**Minnesota day care centers fire back in response to viral video**

(05:03)

Local News**Director of Minnesota day care featured in YouTube video on fraud responds**By Conor Wight

December 30, 2025 / 10:46 PM CST / CBS Minnesota

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On Dec. 16, 2025, security footage shows various people throughout the day dropping off young children at the state-licensed ABC Learning Center in Minneapolis.

That same day, Youtuber Nick Shirley arrived and claimed that the day care was among many in Minnesota that were empty.

It's the latter video that has gone viral, creating a new political lightning rod as Minnesota grapples with various investigations and accusations related to widespread fraud. Officials at one day care, which was not among those featured in Shirley's video, say they was vandalized Tuesday morning, and records of both employees and children were accessed.

In this instance, Shirley claims that nearly a dozen day cares are taking government funding without actually providing a day care service.

In Shirley's video, which X reports has more than 116 million views, the rightwing influencer visits various day cares, including the ABC Learning Center. The video

asserts that the day care is always empty.

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On Tuesday afternoon, WCCO found more than a dozen children at the day care working with several adult staff members. Director Ahmed Hasan said that they were working on basic language and math skills.

"Every day is like this," Hasan said.

On the day Shirley came to the center, the time stamps on the day care's security tapes show that he arrived around noon. WCCO reviewed security footage showing families evidently arriving to drop off their children earlier that morning and later in the afternoon.

When Shirley knocked on the door, he seemed to fabricate a reason for being there, asking to check a child into the day care. A staff member responds verbally but doesn't let him in; Hasan said that they can't allow strangers into an active day care. In addition, he said that Shirley had a team of up to eight people with him. Some were masked, according to Hasan, which set off alarm bells for his staff members, given recent ICE activity.



CBS News conducted its own analysis of nearly a dozen day care centers mentioned



cleanliness, equipment and staff training, among other violations, but there was no recorded evidence of fraud.

Tuesday evening, the Department of Health and Human Services said it has frozen federal child care funding for Minnesota, citing the fraud allegations.

Gov. Tim Walz responded on X, stating in part, "We've spent years cracking down on fraudsters. It's a serious issue - but this has been his plan all along. He's politicizing the issue to defund programs that help Minnesotans."

State inspectors last visited ABC Learning Center on Nov. 7 for a license review. While there are ongoing citations related to a child's allergy and an individual child's care program, the state did not flag fraudulent activity.

Umi Hassan, the day care's day-to-day operator, said that she believes Shirley's work was entirely politically motivated. She noted that both she and Hasan are Somali-American. In recent weeks, she's among many in the community who have felt compelled to carry their U.S. passports everywhere they go to avoid getting swept up in ICE operations.

"We pay our taxes. We do whatever we can to be a law-abiding citizen. When one Somali does something wrong, we all get collective punishment," Hassan said.

Since Shirley's video went viral, Hasan said that he's been getting constant phone calls, many of them coming from out of state. He showed WCCO a few of the voicemails. Some had a seemingly innocent premise with people asking if the day care had space for their own children. One was threatening, with a caller telling Hasan he's excited to see him get arrested.

A large portion of Shirley's video focused on the Quality Learning Center, which he also alleged was empty. The owner of the building where the day care operates, Fardowsa Ali, said that she is simply a landlord. While she said she has nothing to do with the day care's day-to-day, she said she, too, is getting phone calls linked to Shirley's video.

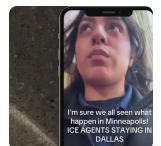
"People are calling me, my phone, because when they Google the address, it's showing my kitchen and it goes straight to my website," Ali said.

WCCO spoke to Fatima Noor on Tuesday, a mother who said she's been sending her children to Quality Learning Center multiple times a week for the past few months. Day care operators declined to speak with WCCO.

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