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# DCF Gives Day-Care License, Foster Parent Approval to Woman with Child Abuse Past

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Written by Jackelyn Barnard

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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - Annette Smith was licensed as a day care operator in 2001 and as a foster parent in 2004.

"The fact she was a foster parent is mystery number one," said attorney Brian Cabrey.

Smith was convicted of child abuse more than a decade before she opened a day care and was approved as a foster parent. "The irony is

she lost her own children and was convicted of child abuse on her own children back in 1991, here in Jacksonville," said Cabrey, who recently filed a lawsuit on behalf of two foster children once in Smith's care.

It was all missed, he said, and he wants to know why.

"If it hadn't been missed or if anybody had bothered to look, our children would not have been in that home. That home would not have existed."

The allegations are graphic. According to the lawsuit, the children were urinated on, forced to eat feces, and not allowed to eat, drink or wear clothes.

"It's some of the worst sexual abuse I've ever seen," said Cabrey.

The children have been adopted by a family in Canada, have around the clock care and are in therapy.

Smith was not at her home or available for comment.



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Court records show Smith got probation for her 1991 child abuse case.

In 2006, her foster home was closed because she was arrested again for child abuse involving a foster child. Once again, she got probation.

"She was convicted of child abuse. Her own children were removed. That's a no-brainer," said Cabrey. "There's no way she should have been licensed and approved as a foster parent or day care operator."

The Department of Children and Families said this afternoon, it did do a background check on Smith and no disqualifiers were found for the day-care license.

As for the foster parent approval, DCF said it still checking on that. "It's all out there. It's all public record. How that was missed....again baffling," said Cabrey.

First Coast News has requested Smith's records with the department and DCF said it is working on providing that information.



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