

# A day-care license doesn't ensure quality

For a related editorial comment, see Page 14A.

By Bill Kote  
staff writer

The license hanging in a day-care home doesn't guarantee that toddlers will be cared for in a clean and loving environment.

In fact, there may be no license there at all — so working parents in Oakland County thinking of putting their children in a day-care home should take a closer look, according to a state Department of Social Services official.

"Having a license does not necessarily mean there won't be problems," Ted deWolf, director of the DSS Child Day Care Licensing Division, said.

DeWolf said Michigan law requires "family" day-care homes for one to six children to be registered with the DSS and "group" day-care homes for seven to 12 children to hold licenses. It's his department's attempt to keep track of such homes and ensure they're following state guidelines for child care.

But the task is complicated, deWolf says, because only 20 percent of home operators bother to comply.

Both family and group day-care homes are inspected by state officials who, make sure there is one worker for every six children and at least 35 square feet of indoor play space per child. DeWolf's staff also requires health records on all workers and a written evacuation plan for emergencies, he said.

STAFF MEMBERS meet with prospective family day care home directors, who must provide three references and sign a statement denying they have a criminal record or an abuse or neglect background. Before issuing certificates of registration, the DSS runs a police check on them "no matter how they fill out the statement," deWolf said.

If an applicant does have a criminal history, registration could be denied.

Within 90 days of registering a family day care home, officials conduct an on-site inspection. The visit is important since certificates are renewed by mail every three years. Chances are slim the home will be among the random 10 percent checked annually.

"That may be the last time we ever get in there," deWolf said, adding that his department investigates all complaints.

The process is more involved for the commercial group day care homes, which require licenses instead of registration certificates. Licenses are renewed every two years after an on-site inspection and a "thorough review" and are also sub-

ject to random visits, deWolf explained.

Most of the 955 day-care homes in Oakland County are family day-care homes. There are an estimated 9,100 registered family day-care homes and 700 licensed group day-care homes in the state, deWolf said. He said some family day care homes are expanding operations and applying for licenses for group status.

Those figures merely represent the tip of a day care iceberg in Michigan, where there could be thousands of unregistered and unlicensed homes.

IF AN unofficial home is discovered, deWolf's staff will notify the owner that the operation is breaking the law and is subject to misdemeanor penalties of up to \$500 in fines and/or 90 days' imprisonment. "That will generally get them to come in for registering," deWolf said, but, if not, the department takes injunctive action to close the home.

The state staff of 35 focuses primarily on the complaints lodged against known child care homes. Last year, the department received about 1,100 complaints.

Parents need to maintain close contact with their child care homes to minimize the incidents of child abuse, deWolf stressed. "Unless the parents really become educated, we won't make a dent in the (sexual abuse) problem," he said.

DeWolf said parents should use

the following checklist as a guide:

- How do workers interact with the children? Spend enough time in the home to determine what the "atmosphere" is like.
- Are the facilities clean and wholesome? Check the sleeping, bathroom and play areas for cleanliness and safety.
- Where are cleaning supplies stored? Are they safely out of the reach of toddlers? Check the kitchen to ensure sharp knives and other utensils are out of reach.
- Are there gates on stairways? Check unused electrical outlets for safety caps.
- What are the outdoor surroundings like? Make sure grounds are free of clutter or junk that could injure a playing child.
- Is there a swimming pool on the property? See that it's secure.
- What is the staff's procedure in case of emergency? Day-care homes are required by state law to have an evacuation plan — ask about it.
- How do workers discipline the children? Take time to see whether discipline is done with care and understanding — or borders on physical or emotional abuse.
- Are babies held in a loving way when fed, or are they "stuck in a crib?"

ings like? Make sure grounds are free of clutter or junk that could injure a playing child.

• Is there a swimming pool on the property? See that it's secure.

• What is the staff's procedure in case of emergency? Day-care homes are required by state law to have an evacuation plan — ask about it.

• How do workers discipline the children? Take time to see whether discipline is done with care and understanding — or borders on physical or emotional abuse.

• Are babies held in a loving way when fed, or are they "stuck in a crib?"

## 3 academy nominees named

U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, has nominated three Farmington-area residents to the service academies.

Farmington High School senior Edward Sudzina, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Sudzina of Farmington Hills, was nominated to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Farmington High School senior John J. Lekovich, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lekovich of Farmington, and North Farmington High School senior Jennifer Rose, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Rowe of Farmington Hills, were nominated to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.

Each representative may have up

to five cadets or midshipmen charged to his or her office's quota in attendance at each service academy at any one time. For each vacancy, 10 nominees may be selected to compete for appointment.

In Broomfield's district, which includes the Farmington area, there are two vacancies to the Military Academy and one to the Naval Academy.

Under the competitive appointment system, which requires appointments to the academies will be made by selection boards at each academy. The academies will continue to announce appointments until May 1.

## Mr. Tile Co.

Do-It-Yourself Headquarters



**Bruce**

**Oak Parquet**

Tongue & Groove

**\$1.49**

sq. ft.  
12"x12"



**White Kitchen & Bath**

**Wall Tile**

**9¢**

each  
O.L.I.

All Trim Available, Too



**Armstrong**

**Linoleum**

**\$3.99**

sq. yd.  
No. 53501



**1"x1" Mosaic Tiles**

**99¢**

sheet  
SK111

**67% OFF**

No Wax, Peel & Stick

**Vinyl Tiles**

Reg. \$1.49 **Now 49¢**

CT1082 CT1040



**Vinyl Cove**

Baseboard Molding

**24¢**

lin. ft.  
FB-2.5

Professional Advice for Do-It-Yourselfers. Experienced Personnel & Professional Installation Available, Commercial or Residential

**Get Your Best Price & Then Call Mr. Tile!**

**NOVI**

Behind Denny's  
Next to 12 Oaks Mall

Mon.-Fri. 9-9; Sat. 9-5

**348-8850**

**REDFORD**

Telegraph Road  
South of W. Chicago

255-0075

# midnight madness sale

Mr. Seymour Perry Ellis • Palizzio Bass • Liz Claiborne Evan Picone Bandolino YSL Westies by 9 West Caressa Garolini Perche Nol Candles

Now is the time to save on a great selection of women's Fall footwear.

Most shoes **35%-70% off** reg. price.

**1 DAY**

Friday, Jan. 30, 10 A.M.-Midnight Only

**20% OFF**

ALL REG. FOOT SHOES

REG. PRICE	110.00
SALE PRICE	88.00
ADDITIONAL	35.00
SALE PRICE	53.00
your price	\$28.00

plus tax

**W. PUT FASHION IN A BOX AND A LID ON PRICES.**

**NUSRALA'S**

**Name Brand Shoes**

31045 ORCHARD LAKE RD.  
FARMINGTON HILLS

Mon.-Sat. 10-9; Sun. 12-5

855-2050

Loehmann's HUNTER'S SQUARE TALLY HALL

Orchard Lake Road at 14 Mile FARMINGTON HILLS

Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday

Until 8 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday

**Pepsi • Diet Pepsi**

**Mountain Dew • Slice**

**Vernors • A&W • Pepsi**

**Free • Diet Vernors • Diet**

**Slice • Diet A&W • Diet**

**Pepsi Free**

8 1/2 Ltr. Btls. **\$2.18** + dep.

2 Ltr. Btl. **\$1.29** + dep.

Good Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 1987

**DISCOUNT POP**

32434 Grand River W. of Powers 477-0479

29460 Ford Rd. W. of Middlebelt 421-9150

2434 Telegraph S. of Michigan 277-3030

16348 Middlebelt N. of E. Mile 421-6870

## GOING SOUTH?

The Perfect Camera For BEACH - WATER - SNOW

The Nikon Action•Touch. Weatherproof. Waterproof. Foolproof.

Features Include:

- Autofocus • Auto-Load
- Auto-Advance and
- Rewind • Auto-Exposure
- Waterproof Down to 10 Feet • Nikon Inc. Limited

Warranty Included

**\$189<sup>95</sup>**

Mfg. List Price \$290<sup>00</sup>

**FREE — Flotation Strap**

When you Purchase your Action Touch

**bel-crest photo**

6698 Orchard Lk. Rd.

(In West Bloomfield Plaza)

**851-5840**

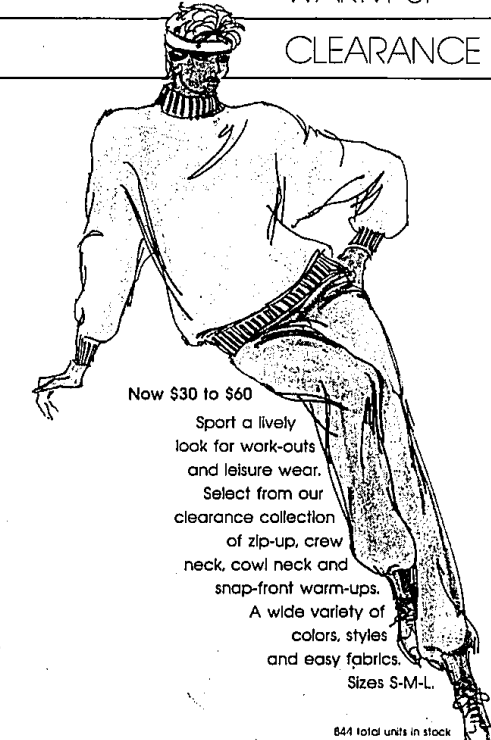


**Nikon**

We take the world's greatest pictures®

WARM-UP

CLEARANCE



Now \$30 to \$60

Sport a lively look for work-outs and leisure wear. Select from our clearance collection of zip-up, crew neck, cowl neck and snap-front warm-ups. A wide variety of colors, styles and easy fabrics. Sizes S-M-L.

644 total units in stock

**Jacobson's**

We welcome Jacobson's Charge Card or The American Express® Card.