



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

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

DATE OF REPORT

9/14/2022

DVN

000685503

FACILITY NAME

COUNTRYSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

FACILITY ADDRESS

12226 LADUE RD

CITY

ST LOUIS

ZIP CODE

63141-8123

PHONE NUMBER

(314) 434-2821

COUNTY

ST LOUIS

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

HUDSON, ELIZABETH

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

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

Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used based on a guideline of one (1) minute of separation for each year of the child's age.

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

On September 14, 2022, the Office of Childhood (OOC) received an allegation that on 09.13.2022, Jennifer Hanser (Director) was reviewing video footage for the infant and toddler classroom and observed Cynthia Baeza- Teacher grab Child A age 12 months, by the arm, pulled Child A across the floor and placed her in time out for more than 15 minutes. Child A went to take a toy from another child and Cynthia placed Child A back in time out for more than 5 minutes. After conducting an investigation, Compliance Inspector (CI) Liz Hudson has found this allegation to be substantiated based on the following evidence:

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)5., which states, "Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used based on a guideline of one (1) minute of separation for each year of the child's age."

AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(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."

On September 14, 2022, CI Hudson conducted an unannounced inspection at Countryside Montessori School. CI Hudson interviewed Jenifer Hanser, Director as well as Teachers Kate Durfed and Lisa Sanders. Teachers and the Director gave consistent statements that Ms. Baeza was observed on film using time out for an excessive amount of time with Child A. Staff stated that her tone was often too harsh with the children and she had problems with other staff as well .

Ms. Hanser stated that Parent A was notified immediately after the incident as were all of the parents via community daycare text/ap, after Ms. Baeza was dismissed from the facility. CI Hudson observed the correspondence. Staff stated that there were no further concerns reported among parents or staff once Ms. Baeza's employment at Countryside Montessori School ceased.

On September 15, 2022, CI Hudson observed video footage which illustrated Ms Baeza place Child A in "time out" after Child A appeared to be fighting with a peer over a toy. Ms. Baeza walked across the floor and took Child A by the arm, quickly leading Child A back to the chair where Ms. Baeza was sitting. She continued sitting next to Ms. Baeza for approximately five minutes.. CI Hudson observed Child A try to get up and walk away but was taken by arm again and told to sit back down . Child A was in "time out" for a total of fifteen minutes.

On November 09, 2022, CI Hudson interviewed Ms. Baeza who stated that she recalled having Child A sit next to her but she wasn't sure how long. She stated that Child A was fighting over a toy with another child. Ms. Baeza stated that she was not aware of the guidelines when utilizing time out.

On September 15, 2022, CI Hudson conducted an interview via phone with the reporter who stated that there was no additional information to add.

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 disciplinary measures as well as age appropriate expectations regarding child behaviors. The facility must provide the Child Care Compliance Section 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.	Yes	9/30/2022

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	1/14/2023

APPROVING SUPERVISOR
CHRISCO, MARLA L