



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
ACTING DIRECTOR

September 13, 2023

Angela Mentink
Early Impressions Preschool & Childcare Ctr
3505 E. Michigan Ave
Jackson, MI 49202

RE: License #: DC380404963
Investigation #: 2023D0197026
Early Impressions' Little Panthers

Dear Ms. Mentink:

I conducted a special investigation because the child care licensing bureau received information regarding your facility that related to licensing rules or law. The information was related to the following:

R400.8125(1): Staff; volunteer; requirements.

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

- I interviewed the licensee designee, administrators, child care staff members, and parents with relevant information.
- I completed on-site inspections on the following dates: 7/28/23.

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

R400.8125(1): Staff; volunteer; requirements.

I recommend issuance of a 1st provisional license. If you accept the provisional license, you must sign and return the enclosed waiver form. If you do not accept the provisional license, the matter will be forwarded to the disciplinary unit.

Due to the violations, you must send us a corrective action plan by 10/03/2023. You can use our [corrective action plan](#) form or create your own.

If you need help writing the corrective action plan, please contact me. If you do not send a corrective action plan, you may face disciplinary action. The corrective action plan must include the following:

- How compliance with each rule will be achieved.

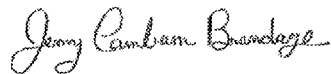
- Who is directly responsible for implementing the corrective action for each violation.
- Specific time frames for each violation as to when the correction will be completed or implemented.
- How continuing compliance will be maintained once compliance is achieved.
- The signature of the responsible party and a date.

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](#).

Please review the enclosed documentation for accuracy and contact me with any questions. In the event that I am not available and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the local office at (517) 284-9730.

Sincerely,



Jenny L. Camburn Brundage, Licensing Consultant
 Child Care Licensing Bureau
 611 W. Ottawa Street
 P.O. Box 30664
 Lansing, MI 48909
 (517) 262-9717

enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
CHILD CARE LICENSING BUREAU
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	DC380404963
Investigation #:	2023D0197026
Complaint Receipt Date:	07/26/2023
Investigation Initiation Date:	07/26/2023
Report Due Date:	09/24/2023
Licensee Name:	Early Impressions Preschool & Childcare Ctr
Licensee Address:	3505 E. Michigan Ave Jackson, MI 49202
Licensee Telephone #:	(517) 937-1721
Administrator:	Angela Mentink, Designee
Licensee Designee:	Angela Mentink, Designee
Name of Facility:	Early Impressions' Little Panthers
Facility Address:	3950 Catherine Street Jackson, MI 49203
Facility Telephone #:	(517) 841-8703
Original Issuance Date:	08/28/2020
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	02/28/2023
Expiration Date:	02/27/2025
Capacity:	164
Program Type:	CHILD CARE CENTER

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
On 7/25/23, Child A (age 2 ½ years, male) and Child B (age 2 years, 11 months, female) were left outside on the playground by Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1 and CCSM 2. The two children were found approximately 12 minutes later when CCSM 3 went outside with a different classroom. Child A and Child B were found uninjured and standing outside the fenced in play area crying. The children were reunited with their classroom.	Yes

III. METHODOLOGY

07/26/2023	Special Investigation Intake 2023D0197026
07/25/2023	Special Investigation Initiated - Telephone Interview contact with Administrator 1.
07/28/2023	Inspection Completed On-site from approximately 10:25 a.m. - 12:40p.m.
07/28/2023	Contact - Face to Face Interviews with Administrator 1, Administrator 2, Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1, CCSM 2, CCSM 3 and CCSM 4.
08/01/2023	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Child A's Mother.
08/01/2023	Contact - Telephone call made Attempted contact with Child B's Mother
08/02/2023	Contact - Telephone call received Interview with Child B's Mother.
08/02/2023	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Ms. Mentink, licensee designee.
08/16/2023	Contact - Document Received Review of video clip footage.
09/09/2023	Contact - Telephone call made Contact with Ms. Mentink

09/09/2023	Exit Conference with Ms. Mentink.
09/09/2023	Inspection Completed-BCAL Sub. Non-Compliance

ALLEGATION: On 7/25/23, Child A (age 2 ½ years, male) and Child B (age 2 years, 11 months, female) were left outside on the playground by Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1 and CCSM 2. The two children were found approximately 12 minutes later when CCSM 3 went outside with a different classroom. Child A and Child B were found uninjured and standing outside the fenced in play area crying. The children were reunited with their classroom.

INVESTIGATION: I interviewed Administrator 1. She acknowledged that Child A (age 2 ½ years, male) and Child B (age 2 years 11 months, female) were left outside unsupervised for between 10-15 minutes. The classroom consists of children 2 ½ through 3 years old. On the day of the incident there were 13 children in care with Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1 and CCSM 2. She stated that the center uses two large outdoor play areas. One area is completely fenced at the side of the building. The fence line runs along the back of the building. The second play area is a large grassy area that is not fenced located at the back of the building. On the day of the incident, Child A and Child B's classroom was playing on the unfenced grassy area. As the classroom was coming inside, CCSM 2 was getting ready to leave for the day, being replaced by CCSM 4. CCSM 4 met them in the hallway mid transition, which may have caused a distraction in the hallway. Both parents were notified of the incident. The parents were initially told the children may have been left inside the fenced in area. However, once she received further clarification, she quickly corrected this information with the parents.

Administrator 1 indicated that this was an unfortunate isolated incident, and that the health and safety of the children is a priority. There have not been prior supervision concerns with CCSM 1 or CCSM 2 while working at the center. The center's policy is to maintain direct and active supervision while frequently counting the children. The CCSMs are also expected to practice "zoning", in which they spread out while supervising the children. Administrator 1 stated that the center is currently developing a new supervision training, as well as the rooms now have white boards to assist in easily documenting the number of children in the space. The unfenced outdoor area will no longer be used by children under school-age. The grassy area will only be used by school-age children if they are engaged in a structured activity.

I interviewed Administrator 2. She acknowledged that Child A and Child B were left outside unsupervised for approximately 10 minutes. She stated that on the day of the incident, she had just finished visiting Child A and Child B's room for a few minutes after they came inside. There was a parent in the room being spoken too.

Administrator 1 left the room and went to the kitchen break room. At approximately 3:30p.m. she received a two-way radio message from CCSM 3 to come to the playground as soon as possible. When she arrived outside, CCSM 3 yelled to her from across the playground that she found Child A and Child B alone on the other side of the fence in the open grassy play area. Administrator 2 ran through the building to retrieve the children from the other side of the fence. When she went outside, Child A and Child B were standing at the fence line. Child B was crying. Neither child was injured. Child B told her that they were left outside. Administrator 1 took the children back to their classroom. CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 did not realize that the children were not in the room. Both CCSMs thought that they counted the children. Administrator 2 indicated that this was an unfortunate isolated incident, and that the health and safety of the children is a priority.

I interviewed CCSM 1. She acknowledged that Child A and Child B were left outside unsupervised for approximately 10-15 minutes. She stated that the children normally go outside to play in the afternoon from approximately 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. On the day of the incident, there were 13 children ages 2 ½ years through 3 years old with two CCSMs, thus having enough CCSMs for the children in care. She remembered seeing Child A and Child B playing in the middle of the grassy area. She described Child A and Child B as typical children for their age, with no behavioral concerns. The children were lining up by the double doors used to come inside. Five or six children ran inside so CCSM 2 followed behind them. CCSM 1 brought the rest of the children inside. She followed behind the group of children, and they went to their room to begin free choice learning. It was a busy time and there was a parent who came into the room at that time, which distracted her. CCSM 1 thought the children were counted before going inside and again at the door to the room, but “I guess not.” They were in the room for approximately 15 minutes when Administrator 1 brought Child A and Child B back to the room. Child A and Child B were not hurt or upset.

CCSM 1 stressed that this is an unfortunate isolated incident. She normally has good communication with CCSM 2, they normally count the children frequently, and they normally provide the children with good care and supervision. She stated that she “feels bad” and that the situation was “scary.” Since the incident, they count the children more frequently, as well as make sure all the children are lined up together and stay together in a group when transitioning between areas. The children no longer play in the unfenced play area. CCSM 1 said she is confident that this type of situation will not happen again.

I interviewed CCSM 2. She acknowledged that Child A and Child B were left outside unsupervised for approximately 10-15 minutes. On the day of the incident, the children went outside at approximately 3:00 p.m. The children began lining up to go back inside at approximately 3:35 p.m. During that time, five or six children ran inside the first set of doors. CCSM 2 followed these children inside, telling them that adults need to oversee opening the door, so they stay safe. CCSM 1 was bringing in the rest of the children. She thought that she heard CCSM 1 count the children,

believing there were 13 children in total. CCSM 2 stated that she normally recounts the children, but it was a “chaotic” transition with some of the children trying to run inside as well as not wanting to stay in line while walking in the hallway. There was also a child who became upset while walking and needed to be carried, as well as the line was stopped briefly for a child to get a hug by another CCSM. CCSM 4 met them in the hallway, and they continued to the room. She believed that CCSM 1 counted the children when they got back to the room, but she did not hear her do this. It was a busy time as the children were spread out engaged in freedom of choice learning. There was also a parent who arrived at the room along with Administrator 2 for a few minutes. CCSM 2 described Child A as a typical child with no behavioral concerns. Child B can struggle emotionally with some refusing behaviors. When the children returned to the room they were not hurt. Child B was a little emotional and started crying again. Both children told her they heard that it was time to line up. CCSM 2 told both children that they were not in trouble, and that she was “so sorry” they were left outside. She hugged the children and both parents were notified.

CCSM 2 stressed that this was an isolated incident and that she is not happy that this incident occurred. She and CCSM 1 have good communication with each other, and they normally provide the children with good care and supervision. She stressed that they normally count “all the time.” She and CCSM 1 are going to be counting more frequently and double checking each other’s counts. They are going to do name to face counting. They also have a transition hold rope that the children can use. CCSM 2 is confident that this situation will not happen again.

I interviewed CCSM 3. She was working in the Pre-K room at the time of the incident. At approximately 3:30 p.m., her classroom went outside to the fenced in play area. She walked around the play area and checked on all the children. She then sat down to play street chalk and assist the children if they wanted an outside water break. They were outside approximately 10-15 minutes when she heard crying. CCSM 3 stood up and did a head count. None of the children were crying. She heard crying again. She looked toward the fence at the back of the playground and observed Child A and Child B on the other side of the fence. She waited for a moment to see if a CCSM would be attending to them. When she did not see anyone, she went to the fence line. The children were crying but not injured. The children told her that they were left outside. CCSM 3 called for Administrator 2, who responded immediately by running through the school to retrieve them from the other side of the fence. CCSM 3 stayed next to the children until Administrator 2 arrived. CCSM 3 believes that this is an isolated incident. She feels “terrible” that this occurred, saying that she cried.

I interviewed CCSM 4. She was inside the building when the incident occurred. She was asked to join Child A and Child B’s room. She met the children in the hallway as they were coming in from outside. CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 did not count the children out loud when they got to the room. CCSM 4 stated that she counted the children. She believed that she counted 12, but she must have miscounted. She asked CCSM

1 if they had 12 children, and she was told “yes.” In hindsight, CCSM 4 believes that CCSM 1 may have been preoccupied and that CCSM 1 did not mentally register what she asked. The room was “very busy”, and the children were playing loudly. Administrator 2 came to the room for a few minutes and left. A few minutes later Child A and Child B were brought back to the room. Child A and Child B were not hurt. Child B told her that they were left outside. CCSM 2 spoke with Child A and Child B, who told her they heard that it was time to come inside. CCSM 2 told the children that they were not in trouble, but that it is important to listen to the CCSMs. CCSM 4 believes that this was an isolated incident, as the children are normally counted frequently and out loud. CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 were both upset that this occurred. Both parents were notified.

I observed the center. Child A and Child B attend room A104. From the room, the children traverse approximately 60 feet down the hallway, turn, and then traverse approximately 108 feet down a second hallway to the first set of double doors that lead to the non-fenced grassy play area. There is approximately 7 feet between the first set and second set of doors that lead outside to a small cement pad. The children were found approximately 16 paces from the door along the back fence of large play area. There was no gate to allow the children to enter the area. In addition, from the doors to the center, it is approximately 95 paces to the edge of the grassy area. The edge of the grassy area has a natural border of woods and tall grass. There were no obvious outdoor hazards in the grassy area. There are no visible roads or parking lots.

I observed the center’s attendance log. I verified that there were 13 children with two CCSMs at the time of the incident.

I interviewed Child A’s Mother. She verified that she was notified of the incident. She was told that Child A and another child were left outside for at least 10 minutes, and that another CCSM found them. She was originally told that this occurred inside the fenced in area, but she was later told by Administrator 1 that they were found outside the fence when she got additional clarification from the CCSMs. Child A did not tell her what happened, but he did say that Child B was crying. Child A’s Mother indicated that this was an isolated incident regarding the children’s care and supervision. Child A’s Mother expressed concern with how this could happen, and questions if the children were always kept in direct line of sight. She was assured that the center would be making corrections to be sure that this does not occur again. She is hoping that additional people will be hired to watch the center cameras, do safety checks, and better supervise the CCSMs regarding their care of the children. Child A continues to attend the center, with two other siblings, age 4 years and age 9 months. Child A likes attending the center.

Child A’s Mother stated that in the past she has expressed some concerns that were addressed. She expressed concern regarding the fenced outdoor play area and wanting to be sure that the front gate stays closed, secure, with no large gaps. She is not aware of any children leaving the fenced in play area. She also expressed

concerns that there may be people from the public in the wooded area behind the center as it connects to a residential area. Child A's Mother also expressed concerns to the center regarding CCSM 2, citing her work history at another center and failing to properly supervise children at that other center. Ms. Mentink assured her that CCSM 2 was not solely responsible for that incident.

I interviewed Child B's Mother. She verified that she was notified of the incident. She was told that Child A and another child were left outside and that another CCSM found them. She was originally told that this occurred inside the fenced in area but was later told that they were outside the fence when Administrator 1 got additional clarification from the CCSMs. She also spoke with Child A's Mother who clarified that the children were left outside for at least 10 minutes. Child B told her that she was left outside, that she cried, was scared, but that she is fine now. Child B's Mother believes that this was an isolated incident and an accident. She stressed that the center is "a great place" and that they are taking the incident seriously. She did not have any previous concerns regarding the center, saying that the CCSMs do a "great job" and that she "adores" the CCSMs. The CCSMs have assured her that they are making changes to assure that this does not happen again. For example, the children are now only staying in the fenced in play area and they are counting the children more frequently. Child B continues to attend the center. Child B likes attending.

I observed the available video clips of the center. The clips were in several segments showing the inside hallways of the center, and a corner of the fenced in play area. The outdoor play area where the children were found did not have a video. The video segments showed:

- At approximately 3:43.14, CCSM 2 is observed walking in front of a group of 11 children. CCSM 1 is in the back of the children. The group was joined by another CCSM in the hallway leading to the room.
- At approximately 3:53.45, CCSM 3 is observed in the fenced in play area moving toward the fence line where Child A and Child B were found. Child A and Child B are not viewable in the video.
- At approximately 3:56.33, Administrator 2 is observed running from the playground back inside the building.
- At approximately 3:57.04, Administrator 2 is observed running out the center doors to retrieve Child A and Child B.

I interviewed Ms. Mentink, licensee designee. She was aware of the incident, saying that there were 13 children while outside, but that CCSM 1 and CCSM 2 only brought 11 children inside. The CCSMs missed several opportunities to count the children to realize that they were not in the group. The CCSMs did not notice that Child A and Child B were missing from the group until they were brought back to the room. Child A and Child B were found unharmed outside after 10-15 minutes.

Ms. Mentink stressed that this was an isolated incident, and they are taking what happened seriously. The center will continue to train the CCSMs on the importance

of providing direct and active supervision including the use of zones to provide for better supervision. The CCSMs are reminded on the importance of counting the children frequently, and even more so during times of transitions. The rooms also contain white boards to better document the number of children in the room. The center is also working to eliminate distractions during transitions by reminding CCSMs to finish the entire transition before switching staff or stopping to engage with the children in the hallway. The CCSMs will also be counting the children more frequently. The children are also now staying in the fenced in play area. Ms. Mentink does not believe that this type of incident will happen again.

Ms. Mentink stated that CCSM 1 continues to work for the center. CCSM 1 now works with the older children. She also works supervised with more experience CCSMs. She has received additional trainings and is having monthly observations of her care and supervision of the children. CCSM 1 is remorseful about what happened. Regarding CCSM 2, she too continues to work for the center; however, she is no longer working in a classroom providing care and supervision. CCSM 2 now works as a support staff person handing out snacks, doing dishes, and other center tasks outside of the classroom. CCSM 2 is also remorseful about what happened.

Ms. Mentink also verified that she addressed the other concerns brought forth by Child A's Mother in the past. She observed the large gate on the front of the play area, where the children do not play. The children are kept on the other side of the playground. In addition, none of the children have left the fenced area. Although she did not observe any large gaps in the fence, she did see where the gate latch was a "little twisted" but not a safety concern. She does not believe that a preschooler could fit through the closed gate. However, to be preventative, she still contacted the maintenance department to access the gate to be sure that it closes at tight as possible. Regarding the woods behind the center, she spoke with the CCSMs. The wooded area has trails that lead to a housing area. The CCSMs have heard older aged children not affiliated with the center yelling, but their parents were also heard quickly responding to have the children stop. The CCSMs did not have any concerns regarding the public being in the wooded area. Regarding CCSM 2's previous work history, CCSM 2 used to work for another center where a child was not appropriately supervised while outside. CCSM 2 was not solely responsible for the situation at the other center, as there were other CCSMs present. There was also some faulty equipment involved. Based on CCSM 2's many years of good service and quality care of children, she decided to hire her. CCSM 2 did a good job supervising the children until this recent incident.

I reviewed the center's child care licensing file. The center has not been previously cited for children being left alone without a CCSM being present.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.8125	Staff; volunteer; requirements.
	(1) All staff and volunteers shall provide appropriate care and supervision of children at all times.
ANALYSIS:	On 7/25/23, Child A (age 2 ½ years, male) and Child B (age 2 years, 11 months, female) were left outside on the playground by Child Care Staff Member (CCSM) 1 and CCSM 2. The two children were found approximately 10-15 minutes later when CCSM 3 went outside with a different classroom. Child A and Child B were found uninjured and standing outside the fenced in play area crying. The children were reunited with their classroom. This appears to have been an isolated incident.
CONCLUSION:	REPEAT VIOLATION ESTABLISHED SIR report 2022D0451011 dated 5/18/22. Corrective Action Plan dated 6/8/22.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Upon receipt of an acceptable corrective action plan, I recommend issuance of a first provisional license.

Jenny Camburn Brundage

9/9/23

Jenny L. Camburn Brundage
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:

Darlese McConnell

09/13/2023

Darlese McConnell
Area Manager

Date