

Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Raisin' Em Up Early Learning Center	Enrollment: 40	License ID: 20181
Street: 607 Park St	City: Donnellson	IA Zip Code: 52625
Mailing Address: PO Box 159		County: Lee
Mailing City: Donnellson	IA Zip Code: 52625	
Director's Name: Sarah Tweedy	Center Phone Number: 319-470-4351	
On-Site Supervisors: Laura McDowell and Nichole Loges	E-Mail Address: stweedy@hotmail.com	

Date of Complaint: 04-17-2019 **Date of Visit:** 04-17-2019

- Scheduled
 Unannounced
 NA
 Non-Compliance with Regulations Found
 Compliance with Regulations Found
 NA

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

- NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended**
 PROVISIONAL license from _____ **to** _____
 SUSPENSION of License
 REVOCAION of License

Complaint Details:

- Did this complaint result in a serious injury? Yes No
Did this complaint result in a death to a child? Yes No

Summary of Complaint:

The center frequently operates over ratio.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.8(2) Ratio maintained in center as required by age.

Inspection Findings:

The determination of this complaint was made based upon employee and Director interviews, and independent evidence regarding being over ratio in the form of messages. Staff report working over ratio and I witnessed such in January 2019. The Director admits staff worked out of ratio at times.

- 109.8(2) Ratio maintained in center as required by age.

Information was provided by the DCI in messages between Laura M. and Sarah T., other staff members, and family members. Multiple discussions were regarding ratio being exceeded on numerous occasions.

On 1/3/2018 Sarah T. states in a message, "I think we are just going to have to play it by ear tomorrow and see how they fall and adjust the best we can too many if they all show up but I think Jill would even see that we are accommodating as best we can."

On 1/29/18 Laura M. states in a message to Sarah T., "Not over by a lot but 1."

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On 2/5/18 Laura M. states in a message, "Over by 1 two. If booting out J number 4 and 4."

On 3/2/18 Laura M. states, "Pretty much if Jill comes screwed because I don't think A or M will look three lol." Director Tweedy replies I will cast a spell to keep her away for at least another hour....nope I will make it all day ;)".

On 3/6/18 Laura states in messages, "Seriously we have a ton of kids 6-13-10 with more to come. 32 during nap." Reply, "Awesome." Laura's response, "Licensed for 35 staffed under lol." Reply, "Go figure."

On 3/16/18 Laura M states in a message, "Nichole could potential get off soon only over by 1?"

On 3/22/18 Laura M. states in a message, "Sometimes I don't understand people." Response, "Lol, why?" Laura replies, Sarah and Ratio....definitely not my business." Reply, "Lol sorry. Hopefully nothing happens." Laura' replies, 'Amen.....because we will all be going down." Reply, "Guess you have to be glad it's not your name on the sign then. Sorry she is doing that to you." Laura's reply, "I think she doesn't think about the what ifs."

On 4/11/18 Laura M. state in messages to Owner/Director Tweedy, 'I am here but I think I may have to head back ;/". Tweedy replies, "O no ;(why, too many kids?" Laura M. replies, "Yep and not enough staff".

On 5/24/18 Laura states in a message, "39 kids licensed for 35 and 2 staff today.....ugh".

On 1/2/19 I made an unannounced visit to the center. I walked into the infant room as a parent was dropping off an infant. The room contained 4 children and only 1 staff was present as the parent was dropping off the 5th infant. We discussed that the room was out of ratio and staff member Bailey J. indicated she would call Sarah T. to inform her. I immediately called Director Tweedy informing her the infant room was out of ratio and the practice of being over ratio, even for a few minutes was completely unacceptable. I informed her that allowing parents to drop off children unexpectedly creating staff child ratio to be over is a clear violation. I phoned Child Care Bureau Chief Todd Savage to report and document this. In a message to Laura from Director Tweedy on the same date she states, "Now Jill came and technically A just showed up so they were over by 1 and it makes me feel ill."

Staff interviews were held April 17, 24th, 25th, 26th 2019.

Staff Kelsey K. indicated in the past month ratio was over in the infant room (9 infants, 2 staff). She has only been employed at the center for 6 weeks.

Alisa H. indicated the center was often over ratio every Wednesday, especially 2 or 3 kids over on 3-4 year old children. Alisa indicated she has spoken about this to both the On Site Supervisor Laura M. and head staff in charge when Laura is not present Nicole L. She indicated they would "try to make it work". She indicated the longest time being over ratio she can recall was an hour or 2. She indicated the job and center "was very chaotic". She stated this was her reason for leaving employment.

Amber G. was employed at the center for approximately 6 months. She stated she worked in the infant room and was over by 1 infant. She stated when this occurred they were to phone Sarah.

Korissa H. also stated "parents drop off kids on a regular basis with no schedule so staff never know how many kids are going to show up so sometimes you are over staffed, sometimes you are under staffed." She stated when this occurred staff were to call Laura M. or Sarah T. for directions.

Hayley E. also reported that when they were over on ratio staff members were to phone Sarah. She indicated Sarah would then send someone over from Raisin Em On Up or call someone to come from home indicating this could take 15-20 minutes. She estimated this occurred three times a week. Hayley E. reported sometimes they had 9 children with 2 staff in the infant room and that ratio was not being followed for 1 year olds.

Nicole L. is a staff person in charge when the on-site supervisor isn't available. Nicole indicated she typically calls Sarah if parents drop off kids and they are over ratio. She indicated at times they have to

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call staff in from home and it may take 15 minutes for a staff person to get there. She indicated that before lunch and after nap they can be over by 1 or 2 children.

Bailey J. indicated the center is "over consistently" on ratio.

Alex H. stated when they were "over ratio Sarah would try to fix it".

Emily W. stated sometimes they would be "out of ratio a half hour."

Kayla D. indicated when they were over ratio she would call staff in from home or sometimes staff could come over from the preschool. She described the center as "overwhelming".

Jordan B. stated that when the center was over ratio Nichole would send her from the preschool (Raisin Em On Up) to Raisin Em Up, she indicated the baby room is over especially on Wednesdays because they go to the library.

Ashley K. indicated she has "not noticed" the center being out of ratio.

On 5/30/19 I spoke with Whitney W., who had interviewed with the center for potential employment with the center. She stated that during her interview process in Raisin Em Up staff were leaving the room to conduct kitchen duties violating ratio. She reported Sarah was present as this occurred, but did not react or respond.

In 2018, the center has clearly been operating in a pattern of disregard for ratio as evidenced by staff statements and phone messages. Standards for staff ratios are based on what children need in order to have a reasonable amount of quality, nurturing care. The ratio of children to adults allows for increased one-to-one interaction, knowledge of individual children, and consistent and safe caregiving.

Research shows that the staff/child ratio is the most critical for children from birth to three years of age. While a low staff/child ratio does not in and of itself guarantee that quality care is provided, it does increase the likelihood that staff will be able to provide more individualized, interactive, direct care and increases staff's ability to respond to emergencies, tend to children with minor illness, etc. The National Fire Protection Association, in its 1988 Life Safety Code 10.1 recommends lower staff/child ratios for non ambulatory children as essential for fire safety.

It is apparent by statements in messages provided above the center displayed active efforts to deceive child care licensing. Laura M. was the primary person in charge at Raisin' Em Up in 2018. She only worked at Raisin Em On Up in Sarah T.'s absence, which was seldom per report of the Director. Laura M. would go to the preschool site on non preschool days for a few hours to work on paperwork. This information, message information discussing ratio regarding children under age 3, along with staff report indicates the ratio violations noted above occurred at Raisin Em Up Early Learning Center. Children under age 3 are only served at Raisin Em Up Early Learning Center. Sarah T. admits the center was out of ratio and that this practice has now changed the past few weeks. --- VIOLATION

Special Notes and Action Required:

The lack of structure and protocols coupled with inexperienced staff and a disregard to rules has contributed to chaos which appears at times to have overwhelmed staff. This dynamic increases risk to children.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact me (phone 641-684-3951; email jseiber@dhs.state.ia.us) so that we may discuss the issue. If necessary, I can make a notation in your record. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report. If you have the need for any additional information discussed during my visit, please contact me and I will forward the information to you. Thank you.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.

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A referral for technical assistance was made to your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency for the following reason:

- Safe Sleep Practices
- Emergency Preparedness Planning
- Discipline Strategies
- Other

Consultant's Signature:

Jill Seibert

Date:

06-12-2019