



## Rhode Island Department of Human Services

25 Howard Avenue, Building 57  
Louis Pasteur Building  
Cranston, RI 02920

August 15, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Nicole Chiello and I am the Administrator of Child Care Licensing for the state of Rhode Island at the Department of Human Services. I am writing this letter in support of Joanne Stokes and her garage renovation as an extension of her child care center, Cozy Corner Child Care.

I have been working alongside Joanne for months now. She was asked, very quickly, to leave her previous location due to the pandemic and being in a nursing home. The safety and well-being of the children in her care and their families has been of the utmost importance to her after hearing this news. While she was fortunate to come across the sale of Angel Care Montessori, the former tenants at 150 Waterman Ave, there is not enough space to house all the families she currently cares for. She has been working with Moses Brown for the summer, but as I am sure you are aware, space is limited in early childhood at a time where we are trying to allow families to work, while also maintaining strong stable group guidelines in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among child care in Rhode Island.

Joanne has been a strong advocate for her families since day 1. She has exhausted every possible opportunity to use space in the area, determined to be close to her current center for families with siblings. At points, she has considered using her home in order to ensure the children in her program had a place to learn. This space behind 150 Waterman Ave is a prime location for Joanne to be able to expand and allow for quality child care for families in Providence. Families, unsurprisingly, are scared to return to care amidst a pandemic, and for Joanne to go out of her way to make them feel comfortable and confident in returning to a brand-new facility is no small feat.

I am excited about this project as I think it has the potential to a beautiful space for high-quality early childhood in the Providence area. I think it will be a great place for children to be able to enroll and feel safe, stay healthy, grow and learn. I have looked at the floor plan and am confident that it will meet all the child care regulations put forth by the Department of Human Services.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me, at any time, with any additional questions you might have regarding my advocacy for the repurpose of this space.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicole Chiello".

Nicole Chiello  
Child Care Administrator of Licensing and Regulation  
Department of Human Services