



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## CHILD SCARE: NEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT & UNDERCOVER VIDEO EXPOSE ONGOING DANGERS IN CHILD CARE FACILITIES

JEFFREY D. KLEIN November 3, 2016

| ISSUE: **CHILD SAFETY, CHILDREN & FAMILIES, LEGISLATION, VIOLATIONS**

*Senators Jeff Klein, Tony Avella & Democratic Senate Nominee Marisol Alcantara & Advocates Urge Governor Cuomo to Immediately Sign Day Care ‘Report Card’ Bill*

**New York — Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and Democratic Senate Nominee Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan)**, joined by child care advocates, released an alarming investigative report, “The Hidden Dangers in Day Care: A Continuing Investigation into the Safety and Quality of Day Care in New York City,” in a call for Governor Cuomo to sign Senator Klein’s day care report card bill into law.

“It is clear from this report that day cares around the city continue to rack up dangerous violations that put our children at risk. For many parents this information is difficult to find, and as is clear from our undercover video investigation, many day cares will lie or deceive would-be-customers into believing they have no violations. By providing parents with a streamlined report card at the door of day cares we can ensure that parents are able to make smart, informed decisions about where they send their children everyday,” **said Senator Klein.**

“When parents drop their children off at a day care center before work, they have an expectation that their child will be in a safe environment that encourages high quality early

education. There should be no doubt in a parent’s mind that the people they entrusted their child with are providing superior child care. As chair of the New York State Senate’s Children and Families committee I am proud that the IDC is taking the lead in this effort to ensure that every parent in New York City will know the quality of their day care center before leaving their child there,” **said Senator Avella.**

“It’s disturbing, especially as a mother, to see bad actors deceive parents who are looking for safe, clean and reliable day cares for their children. Those who care for our precious little ones must adhere to the highest standards and parents deserve to know the true track records of the day care that they select. We urge Governor Cuomo to sign Senator Klein’s day care report card legislation into law so every parent has the information they need to make an informed decision,” **said Democratic Senate Nominee Alcantara.**

Each year the Independent Democratic Conference analyzes violations in day cares using data available from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Within a year, the city’s 2,244 programs racked up a combined 19,493 violations, for an average of 8.69 violations per program. Brooklyn had the highest total number of violations and the highest average number of violations per program with over 11 per program.

Over the past year, My Little Language School/Mi Pequeña Escuelita in Manhattan accumulated an astounding 74 violations, 12 of which were public health hazards. It crowns the top ten list of day cares that were issued the most violations in a one year period.

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Name of Program</u> | <u>Permit #’s</u> | <u># of Violations Oct. 2015 to Oct. 2016</u> | <u># of Public Health Hazards</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
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|           |   |       |    |    |
|-----------|---|-------|----|----|
| <b>1</b>  | My Little Language School, Mi Pequena Escuelita, Inc. – Manhattan | 8374  | 74 | 12 |
| <b>2</b>  | The New York League for Early Learning, Inc. – Manhattan          | 7341  | 32 | 2  |
| <b>3</b>  | Modern Organization and Human Development Center – Brooklyn       | 93880 | 28 | 12 |
| <b>4</b>  | Yeshiva Adas Yosef Elanda – Brooklyn                              | 55098 | 27 | 6  |
| <b>5</b>  | Loyalty Daycare – Bronx   | 14418 | 26 | 16 |
| <b>6</b>  | Sunshine Infant & Toddler Program – Brooklyn                      | 7597  | 24 | 6  |
| <b>7</b>  | MOHDC Smartstart Pre-K Academy & Learning Center – Brooklyn       | 73020 | 22 | 11 |
| <b>8</b>  | UVP Operating, LLC.– Manhattan                                    | 54540 | 22 | 7  |
| <b>9</b>  | Royal Day Care Center, LLC – Brooklyn                             | 81757 | 21 | 6  |
| <b>10</b> | Preschool of America – Manhattan                                  | 7518  | 21 | 4  |

One disturbing finding was that half of these programs were cited for a failure to conduct necessary background criminal checks on staff in the past year.

IDC investigators also reached out to 116 programs identified as chronic, persistent violators, or those with violations in at least two-thirds of their annual inspections and a minimum of

20 violations on record, via phone and conducted in person visits to some of the worst violators on the list. They asked the programs a number of questions about their past violations and where they could get information about violations. Of the 98 that were reached via phone 50 claimed they had no history of violations, while only 23 provided callers with information on where to view violation history.

Undercover video found staff at programs deceptively claiming they had no past violations and stating there is no way to look up information on violations. In one of the more egregious visits, investigators found staff at the already shuttered Heavenly Miracle Academy Service, Inc. in

Brooklyn waiting for Department of Health clearance to open again. When investigators asked about the violations that resulted in their closure a staffer replied, “minor stuff.”

However, news accounts reveal the program was suspended because it was mixing kids as old as 10 with toddlers. In addition, a volunteer at the program, Manathis Anderson, was arrested and charged in January for groping a 10-year-old. Neither of these instances were mentioned by Heavenly Miracle staff to IDC investigators.

Last year’s investigation formed the basis for Senator Klein’s bill requiring day cares in New York City to display “report cards” at their doors. As this investigation has shown, parents cannot rely on the staff to be forthcoming with a program’s violation history. These report cards would ensure that parents are provided with a simple way of knowing a day care’s violation record.

The bill successfully passed both the Senate and the Assembly this year. It is awaiting approval from the Governor.

“When parents leave their children at child care centers, it is critical for them to feel confident that their child is in a safe place. We appreciate the efforts of Senator Jeff Klein, the IDC, Mayor de Blasio and the City to simplify and enhance the information now available to parents so that they can assess the safety of programs and make the best choices for their families,” **said Stephanie Gendell, Associate Executive Director for Policy and Advocacy, Citizens’ Committee for Children.**

“New York’s children deserve access to high-quality and affordable early childhood education. The challenges exposed in the report that Senator Klein is releasing today show the need for New York to fully fund child care programs. Without a significant new investment in New York State’s Child Care Block Grant, New York State will not be able to meet federal health and safety requirements and maintain the current number of child care subsidies. We look forward to working with Senator Klein to ensure that New York State makes the investments necessary to ensure high-quality early childhood education for New York’s children,” **said Gregory Brender, the Co-Director of Policy and Advocacy for United Neighborhood Houses.**

“The New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute believes that all young children in New York should have access to the highest quality services across sectors, locations, and professions. Health and safety are fundamental pillars of quality early child care, no matter the setting. QUALITYstarsNY, as New York’s early childhood quality rating and improvement system, is a vital and necessary resource for child care providers to deliver the high quality care that has the greatest impacts on young children. Governor Cuomo, Senators Klein and Avella, and the IDC continue to shine a spotlight on the need to provide parents with accurate information about their child’s care, as well as provide child care centers and home providers with the supports they need to give our youngest New Yorkers access to high quality care,” **said Sherry Cleary, Executive Director, New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute**

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RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2015-S5676A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Requires the department of health and mental hygiene in a city having a population of one million or more to issue a performance summary card to each child care service

May 27, 2015

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Jeffrey D. Klein

Do you support this bill?