

Department of Health and Human Services

**OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**SOME LOUISIANA CHILD DAY CARE
CENTERS DID NOT ALWAYS COMPLY
WITH STATE HEALTH AND SAFETY
LICENSING REQUIREMENTS**

*Inquiries about this report may be addressed to the Office of Public Affairs at
Public.Affairs@oig.hhs.gov.*



Gloria L. Jarmon
Deputy Inspector General
for Audit Services

August 2014
A-06-13-00036

Office of Inspector General

<https://oig.hhs.gov>

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The designation of financial or management practices as questionable, a recommendation for the disallowance of costs incurred or claimed, and any other conclusions and recommendations in this report represent the findings and opinions of OAS. Authorized officials of the HHS operating divisions will make final determination on these matters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We determined that all four providers that we reviewed did not always comply with applicable State licensing requirements to ensure the health and safety of children.

WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

The Administration for Children and Families provides Federal grants through several programs, including Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). In a recent report summarizing the results of 24 audits of Head Start grantees, we described multiple health and safety issues that put children at risk. To determine whether similar health and safety risks exist at childcare providers that received CCDF funding, we audited four licensed child day care centers (providers) that received CCDF funding in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana. We conducted this review in conjunction with our review of 20 family day care homes (report number A-06-13-00037).

The objective of this review was to determine whether the Department of Children and Family Services' (State agency) monitoring ensured that providers that received CCDF funds complied with State licensing requirements related to the health and safety of children.

BACKGROUND

The CCDF (authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act and the Social Security Act, section 418) assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and families transitioning from public assistance to obtain childcare so that they may work or obtain training or education. Combined funding for the CCDF program for fiscal year 2012, including the block grant's discretionary fund and the CCDF mandatory and matching funds, was approximately \$5.2 billion.

The State agency is the lead agency and sponsor of the Child Care Assistance Program, which helps low- to moderate-income families in Louisiana pay for childcare. Parents may select a provider that satisfies the applicable State and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements.

As the lead agency, the State agency must monitor licensed providers. According to the *Child Care and Development Fund Plan for Louisiana FFY [Federal fiscal year] 2012 – 2013*, the State agency is responsible for childcare licensing and enforcement personnel, who conduct inspections to ensure that providers meet basic health and safety standards. State regulations require the State licensing agency to conduct unannounced inspections of providers at regular intervals not to exceed 1 year.

WHAT WE FOUND

Although the State agency conducted the required onsite monitoring at all four of the providers that we reviewed, it did not ensure that providers that received CCDF funds complied with State

licensing requirements related to the health and safety of children. We determined that all four providers did not comply with one or more State licensing requirements to ensure the health and safety of children. Specifically, we found that the four providers did not always comply with State licensing requirements related to physical conditions, and one of the providers did not comply with all of the required criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry check requirements. In addition, one provider exceeded the allowable child-to-staff ratio.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

We recommend that the State agency:

- require providers to complete specific training requirements related to health and safety regulations and
- ensure that all providers' employees who provide direct services to children have had criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry checks.

STATE AGENCY COMMENTS

In written comments on our draft report, the State agency described actions that it had taken to address our findings. The State agency said that it had conducted followup visits to providers and that the providers had corrected all deficiencies identified in our report. In addition, the State agency said that it is not in a position to implement our recommendations because the State is currently transitioning authority over CCDF to another State department. However, the State agency said that it would share the recommendations with the succeeding department.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides Federal grants through several programs, including Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). In a recent report summarizing the results of 24 audits of Head Start grantees,¹ we described multiple health and safety issues that put children at risk. To determine whether similar health and safety risks exist at childcare providers that received CCDF funding, we audited four licensed child day care centers² (providers) that received CCDF funding in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana. We conducted this review in conjunction with our review of 20 family day care homes (report number A-06-13-00037).

OBJECTIVE

Our objective was to determine whether the Department of Children and Family Services' (State agency) monitoring ensured that providers that received CCDF funds complied with State licensing requirements related to the health and safety of children.

BACKGROUND

Authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act (42 U.S.C. § 9858 et seq.) and section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 618), the CCDF assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and families transitioning from public assistance to obtain childcare so that they may work or obtain training or education. Combined funding for the CCDF program for fiscal year 2012, including the block grant's discretionary fund and the CCDF mandatory and matching funds, was approximately \$5.2 billion.

The CCDBG Act and implementing Federal regulations require the State to maintain a plan that certifies that the State has requirements in State or local law to protect the health and safety of children, and the plan must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that childcare providers comply with these requirements.³ In addition, Federal regulations require States to designate a lead agency to administer the CCDF program (45 CFR § 98.10).

¹ *Review of 24 Head Start Grantees' Compliance With Health and Safety Requirements* (A-01-11-02503, issued December 13, 2011).

² We limited our review to Class A child day care facilities. Louisiana law defines a child day care facility as an individual or entity responsible for providing care to seven or more children not related to the caregiver, unaccompanied by parent or guardian, on a regular basis for at least 12.5 hours in a continuous 7 day week (Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC) 67:III.7302(A)(1)). To be eligible to receive State or Federal funding, including CCDF payments, child day care facilities licensed by the State agency must be licensed as Class A (*Child Care and Development Fund Plan for Louisiana FFY [Federal fiscal year] 2012 – 2013*, § 2.7.9).

³ 42 U.S.C. §§ 9858c(c)(2)(F) and (G) and 45 CFR §§ 98.15(b)(5) and (6).

Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §§ 98.11(b)(4) and (6) state that in retaining overall responsibility for the administration of the program, the lead agency must ensure that the program complies with the approved Plan and all Federal requirements and must monitor programs and services.

Louisiana Childcare Services

The State agency is the lead agency and sponsor of the Child Care Assistance Program, which helps low- to moderate-income families in Louisiana pay for childcare. Parents may select a childcare provider that satisfies the applicable State and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements.

As the lead agency, the State agency must monitor licensed providers. According to the *Child Care and Development Fund Plan for Louisiana FFY 2012 – 2013*, the State agency is responsible for childcare licensing and enforcement personnel, who conduct inspections to ensure that providers meet basic health and safety standards. State regulations require the State agency to conduct unannounced inspections of providers at regular intervals not to exceed 1 year (LAC 67:III.7207(C)(1)).

Child Care Aware of America

Child Care Aware of America (CCAA) published a 2013 update, *We Can Do Better*, that reviewed and ranked State childcare center regulations and oversight.⁴ CCAA stated that effective monitoring policies are important for child safety and center accountability for compliance with State licensing requirements. CCAA added that making inspection reports public is an important form of consumer education because parents cannot make informed selections among childcare settings without having access to compliance information. Otherwise, they assume that a State license is a seal of approval. CCAA also suggested that with the important role effective monitoring plays in promoting child safety and programs' compliance with licensing requirements, the number of programs that each licensing inspector covers needs to be reduced, not increased.

Administration for Children and Families Proposed Regulations

ACF recently proposed amending current CCDF regulations to improve childcare health, safety, and quality.⁵ The proposed changes include a requirement that State lead agencies perform an initial onsite monitoring visit and at least one annual unannounced onsite visit of providers that have received CCDF subsidies. The proposal also requires providers responsible for the health and safety of children to receive specific and basic training commensurate with their professional responsibilities. In addition, ACF stated that it strongly encourages lead agencies to establish requirements for ongoing training.

⁴ CCAA works with more than 600 State and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies nationwide. CCAA leads projects that increase the quality and availability of childcare professionals, undertakes research, and advocates childcare policies that positively impact the lives of children and families.

⁵ 78 Fed. Reg. 29441 (May 20, 2013).

HOW WE CONDUCTED THIS REVIEW

We selected 4 of the 99 Class A providers in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana, that had a one-star rating⁶ and received CCDF funding on April 30, 2013. We conducted unannounced site visits at the four providers from June 17 through 19, 2013.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix A contains the details of our audit scope and methodology, Appendix B contains details on the Federal regulations and State licensing health and safety requirements that pertain to providers, and Appendix C contains photographic examples of noncompliance with physical conditions requirements.

FINDINGS

Although the State agency conducted the required onsite monitoring at all four of the providers that we reviewed, it did not ensure that providers that received CCDF funds complied with State licensing requirements related to the health and safety of children. We determined that all four providers did not comply with one or more State licensing requirements to ensure the health and safety of children. Specifically, we found that the four providers did not always comply with State licensing requirements related to physical conditions, and one of the providers did not comply with all of the required criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry checks. In addition, one provider exceeded the allowable child-to-staff ratio.

PROVIDERS DID NOT ALWAYS COMPLY WITH PHYSICAL CONDITIONS REQUIREMENTS

State Requirements

A prospective provider applies for a child day care center license by completing, signing, and submitting to the State licensing agency an application to obtain a child day care center license.⁷ The application includes an acknowledgment that the applicant has read the State licensing regulations, agrees to abide by them, and will allow full unannounced inspections by the State licensing agency's staff. State licensing regulations include the following requirements related to the physical conditions at the providers:

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications, poisons, cleaning supplies, harmful chemicals, equipment, tools, and any substance with a warning label stating that it is

⁶ A rating of one star indicates that a center has a license in good standing and no outstanding deficiencies.

⁷ Louisiana's *Day Care Licensing Class A Child Day Care Center Licensing Standards & Regulations* (State licensing regulations), LAC 67:III.73.

harmful or that it should be kept out of the reach of children must be locked away from and inaccessible to children (LAC 67:III.7327(A)).

- Unused electrical outlets must be protected by a safety plug (LAC 67:III.7327(G)).
- Strings and cords (such as those found on window coverings) must not be within the reach of children (LAC 67:III.7327(H)).
- The center and yard must be clean and free from hazards (LAC 67:III.7327(L)).
- Outdoor space must be enclosed with a fence or other barrier to protect the children from traffic hazards, to prevent the children from leaving the premises without proper supervision, and to prevent contact with animals or unauthorized persons (LAC 67:III.7323(B)(3)).
- Crawl spaces and mechanical, electrical, or other hazardous equipment must be made inaccessible to children (LAC 67:III.7323(B)(4)).

Appendix B contains all relevant State licensing regulations.

Providers Did Not Comply With Physical Conditions Requirements

All four providers that we reviewed had one or more instances of noncompliance with requirements to protect children from potentially hazardous conditions. Examples of noncompliance included:

- chemicals accessible to children (Appendix C, photograph 1),
- unused electrical outlets that were not protected by safety plugs (Appendix C, photograph 2),
- exposed cords accessible to children (Appendix C, photograph 3),
- a knife in a kitchen sink accessible to children (Appendix C, photograph 4),
- a stove that was on and left uncovered and unattended while an employee ran water on the other side of the kitchen (Appendix C, photograph 5),
- frayed carpet on stairs that posed a tripping hazard to children (Appendix C, photograph 6), and
- a highchair with a missing connecting strap to secure a child (Appendix C, photograph 7).

In addition, we found that two providers did not keep playground areas free from hazards, such as:

- exposed nails in the play area (Appendix C, photograph 8);
- exposed lining in the play area, which posed a tripping hazard (Appendix C, photograph 9);
- a playground fence with a hole large enough for a child to pass through and leave the play area (Appendix C, photograph 10); and
- a building's crawl space that was accessible to children.

ONE PROVIDER DID NOT ALWAYS COMPLY WITH REQUIRED CRIMINAL RECORDS AND CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REGISTRY CHECKS

State Requirements

Louisiana requires documentation of a satisfactory criminal record clearance for all staff, including all owners and operators. In addition, the regulations require that employee files include a disclosure form noting that no justified finding of abuse and/or neglect was found (LAC 67:III.7303(A)(2)(g)(xi) and (xii)).

For independent contractors, including therapeutic professionals and extracurricular personnel, providers must keep on file documentation of a satisfactory criminal record check from the Louisiana State Police as required by Revised Statutes (R.S.) 46:51.2. This check must be obtained before the individual being present in the childcare facility or providing services for the childcare facility (LAC 67:III.7311(B)(1)).

One Provider Did Not Comply With Required Criminal Records and Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Checks

Two individuals at one center did not have the required background checks before beginning work in the center. Specifically:

- one employee lacked a criminal records check and
- one speech pathologist lacked criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry checks.

ONE PROVIDER DID NOT ALWAYS COMPLY WITH THE ALLOWABLE CHILD-TO-STAFF RATIO

State Requirements

When a mixed-age group includes children under age 2, the age of the youngest child determines the child-to-staff ratio for the group. The allowable ratio for a group of children that includes a child under age 2 but at least 1 year is seven children for each staff member. The allowable ratio

for a group of children that includes a child under 12 months is five to each staff member (LAC 67:III.7315(A)).

One Provider Did Not Comply With the Allowable Child-to-Staff Ratio

One provider did not comply with the allowable child-to-staff ratio. During our onsite visit, we observed a staff member who was responsible for supervising 14 children of mixed ages, including children under age 2.

CAUSE OF NONCOMPLIANCE

The noncompliance with State requirements occurred because the State agency did not have procedures in place to ensure that providers received adequate training on health and safety requirements. Though the State agency performed inspections as required, providers had instances of noncompliance. These instances of noncompliance with health and safety requirements indicate that additional measures need to be taken to ensure that providers clearly understand what is required to safeguard and protect the children in their care. In accordance with ACF's proposed regulations, providers responsible for the health and safety of children are to receive specific and basic training commensurate with their professional responsibilities. In addition, ACF stated that it strongly encourages lead agencies to establish requirements for ongoing training. State regulations require staff to obtain 12 hours of training per year in job-related subject areas.⁸ Implementation of specific training related to health and safety regulations would reduce noncompliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the State agency:

- require providers to complete specific training requirements related to health and safety regulations and
- ensure that all providers' employees who provide direct services to children have had criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry checks.

STATE AGENCY COMMENTS

In written comments on our draft report, the State agency described actions that it had taken to address our findings. The State agency said that it had conducted followup visits to providers and that the providers had corrected all deficiencies identified in our report. In addition, the State agency said that it is not in a position to implement our recommendations because the State is currently transitioning authority over CCDF to another State department. However, the State agency said that it would share the recommendations with the succeeding department.

⁸ LAC 67:III.7312(D).

APPENDIX A: AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

SCOPE

From a list of 99 Class A providers in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana, that had a one-star rating and received CCDF funding on April 30, 2013,⁹ we selected 4 providers for our review. We conducted a review of the providers' records and facilities.

To gain an understanding of the State agency's operations regarding childcare providers, we limited our review to the State agency's internal controls as they related to our objective.

We conducted fieldwork at two providers in Baton Rouge and two in New Orleans. We conducted these unannounced site visits from June 17 to 19, 2013.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish our objective, we:

- reviewed applicable Federal laws, State statutes, and regulations for licensing providers and the most recent Louisiana CCDF State plan approved by ACF;
- interviewed the CCDF program manager to determine how Louisiana monitored providers;
- obtained from the State agency a letter that explained our audit to providers;
- interviewed the Louisiana Director of Child Care Licensing regarding licensing requirements for providers;
- developed a health and safety checklist as a guide for conducting site visits;
- conducted unannounced site visits at the four providers we selected for review;
- interviewed providers to obtain a listing of center employees whose salaries were funded by CCDF (and who had direct access to children) to determine whether all required criminal history records checks were conducted; and
- discussed the results of our review with each of the providers, State licensing officials, and State agency officials.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions

⁹ At the time of our data request, April 30, 2013, was the date of the latest payments to providers. We used the latest payment date to ensure that providers we reviewed were active in the CCDF program.

based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

APPENDIX B: FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND STATE PLAN

One of the goals of CCDF is to assist States in implementing the health, safety, licensing, and registration standards established in State regulations (45 CFR § 98.1(a)(5)).

The lead agency must certify that there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the lead agency), under State or local (or tribal) law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to childcare providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the CCDF (45 CFR § 98.15(b)(5)).

The lead agency, in retaining overall responsibility for the administration of the program, must ensure that the program complies with the approved Plan and all Federal requirements and must monitor programs and services (45 CFR §§ 98.11(b)(4) and (6)).

The CCDF Plan for Louisiana requires the State licensing agency to conduct inspections to ensure that providers meet basic health and safety requirements. The State licensing agency is the State agency responsible for licensing providers (*Child Care and Development Fund Plan for Louisiana FFY 2012 – 2013*, § 3.1).

The CCDF Plan allows CCDF payments to Class A centers, Class M (military childcare centers), school-based childcare programs, registered family child day care homes, and certified in-home childcare (*Child Care and Development Fund Plan for Louisiana FFY 2012 – 2013*, § 2.7.9).

STATE STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

Louisiana Administrative Code

Louisiana's Statutes and Regulations for Licensing Class A Child Care Centers are in chapter 73, subchapter A. Within the State licensing regulations, we used the sections listed below to identify the instances of noncompliance.

Criminal Record Check

Section 7311(A)(5) – Criminal Record Check

For each paid and nonpaid staff person, providers must maintain a record that includes documentation of a satisfactory criminal record check from Louisiana State Police as required by R.S. 46:51.2. This check must be obtained before the individual begins work in the childcare facility.

Section 7311(B)(1) – Criminal Record Check

For independent contractors, including therapeutic professionals and extracurricular personnel, providers must keep on file documentation of a satisfactory criminal record check from the

Louisiana State Police as required by R.S. 46:51.2. This check must be obtained before the individual begins work in the childcare facility.

Physical Environment

Louisiana's licensing regulations state that the licensing agency must adopt regulations to ensure that child day care centers meet the health, educational, and social needs of children utilizing such homes.

Section 7327 – Safety Requirements

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications, poisons, cleaning supplies, harmful chemicals, equipment, tools, and any substance with a warning label stating that it is harmful or that it should be kept out of the reach of children must be locked away from and inaccessible to children. Whether a cabinet or an entire room, the storage area must be locked.
- Unused electrical outlets must be protected by a safety plug cover.
- Strings and cords (such as those found on window coverings) must not be within the reach of children.
- The center and yard must be clean and free from hazards.
- The provider must prohibit the use of alcohol and tobacco and the use or possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, fireworks, firearms, and pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) on the childcare premises. This notice must be posted.

Section 7323 – Physical Environment

- The outdoor play space must be enclosed with a fence or other barrier to protect the children from traffic hazards, to prevent the children from leaving the premises without proper supervision, and to prevent contact with animals or unauthorized persons.
- Crawl spaces and mechanical, electrical, and other hazardous equipment must be made inaccessible to children.

Section 7315 – Required Child/Staff Ratios

Child-to-staff ratios are established to ensure the safety of all children. Only those staff members directly involved in childcare and supervision may be considered in assessing child-to-staff ratios. Child-to-staff ratios must be met at all times, and the number of children supervised by one staff member must not exceed the ratios shown below. In addition, a minimum of two childcare staff members must be present during hours of operation when children are present.

Table: Required Child-Staff Ratios

Child-Staff Ratio	
Ages of Children	Ratio
Infants under 12 months	5:1
1 year old	7:1
2 years old	11:1
3 years old	13:1
4 years old	15:1
5 years old	19:1
6 years old and up	23:1

An average of the child-to-staff ratio may be applied to mixed groups of children that are 2, 3, 4, and 5 years old. Ratios for children under 2 or over 5 years old are excluded from averaging. When a mixed group includes children less than 2 years old, the age of the youngest child determines the ratio for the group to which the youngest child is assigned. When a mixed group includes children both older and younger than 6 years old and older, the ages of the children less than 6 years old determine the ratio for the group.

Department Access and Unannounced Inspections

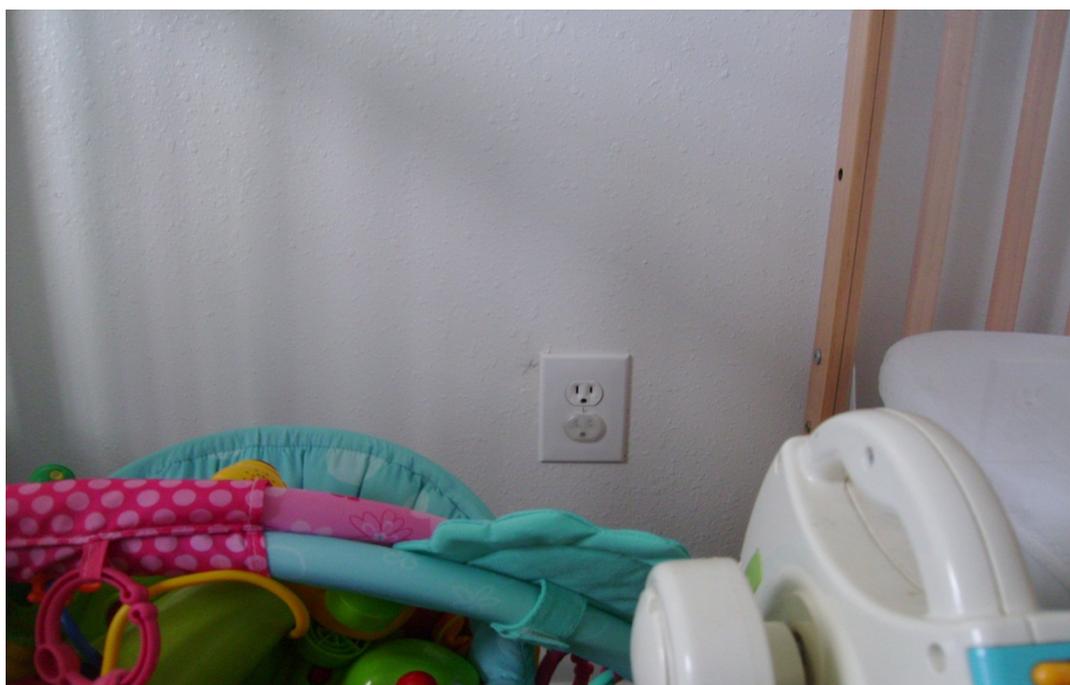
Section 7302 – Inspections

The Department of Social Services, through its duly authorized agents, must inspect at regular intervals, not to exceed 1 year or as deemed necessary by the department and without previous notice, all childcare facilities and child-placing agencies.

APPENDIX C: PHOTOGRAPHIC EXAMPLES OF NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PHYSICAL CONDITIONS REQUIREMENTS



Photograph 1: Chemicals stored in an unlocked cabinet accessible to children.



Photograph 2: Unused electrical outlet not covered with a safety plug.



Photograph 3: Exposed cords accessible and within reach of children.



Photograph 4: A knife in a kitchen sink accessible to children.



Photograph 5: A stove burner turned on and left uncovered and unattended while an employee was on the other side of the kitchen.



Photograph 6: Frayed carpet on the stairs posed a tripping hazard.



Photograph 7: A highchair had a missing connecting strap to secure a child.



Photograph 8: Exposed nails in an outdoor play area.



Photograph 9: Exposed playground lining posed a tripping hazard.



Photograph 10: A hole in the fence in the playground area left the area unsecure.

APPENDIX D: STATE AGENCY COMMENTS



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Bobby Jindal, Governor
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July 3, 2014

Patricia Wheeler
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Austin, Texas 78754
Attn.: Sylvie Witten, Audit Manager

RE: Office of Inspector General – Draft Report A-06-13-00036

Dear Ms. Wheeler:

The safety and well-being of children is our highest priority at the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). DCFS is committed to working with stakeholders to ensure Child Day Care Centers licensed by the State, including those receiving Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) resources are providing healthy and safe environments for children in their care. Providers are expected to comply with all licensing requirements and the department monitors their efforts through contracts with local resource and referral agencies as well as by way of site visits conducted by DCFS staff. State Law requires one unannounced visit per year per provider and investigation of all complaints however DCFS typically conducts more on-site monitoring than this minimum.

Over the last several years, the early childhood system in Louisiana has undertaken significant reforms. Legislation was enacted during the most recent legislative session which will further streamline early childhood learning services and transition child care licensing authority and management of CCDF from DCFS to the Louisiana Department of Education. With this transition of authority and required implementation between now and July 1, 2015; DCFS is not positioned to implement expanded monitoring recommendations regarding Child Day Care Centers policies and procedures at this time. These recommendations however, will be shared with the Louisiana Department of Education.

With regard to the specific findings proposed in your draft report; I offer the following comments:

Providers Did Not Always Comply With Physical Conditions Requirements

DCFS Licensing Specialists inspect the buildings and playgrounds of each facility they visit at every visit. When hazardous conditions are observed during the visit, deficiencies are cited. The expectation of DCFS is that providers will monitor the buildings and playgrounds that make up their facilities and, if any hazardous conditions are observed, the providers will immediately repair, replace or remove the hazardous conditions. The conditions cited may indeed have been observed by DHHS-OIG auditors during their June 17-19, 2013 site visits. However, subsequently each of the four providers cited in this audit were revisited by our Licensing Specialists - #15562 on July 8, 2013, #15434 on August 15, 2013, #15331 on August 15, 2013 and #15654 on November 22, 2013. At each of these visits, it was noted that the hazardous conditions observed by the auditors had been rectified and were no longer hazardous. No new hazardous conditions were observed.

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One Provider Did Not Always Comply With Required Criminal Records And Child Abuse And Neglect Registry Checks

DCFS agrees that on June 17-19, 2013 the referenced documents may not have been available on-site for review. Criminal background clearances and child abuse/neglect Registry Checks are reviewed at every visit the Licensing Specialist conducts with each provider. The provider cited for failing to meet the criminal background clearance and child abuse/neglect registry checks in this audit (#15331) was revisited on August 15, 2013. Documents were on file at the center for all staff and extra-curricular staff at this visit.

One Provider Did Not Always Comply With The Allowable Child-To-Staff Ratio

The Child Day Care Minimum Standards require that child-to-staff ratios be met at all times. DCFS Licensing Specialists review this regulation with each provider at every visit conducted. The provider cited for failing to meet child-to-staff ratio in this audit (#15562) was re-visited on July 8, 2013. The provider was found to be in compliance with the child-to-staff ratios at this visit.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the Office of the Inspector General regarding this audit. Documentation of the current status of the items discussed herein is available for review at your request. We await the opportunity to further discuss our response to this preliminary report or to provide additional information regarding any potential findings discussed. Please contact Bridget Depland, Interim BACS Director, at 225-342-1043 or bridget.depland.dcf@la.gov as needed to continue this work.

Sincerely,



Suzy Sonnier
Secretary

cc: Lisa Andry, Assistant Deputy Secretary – Programs
Sharon Tucker, Deputy Secretary – Operations
Sandra Broussard, Assistant Deputy Secretary – Operations
Etta Harris, Undersecretary
Kaaren Hebert, Policy Advisor
Charlie Dirks, Executive Counsel
Tia Embaugh, Chief of Staff and Director, Bureau of Communications & Governmental Affairs
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