



January 12, 2011

name
address
city, state, zip

Dear name:

We are writing to you to let you know that on Monday, January 3, 2011, the first day after winter break and the first day of the new session of the program, fourteen third through fifth grade students were left unattended for six minutes during the Burlington Kids program at Flynn. No one was hurt. This incident is in complete violation of our own Burlington Kids policies and procedures, as well as the state licensing regulations that govern after school child care programs. Licensing Field Specialists from the Vermont Department of Human Services, Child Development Division conducted a field visit to review our compliance with the State's Licensed School Aged Care regulations on that particular day and witnessed this lack of supervision and brought it to our attention as well as other, less serious licensing violations that occurred that day. We received written communication about the licensing visit findings on the 6th.

This incident is considered to be two serious licensing violations by the State, because there were fourteen, rather than thirteen, children in the group that was left unattended by a single staff member. In order to comply with State regulations and our own policies and procedures, the maximum number of children from age five to twelve allowed under the supervision of one staff member is thirteen. The complete Field Visit Report, in addition to a required Parental Notification Letter, is included in this mailing. Other violations are also described in the report.

Since the safety of your children is the top priority of our after school program, Burlington Kids is taking this violation very seriously, and want to let you know what we are doing to address it, and ask for your feedback and input.

- The Flynn Site Leader, Sarah Austin, has submitted her letter of resignation. We are working closely with her to set in place a new leadership structure and make other staffing changes to better assure proper supervision at all times.
- BSD's Lead Site Coordinator, Nina Mazuzan, who has six years of experience overseeing child care programs, will provide additional on-site support at the Flynn after school program in coordination with Sarah during the transition period.
- We have increased the hours of the position of Maisie Wormser, the assistant site director, to full time for the foreseeable future.

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and the Burlington School District.*

- We are recruiting additional high quality staff to better support the program as a whole, and are continuing to re-align existing staff to assure adequate supervision at all times. Our plan is to increase staffing during core program time by adding team leaders for the first and second grade group that meets in the stage gym and for the third through fifth grade group that meets in the big gym. This approach matches our successful strategy for supervising our kindergarten group.
- Staff training has intensified as a result of this violation to remind all staff of the basic policies and procedures that must be followed at all times. Sarah and the staff at Flynn participated in a pilot of the Youth Program Quality Assessment, a nationally recognized program evaluation tool that focuses on the interactions between staff and participants to identify staff training needs and increase participant engagement in the program. Based on this assessment, conducted this fall, we have begun implementing a positive behavior support system to reward students who model safe and respectful behavior. We also identified a need for additional staff training to engage all participants during core time each day. Professional development on January 17 will focus on training all staff members in the knowledge and skills they need to provide positive behavior support for all participants.
- This plan will continue to be strengthened moving forward.

Given these concerns and our plans, we would like to give you several opportunities to talk with us. You can call or email any of us at the numbers below. You are invited to attend a parents' meeting designed to answer your questions and gather your input as we continue to work to address this issue and increase excellent programming for all students. We have scheduled this meeting for Monday, January 24 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm at JJ Flynn. **We ask that any negative comments about this incident NOT be directed to Sarah, as she has worked incredibly hard throughout the year to build a high quality program, and this violation occurred despite her very best efforts.**

As you can imagine, we write this letter with heavy hearts. We felt strongly, however, that the best course of action is to address this failing as quickly and openly as possible. Thank you for your understanding and your continued support of this program.

Sincerely,



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