



Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, 670 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Phone: (404) 657-5562 WWW.DECAL.GA.GOV

Date: 1/5/2023 VisitType: Complaint Closure from
visit on 11/28/2022

CCLC-1921

Special Investigations Unit Sr.
Specialist

Easter Seals West Georgia, Inc.

Tomekia Sherman

2515 Double Churches Road Columbus, GA 31909 Muscogee County
(706) 660-1144 sharon@eastersealswga.org

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Mailing Address
P.O. Box 1690
Fortson, GA 31808

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Table with 3 columns: Date, Description, Status. Rows include 01/05/2023 Complaint Closure Good Standing, 12/19/2022 Monitoring Visit Good Standing, 11/28/2022 Complaint Investigation Follow Up Good Standing.

Compliance Zone Designation - A summary measure of a program's 12 month monitoring history, as it pertains to child care health and safety rules. The three compliance zones are good standing, support, and deficient.

- Good Standing - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.
Support - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules.
Deficient - Program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.

Comments

Investigative findings were not concluded on this date.

Advisement of Potential for Repeated Rule Violations during Pending Investigations

This report shall serve as official notice of potential rule violations. These potential rule violations have been detailed in this report and discussed with you by the consultant. The department shall conduct a thorough investigation to determine if in fact the alleged rule violation(s) should or should not be substantiated.

Further, from time to time the department discovers additional rule violations during the course of an investigation. If there are new rule violation(s), your consultant shall inform you of the violation(s) as soon as possible.

All rule violations found in relation to a complaint or incident investigation will be associated with the date the investigation was closed.



Please refer to the website, http://www.decals.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx, for information regarding October 1, 2018 rule changes about Criminal Records Checks that may affect your facility.

- New records checks will be required to be completed if a staff member experiences a six month break in service from the child care industry
New clearance is required at least once every five years
Any staff member solely responsible for supervising children will be required to have completed a comprehensive background clearance
All staff members are required to have completed at least a national fingerprint based clearance check
Any staff member with only the national fingerprint based clearance, must be under constant and direct supervision of a staff member with a satisfactory comprehensive records check clearance
Facilities are required to use DECAL KOALA for Criminal Records Checks, including to verify portability of an employee

O.C.G.A. Section 42.1.12(i)(2) requires Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to notify licensed child care programs on accessing and retrieving from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's (GBI) website a list of the names and addresses of all registered sexual offenders. Please see GBI's website located at <http://gbi.georgia.gov> to access the Georgia Sex Offender Registry.

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Refutation Process:

You have the right to refute any of the citations noted in this report with which you disagree. To refute a citation(s), e-mail the following information to [CCSRefutations@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:CCSRefutations@dec.al.ga.gov).

- 1) Facility name, license number and visit date
- 2) Your name, title/relationship to the facility, e-mail address & up to two phone number(s) where you can be reached
- 3) Specific rule number(s) that you are refuting, along with your concerns or questions regarding the rule citation

Refutations must be submitted to Child Care Services (CCS) within 10 business days of the completion date.

A sample form for submitting a refutation can be found at: <http://dec.al.ga.gov/ChildCareServices/RefutationInformation.aspx>

Your refutation will be forwarded to the appropriate CCS manager, who will follow up with you about your concerns. If you have any questions about this process, contact our office at 404-657-5562.

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Bright from the Start recommends that all licensed child care providers carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect its clients. If you do not have this liability insurance, you are required to post a notice with ½ inch letters in a conspicuous location in the program, notify the parent or guardian of each child in care in writing, obtain their signature to acknowledge receipt and maintain this written acknowledgment on file at the program at all times while the child attends the program and for 12 months after the child's last date of attendance. (O.C.G.A. Section 20-1A-4)

I have read and understand the Rules and Regulations for Child Care Learning Centers, 591-1-1. I acknowledge that the items noted in this report have been discussed with me and I have agreed to a Plan of Improvement (POI) as indicated in this report. I understand that correction of these deficiencies, while required, will not necessarily prevent DECAL from taking adverse action against this facility. I understand that if I disagree with any of the deficiencies cited, I have the right to refute them on this report or any other form that I choose to send to Child Care Services.

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Sharon Borger, Program Official

Date

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Tomekia Sherman, Special Investigations Unit Sr.  
Specialist

Date



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**Summary Report**

**Date:** 1/5/2023 **VisitType:** Complaint Closure from visit on 11/28/2022

**CCLC-1921**

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**The following information is associated with a Complaint Closure:**

**Safety**

**591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR)**

**Not Met**

**Finding Associated with Complaint**

591-1-1-.11(2) requires that Personnel not: physically or sexually abuse a child or engage or permit others to engage in sexually overt conduct in the presence of any child enrolled in the Center; inflict corporal/physical punishment upon a child; shake, jerk, pinch or handle a child roughly; verbally abuse or humiliate a child which includes, but is not limited to, the use of threats, profanity or belittling remarks about a child or his family; isolate a child in a dark room, closet or unsupervised area; use mechanical or physical restraints or devices to discipline children; use medication to discipline or control children's behavior without written medical authorization issued by a licensed professional and given with the parent's written consent; restrict unreasonably a child from going to the bathroom; punish toileting accidents; force-feed a child or withhold feeding a child regularly scheduled meals and/or snacks; force or withhold naps; allow children to discipline or humiliate other children; or confine a child for disciplinary purposes to a swing, highchair, infant carrier, walker or jump seat. It was determined that on November 17, 2022, a four-year-old child sustained a knot to the top of the head when the child was pushed down by center staff. It was further reported that the child was observed to vomit once. The same day administrator staff viewed the video footage and terminated the staff member. The teacher was also arrested for child cruelty. Professional medical attention was obtained for the child.

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**Correction Deadline: 1/16/2023**

**Staff Records**

**Finding Associated with Complaint**

591-1-1-.31(13) prohibits Center Staff from committing any criminal act, as defined under Georgia law, in the presence of any child enrolled in the Center and requires Center staff to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. It was determined that on November 17, 2022, a four-year-old child sustained a knot to the top of the head when the child was pushed down by center staff. The same day administrator staff viewed the video footage and terminated the staff member. The teacher was also arrested for child cruelty.

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**Correction Deadline: 6/22/2023**