



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

November 17, 2022

Toby Berry
Community Action Agency
1214 Greenwood Ave
Jackson, MI 49203

RE: License #: DC300362501
Investigation #: 2023D0207001
Greenfield Early Childhood

Dear Ms. Berry:

I conducted a special investigation because the child care licensing division received a complaint against your facility that related to licensing rules or law. The allegations were related to the following:

- R 400.8140(1) Discipline.
- R.400.8140(2) Discipline.

The details of the allegations are in the attached report. To investigate the allegations:

- I interviewed the person who made the complaint, program director, licensee designee, child care staff members, and parents.
- I completed on-site inspections on the following dates: 10/28/2022 and 10/31/2022.

As a result of this investigation, I found the following violation(s):

- R 400.8140(1) Discipline.**

I recommend no change to the current license status.

The special investigation report is attached. Due to the violation(s) identified in the report, a written corrective action plan was required. On 11/14/2022, you submitted an acceptable written corrective action plan.

During this special investigation:	Yes	No
A rule or law violation was found and a serious injury or death occurred.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A rule or law violation was found and abuse and/or neglect of a child occurred.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

This report and any related corrective action plans must be filed in your licensing notebook. This report and any related corrective action plans will be online for parents to review under the [Statewide Search for Licensed Child Care Centers and Homes](#).

Sincerely,



Charnell Lennox, Licensing Consultant
 611 West Ottawa St.
 PO Box 30664
 Lansing, MI 48909

enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SYSTEMS
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	DC300362501
Investigation #:	2023D0207001
Complaint Receipt Date:	10/27/2022
Investigation Initiation Date:	10/28/2022
Report Due Date:	12/26/2022
Licensee Name:	Community Action Agency
Licensee Address:	1214 Greenwood Ave Jackson, MI 49203
Licensee Telephone #:	(517) 784-4800
Administrator:	Toby Berry, Designee
Licensee Designee:	Toby Berry, Designee
Name of Facility:	Greenfield Early Childhood
Facility Address:	3471 Beck Road Hillsdale, MI 49242
Facility Telephone #:	(517) 437-3346
Original Issuance Date:	09/26/2014
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	03/26/2021
Expiration Date:	03/25/2023
Capacity:	36
Program Type:	CHILD CARE CENTER

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
Child care staff member Nancy Adams choked Child A.	No
Child care staff member Nancy Adams is harsh with the children.	Yes

III. METHODOLOGY

10/27/2022	Special Investigation Intake 2023D0207001
10/27/2022	Contact - Document Received Email exchange with administrator Codi Benjamin.
10/28/2022	Special Investigation Initiated – On-site Interview completed with child care staff members Kayla Hayes and Jenna Crawford from 11:25 to 11:45 a.m.
10/28/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to Child A's mother. Left a message.
10/31/2022	Inspection Completed On-site Interview completed with program director Jennifer Marshall from 11:15 A.M. to 11:45 P.M.
10/31/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to child care staff member Nancy Adams.
10/31/2022	Contact - Telephone call received Phone call from administrator Codi Benjamin.
10/31/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to Child B's mother and Child C's mother.
10/31/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to Child A's mother.
11/14/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to child care staff member Terra French
11/14/2022	Exit Conference with Codi Benjamin and licensee designee Toby Berry.

11/14/2022	Corrective Action Plan Requested and Due on 12/04/2022
11/14/2022	Corrective Action Plan Received.
11/14/2022	Corrective Action Plan Approved.

ALLEGATION: Child care staff member Nancy Adams choked Child A.

INVESTIGATION: On 10/27/2022 I spoke with administrator Codi Benjamin. Ms. Benjamin said that the center has been addressing concerns that Child A's mother had with child care staff member Nancy Adams. On 10/25/2022 Child A had a red mark visible on his neck. When asked about it, Child A reported that a child care staff member did it. Child A then demonstrated using a "choking" motion with his hands.

Child A's mother also informed Ms. Benjamin that Child A does not know the child care staff members by name, but Child A has provided her with a description that leads her to believe the child care staff member Child A is referring to is Nancy Adams. Ms. Benjamin provided me with written details of their own internal investigation. I reviewed the documents and discovered that child care staff member Nancy Adams was not in attendance on 10/25 the day the red mark was observed on Child A.

I completed an onsite inspection on 10/28/2022. There were only two child care staff members available for interview that day. Child care staff member Kayla Hayes reported that she has never witnessed any child care staff member choke a child. She denied ever choking a child or knowing how a red mark could have appeared on Child A.

I also interviewed child care staff Jenna Crawford while onsite on 10/28/2022. She reported that she has never witnessed any child care staff member choke a child or even lay hands on a child. She denied choking or using any physical discipline.

On 10/31/2022 I completed more onsite interviews with program director Jennifer Marshall. She reported that she has never witnessed any child care staff members choke a child and she would never allow that to happen. She provided me with a copy of the discipline policy for review. The center will use redirection by sending the children to a safe spot with "a tucker the turtle" book which is a book the center utilizes as part of their discipline policy to help redirect children and have them read and calm down.

I spoke with Child A's mother on 10/31/2022. She reported that she understands it is unlikely that a child care staff member actually choked Child A and she said that Child A does not know the child care staff members by name. She said that there

was a small red mark on 10/25/2022 that her mother (who usually does the pickup) told her about and so she asked Child A and Child A demonstrated a choking motion. Child A's mother reported that she contacted the center because they have had ongoing concerns about a child care staff member that Child A refers to as "the big lady" and how she is "mean". She first brought this to the center's attention on or about 9/15/2022. She is choosing to keep Child A out of the classroom until the investigation is complete because she does not believe that her child feels safe.

I also spoke to Child B's mother and Child C's mother on 10/31/2022. They reported no concerns for the way their children has been disciplined in the center.

On 11/1/2022 I spoke via phone call with child care staff member Nancy Adams. Ms. Adams said that she has no idea why Child A would be fearful of her. Ms. Adams said the day the red mark was seen she was not at work and was also not present the day prior (10/24/2022). Ms. Adams said that Child A can be mischievous at times, but she has never laid hands on Child A for discipline. Ms. Adams said she did walk Child A out to his grandmother's car two or three times and had to hold Child A's hand to keep him from wandering into the parking lot, but that is the only time she has had physical contact with Child A.

On 11/14/22 I spoke to child care staff member Terra French. Ms. French reported that she has never witnessed Ms. Adams or any other child care staff member choke a child or lay hands on a child.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.8140	Discipline.
	(2) All of the following means of punishment are prohibited: (a) Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
ANALYSIS:	Ms. Adams did not choke Child A.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION NOT ESTABLISHED

ALLEGATION: Child care staff member Nancy Adams is harsh with the children.

INVESTIGATION: During my onsite inspection Ms. Hayes reported that she is aware of the allegations concerning Nancy Adams and although she does not think Nancy would escalate to the point of harming a child, she does believe that Nancy's approach to discipline with the children does not follow the center's policy and is too harsh. She reported that she will often get into the children's faces very close and

talk in a harsh tone. She also said that often she feels that Nancy can't let the situation go with the children and will often bring it back up to them later.

Ms. Crawford also voiced her concerns about the harshness and lack of patience Ms. Adams has with the children. She reported that once she was asked by management if she had seen anything inappropriate. She was not surprised to be questioned about Ms. Adams because she has always felt that Ms. Adams approach to discipline was gruff and unnecessary when working in an early childhood classroom. Ms. Crawford said that although she has never witnessed anything physical, she does have concerns that children would be fearful of Ms. Adams.

During my interview with Ms. Marshall, she reported to me that Ms. Adams has a difficult time being tender with the children when they have behavior issues, and she often sits in her chair and does not interact with them unless they need redirection. When she redirects them it is often with a harsh tone and continues on much longer than necessary. She reported that in September Child A's mother did approach her with concerns about Ms. Adams, and Child A saying that Ms. Adams had squeezed his hand. She said that Ms. Adams did not take the concerns seriously and did not change her approach with Child A or any of the other children.

Ms. French reported that Ms. Adams have bad days like anyone else and at times can be short on patience with the children when they are having behavior issues.

When I spoke to Ms. Adams, she denied being too harsh with the children and denied squeezing Child A's hand. She reported that staff are never alone one on one with the children so her co-workers would know that she is not inappropriate with the children. Ms. Adams said she re-directs the children with the "tucker the turtle" book or have them put their head down at the table. Ms. Adams said all of the child care staff members are appropriate and take excellent care of the children.

Child A's mother reported that she wants to feel comfortable sending Child A to school and at the moment she does not have that comfort. Child A has reported that there is a child care staff member that is always mean and squeezes his hand. When they ask Child A to describe the child care staff member, based on Child A's description they know that Child A is referring to Ms. Adams. Child A's mother reported that she will not be sending Child A back to the classroom until the issues are resolved. Child B's mother and Child C's mother both reported that they have no concerns with Ms. Adams or any of the child care staff members in the center.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.8140	Discipline.
	(1) Positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation must be used.

ANALYSIS:	Ms. Adams is not using positive methods of discipline as described by getting into the children's faces and speaking in harsh tones that are not conducive to guiding a child through a behavior issue.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

IV. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend no change in the license status.

Charnell Lennox

11/17/2022

Charnell Lennox
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:

Yolanda Sims

11/17/2022

Yolanda Sims
Area Manager

Date