

Linda had her group of children at the restroom area and told the two year old child to go back to the two year old room. As the child turned around to follow her instructions, Linda came up behind the child and grabbed the child's ear. The ear was red at first but was fine after the child woke up from nap. Staff stated even after the child woke from nap the child remembered the incident noting the child's papa would be mad and would call the cops. At least one staff told Rhonda about this incident right away. Rhonda stated she would talk to staff Linda. Another staff stated she did not witness the incident but did hear about. Several other staff interviewed who did not witness this incident but had heard about it talked about general concerns regarding Linda's observed or overheard interactions with the children at times. Staff report hearing Linda say inappropriate things to the children. Staff state also that Linda just does not talk nicely to the children, and her tone of voice can be very nasty and negative. Staff state the parents have complained about Linda as well. Staff state Linda will also put children in time out at times for much too long. One staff recalls children being placed in time out sometimes so long that they miss out on an entire center time which is a half hour. When asked about this, Linda would state that it was because the child was not responding appropriately to the time out. Staff stated the children tend to respond to Linda better because the children are intimidated by her. Staff also state it is obvious which children are not Linda's favorite children. Other staff interviewed had not seen Linda put her hands on or physically hurt a child. Staff believe they have told Rhonda about these interactions as well, at times, and Rhonda has stated she would talk to Linda. Two staff stated Rhonda does not handle anything.

Director Rhonda was spoken to again after speaking to the group of staff. It was noted that now Rhonda stated that she did talk to Linda about the incident even though previously she had stated she did not recall any specifics. Rhonda stated Linda denied grabbing the child's ear. Rhonda stated she did not think Linda would do something like that.

On 9/11/13 staff Linda was interviewed with Rhonda present. Linda recalled the incident and stated she did grab the child's ear, but this was because the child had a bug on the child's ear, and she wanted to get the bug off. When asked what was happening at the time, Linda stated the child was standing in the doorway area of the two's area and was poking her group of children with Legos while her group were near the bench in the hallway using the restroom area there. Linda stated she told this child to back to the two's room. She stated the child then got mad and threw a Lego. She stated it was at that time that she noticed the child had something on the child's ear. She stated she grabbed the ear to remove it and at the same time the child pulled away. She stated the child cried out. She added that the child had already been crying and whining. Linda stated a staff in the two year old room became upset with her and told her not to touch the kids. Linda stated it was a knot that was on the child's ear. She stated she caught it with her fingers. She stated she did not show any other staff that she had actually caught the bug from the child's ear. Linda stated there were two staff in the two year old area and a staff in the kitchen who may have seen the incident. Linda denied having any problems with this particular child and stated she does have the opportunity to interact with this child regularly as she is the person who opens the center and has this child in the early morning. This child is now three so the child is no longer in the two year old room. Linda stated she loves her job especially when the parents compliment her. She denied feeling any level of burnout or frustration. She stated if she gets stressed, she takes a bathroom break, and Rhonda and staff are able to accommodate this kind of thing for each other.

Special Notes and Action Required:

Several staff were interviewed independently for this complaint, and there is a preponderance of evidence to suggest that there have been some concerning behaviors/interactions for staff Linda with the children as witnessed by several staff. The center director also confirmed that she has had conversations with staff Linda about improving her verbal interactions with the children.

The center director shall seek out additional training, possibly the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), for staff Linda (and any other staff that may benefit from this training). The director may contact the local CCRR to schedule this training and to investigate any other trainings that may be relevant to help improve staff Linda's interactions with the children and to ensure those interactions are positive and are age appropriate. The center director shall submit a written plan demonstrating that these recommendations are being followed through within 30 days of receipt of this report. The written plan shall also indicate how the director will be responsible for providing additional guidance and supervision to ensure that the quality of interactions between the staff Linda and children are being monitored and have shown significant improvement as a result of the additional training and guidance.

Heidi Hungate, MSW
DHS Child Care Licensing Consultant

Consultant's Signature:



Date:

09/26/2013