# Child’s Play

No-care day care

November 1, 1997

Everything’s not all fun and games over at Kiddie Ranch, Happy Time Daycare and ABC Playhouse. The three Wisconsin child-care facilities are under the gun at the U.S. Attorney’s Office for allegedly blacklisting a boy with HIV. Lawyer Peg Lautenschlager, who filed the criminal charges, hopes the case will help defuse HIV transmission fright. “If appropriate safety measures are taken, there’s no greater risk to a non-HIV child in that day-care setting than there would be to a child in the general public,” she said. The complaint alleges that the four-year-old boy was accepted at one of the child-care centers, then flatly denied admission when his parent volunteered his HIV status. The other two day cares reportedly also refused to admit him. But the juvenile joints dismiss the charge—the first regarding the right to child care under the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990—as a publicity bid by the Justice Department. “I seriously doubt that’s the case,” said Catherine Hanssens, director of the AIDS Project at Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. “We don’t hear very much about incidents like these. That whole dispute about kids and HIV transmission was addressed—and resolved—by a lot of jurisdictions back in the ‘80s.”

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