldn't get out of the bathroom. Ann Harris told her that Lorraine did walk away from the door but when Child A would peek out the door that she went back to the door and shut it again and this lasted for approximately twenty minutes with Child A shut in the bathroom. Child B has also said that Lorraine shut him in the bathroom. Ann Thomas stated that she has had some concerns with Ms. Lorraine and acted more like a drill instructor.

During an interview with Blair Ballard on August 2, 2021 she stated that she is the Day Treatment Clinical Manager that oversees the therapists in the facility. Blair Ballard stated that last week one of her therapists, Clarisha Blylock asked to talk to her about an incident. Clarisha told her that she was aware that Child B's mom had called and spoke to Pam Simpson about Lorraine

locking Child B in the bathroom in the classroom. Clarisha Blylock told her she was aware that Pam Simpson told Mother of Child B that the bathrooms in the classrooms don't lock and that Child B didn't want to come out of the bathroom. Clarisha Blylock also told Blair Ballard that she hadn't seen a video but she was aware of a video that Lorraine made asking the kids questions about touching a child. Blair Ballard stated that Lorraines style is to be very direct and stern with the children.

Wanda (Ann) Harris, child care provider, stated that Lorraine Williams was putting children in the bathroom if they were in trouble. Ann Harris stated that she has worked in the classroom with Lorraine since March 2021. Ann Harris stated that both Child A and Child B have been shut in the bathroom by Lorraine Williams when they were in trouble. Child A would have go into the bathroom if he didn't do what Lorraine asked him to do. Child B was put in the bathroom for not listening. Ann Harris stated that Lorraine William would hold her foot against the bottom of the bathroom door and hold the handle so Child B couldn't get out of the bathroom. Child B told Lorraine Williams that if she touched him again that he was going to tell his mom. Lorraine Williams told her that she made a video of the other children in the classroom saying that she didn't touch Child B in order to protect herself from Child B saying this. Ann Harris stated that she hasn't seen the video and didn't see Lorraine making the video in the room but did see Lorraine with her phone out in the classroom. Ann Harris felt Lorraine Williams was scaring the children in the classroom by asking them if she had touched Child B and telling them that she had not touched Child B. She saw that Child A had been put in the bathroom twice for discipline and that Child A had been shut in the bathroom once for discipline. She had also noted that Child C had been shut in the bathroom at least three times for discipline. Ann Harris stated that Lorraine Williams started putting children in the bathroom for discipline starting in June or July. Ann Harris stated that Child A was shut in the bathroom with the lights turned off in the bathroom.

Child B stated that he gets put in the bathroom when he doesn't listen and Mrs. Lorraine puts him in the bathroom and makes him sad. Child B stated he thought the light was off in the bathroom when he got put in the bathroom by Mrs. Lorraine.

Child A was not available for an interview at the facility and/or at the home during an interview with Mother of Child A.

Child D stated that Child A had to go into the bathroom for crying and that Mrs. Lorraine put Child A in the bathroom in the Pink Panther room.

Parent A stated that she was not aware of these incidents until she was contacted by another agency. Child A disclosed that Ms. Lorraine Williams locked three children in the bathroom when they were not good.

Parent B stated that Child B did tell her that he was shut in the bathroom at school because he was having a hard time on the playground. Child B also told her that Child A also gets shut in the bathroom on a different occasion. She did talk to the administrators at the facility about children getting shut in the bathroom some time in July. She talked to the director Pam and Pam didn't know anything about it but would ask the teacher. The director, Pam called her back on July 24, 2021 and stated that Child A and Child B were both having a hard time on the playground and Lorraine brought them into the classroom to talk to them and that Child A ran into the bathroom.

During an interview with the Director, Pam Simpson she stated that Lorraine Williams is no longer employed at the facility and she wasn't at the facility when the incident happened with Lorraine because she was at a conference. Pam Simpson did state that Parent B did talk to her about a concern back in June or July about a concern when Child B said he was shut in the bathroom but she was told by Lorraine that Child B went into the bathroom on his own and Lorraine told him to come out but Child B stayed in the bathroom with the door open on his own. Pam Simpson did state that she has had no concerns with Lorraine Williams in the 2 years that she has worked at the facility.

Lorraine Williams did admit that she took video of Child B because he had accused her of putting hands on her and the video was to assure parents that their children were safe.

During the investigation CI Snodgrass observed the bathroom in the Pink Panther classroom which is a solid door with no window. The bathroom door has a flip type door handle that doesn't lock. CI Snodgrass observed there is a motion detector light in the bathroom and the bathroom door was held open with a door stopper on the floor. CI Snodgrass also observed written statements from CEO Ann Thomas and the Clinical Services Manager Blair Ballard. The written statements confirmed the same points from the interview conducted with CI Snodgrass and the statements were consistent.

Based on interviews and observations these allegations are substantiated.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

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All staff and volunteers of The Children's Place, Inc. must obtain two (2)clock hour of training approved by the Department of Elementary Education (DESE) on age appropriate discipline. The training must be held by an approved and qualified

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

7/20/2022

source, outside of The Children's Place, Inc. network. 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.

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

All staff and volunteers must obtain 1 clock hour of training on supervision. The training must be held by an approved and qualified source, outside of The Children's Place, Inc. network. 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

7/20/2022

DISPOSITION

SUBSTANTIATED

DISPOSITION DATE

4/7/2022

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

NURNBERG, TONY A