

Martinez Tender Lovin' Family Daycare Handbook

Registered in the state of Georgia

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Mission Statement

The mission of Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare is to be a family support system that provides a safe and nurturing environment for the exceptional care of children. It is our goal to provide quality learning and superior care in a loving home environment. We aim to provide parents peace of mind and have been doing so for over 12 years.

Philosophy

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare believes that the first and most important task of any community is to care for our children. Quality childcare provides our children with opportunities for growth while allowing our parents to improve their family's living standards. Childcare, more than any other service, has supported women in becoming working professionals. This is vitally important for families that need two incomes and for single parent families, and also for the economy which benefits from the skills and productivity of these individuals in the work force. With the economical and social value of a good quality early care and learning facility our children will begin learning at a very young age and this will give them a head start in life.

This handbook is a basic guide to the policies of Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare. A copy of [Licensing Rules for Family Day Care Centers](#) is available at the center for parents to view.

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare is owned and operated by Sonia Rodriguez doing business as Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare. We are under the direct guidance of [Bright from the Start, Department of Early Care and Learning \(DECAL\)](#).

Parents are welcome to meet with the Director at any time. In order to assure the best quality care for our children, Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare asks that meetings be scheduled to ensure proper student/teacher ratios and supervision.

State of Georgia License

A copy of the State of Georgia Family Day Care Registration and a compliance statement are posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen of the center.

Confidentiality

All staff having access to the children's records will not discuss or disclose any personal information regarding the children or their family unless authorized by the parent.

Services Provided

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare provides full time, before and after school care, and drop in care for ages birth to 12 years old.

Diapering Procedures

Diapers shall be changed in the child's own crib or on a nonporous surface which is cleaned with a disinfectant and dried with a single use disposable towel after each diaper change. Soiled diapers and linens shall be disposed of in a closed container and personnel shall wash their hands with soap and running water immediately after each diaper change.

Toileting Procedures

Some children will be able to use the toilet alone, others may need help. Our aim is to ensure children are able to use the toilet in a hygienic manner with minimum distress to the child, in a way agreed with the parents.

Children are supervised in the toilet area and helped as and when needed.

- The children are encouraged to pull down their trousers; pants etc themselves.
- They are encouraged to wipe themselves and pull up their clothing
- They are then asked to flush the toilet and wash their hands
- Children are not allowed to play in the toilet area

Nondiscrimination Policy

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, or any other prohibited by applicable law in the enrollment of students, hiring of staff, or in the administration of our program or policies. Admission is based on the availability of space in the center and is based on whether the parents and provider feel they are a good match with the group of children currently enrolled. Age ratio will be taken into consideration to keep the center in compliance with state rules. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will accept children with physical or mental handicaps only if an appropriate student/teacher ratio can be withheld, and if the staff is properly trained to care for the child. No qualified individuals as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act shall, by reason of their disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities or be subjected to discrimination by Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare is located at 221 Brooks Drive, Martinez, GA.

Program Overview

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare provides a comprehensive early care and learning program for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. We offer fulltime and drop in (as space permits) care and before and after school care. The program focuses on the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children. Experiences in the center include opportunities for creative expression, intellectual stimulation, large and small motor activities, and social interaction. Three year and four year preschool is taught from September through May.

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will be celebrating many different holidays throughout the school year. If there are any holidays that your family does not celebrate, please let us know. Birthdays are a special time at Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare. If there are any other special traditions or celebrations that you would like to share with us please us know. Parents are welcomed to be actively involved. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome!

This facility's before and afterschool services are provided to, but are not limited to, children in the following Columbia County school districts:

- Westmont Elementary

Yearly Calendar

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare is open year round, Monday – Friday. The hours of operation are 6:45 a.m. till 5:30 p.m. We will observe and be closed for the following Paid holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Good Friday
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Five paid Sick/Training Days per year are reserved (if all are not used they do not carry into the next year)
- 10 paid vacation days per year (normally 1 week in summer and 1 week during Christmas holidays; may be combined with paid holidays. Parents will know dates in January of each year)

If a holiday falls on a regularly closed day, Tender Lovin' will observe the Friday or Monday before or after the holiday. Tuition will be due on the last day of the week that daycare is open (eg. Friday daycare closed for holiday so payment will be due Thursday). Vacation dates are given to the parents at the beginning of each year. Any personal days without pay are also communicated in writing to the parents at the beginning of each year. Any days off outside of those listed will be taken without pay.

Children's Needs List

Please be sure that your child has the following items to be kept at the center. Please label all items. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare does not assume responsibility for lost items.

- A complete change of clothing
- Beach towel or light blanket for rest time (please do not send large blankets or blankets that have sentimental value)
- Disposable diapers and wipes (if needed)
- Bottles and other personal items that your infant/toddler may require (Bottles and lids must be labeled with child's first and last name, and date)

Child Release Policy

A child will not be permitted to leave the center with anyone other than persons listed on the release form. If there is a change of names on the release form it will be the parent's responsibility to notify the office and change the form. If the person picking up the child is not known to the staff, proof of identification will be required. All parents will be permitted to visit and remove the child during center hours unless access is prohibited or restricted by a court order. A copy of the court order must be on file. In the event the person authorized to pick up the child appears to be under the influence of an intoxicant or other controlled substance, the following steps will be followed.

1. Offer to call your emergency contact (if you refuse see #2)
2. Call the local Police or county Sheriffs Department.
3. If behavior is uncontrollable, 911 will be called.

Weather Related School Closings

In the event of inclement weather or national emergencies, we will follow the policies of the Columbia County School System. If they feel it is unsafe for children to be transported and therefore are closed, Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will also be closed. You should watch the local news for this information. In the event of severe weather or fire during time of operation, Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will follow our evacuation plan. If any special arrangements need to be made for the child, you will be notified by phone.

Child Abuse and Neglect

As child care providers, Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare staff is mandated by Georgia law to report any suspected or known child abuse or neglect. We cooperate fully to ensure the health and safety of the children. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the staff member will immediately contact the Director who will contact the Department of Family and Children Services. If an allegation of child abuse or neglect is brought against a staff member, that staff member will immediately be removed from the classroom until allegation has been fully investigated. If allegation is proven to be true, the staff member will be terminated immediately and the situation will be reported to the Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Department of Family and Children Services.

Field Trips

The only field trips taken at Tender Lovin' are the occasional walks around the neighborhood, if and when we have enough staff for appropriate supervision. The neighborhood has sidewalks that make walks possible.

Outdoor Play

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) requires children to participate in outdoor activities daily, weather permitting. Children will remain inside when weather is inclement (raining, snowing, icy conditions) or in extreme cold or heat. Please make sure your child(ren) have weather-appropriate clothing such as hats, mittens, coats and boots (please label).

Tuition Policy

Tuition is due and payable weekly on Fridays for the upcoming week. A late fee will be assessed if tuition is not paid on time per the enrollment agreement. If you decide to keep your child home for any reason, you will be required to pay your tuition in full for that period of absence as part of your contractual agreement. Your child may not re-enter the center without this payment in full. Upon return to the center, you may be required to pay a re-registration fee. If you withdraw your child without notice, no tuition credit or refund will be given. Check or Cash is the preferred method of tuition payment. Checks returned due to non-sufficient funds will be assessed a fee noted in your Enrollment Agreement for each check returned. Two non sufficient funds check in one calendar year will require that you make future payments by money order or cash. Late pickups will be charged a late pick-up fee as noted in your Enrollment Agreement. This fee must be paid when the child is picked up. Repeated incidents of late pick-ups may result in a child's dis-enrollment. An annual, non-refundable registration fee must be paid in advance to enroll your child. This fee is payable according to the terms of your Enrollment Agreement.

If there are circumstances that would prevent you from paying tuition on a timely basis, please discuss this confidentially with the Center Director. Failure to pay tuition per the Enrollment Agreement will result in disenrollment. Children enrolled in the After School Program that attends the center for a full day or a full week due to school closings or holidays will be charged according to the current fee schedule. A child will be dismissed/suspended if tuition fees become two (2) weeks overdue. The child will not be allowed to re-enroll until the balance is paid in full. If the invoice balance is not paid in full in a timely manner, your account will be filed with the county magistrate court.

Please give four weeks written notice if you plan to withdraw your child from Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare. There are no refunds on tuition or registration if you withdraw without notice. The tuition rate is subject to change and the parent will be expected to pay the new rate after the Center Director has given a minimum of a 30 days notice.

Child Enrollment Forms

The child enrollment forms must be completed by the child's parent or guardian and must be on file by the first day of attendance. Immunizations A Certificate of Immunization – DHR form 3231 is required and must be signed by your child's doctor within thirty (30) days of enrollment. No child will be allowed to continue enrollment at our facility without this proof. This form must be kept to date at all times. Immunizations are regulated by the State Health Department.

Termination of Enrollment

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare staff is committed to working with children and their families so that each child's experience at the center is positive and rewarding. If we have concerns about a child's needs, we will meet with the parents to discuss our concerns and establish a plan to benefit the child, family and center. When circumstances prevent a child's needs from being met at Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare, the Director may terminate the child's enrollment. Parents and provider will provide 60 days notice of intent to terminate daycare services in writing unless there is dangerous or disruptive behavior by either parents or child in which case no notice is required for the safety of all. If the provider is forced to initiate an emergency termination of services, 60 days of fees will still be due by the parent in lieu of the 60 day notice. Some reasons for termination of service are:

1. Abuse of other children, staff or property by child or parent/guardian may result in termination of enrollment.
2. Continued violation of Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare policies by child or parent/guardian may result in termination of enrollment.
3. Disruptive or dangerous behavior by child or parent/guardian may result in immediate termination of enrollment.
4. Children may be excluded if parents fail to submit required health/enrollment forms within the appropriate time schedule.
5. When Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare staff and parents mutually agree that placement is inappropriate for a child and termination is the end result, the parent will only pay for the days services were rendered.
6. Parents whose bills are delinquent in excess of two weeks will be excluded from Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare upon written notification from the Director. The child or children shall not be admitted back into the center until the total owed has been paid or an acceptable payment plan has been made with Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare.

This is a partial list and Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare reserves the right to end the enrollment of a child at any time for any reason seemed appropriate.

Guidance & Discipline

The guidance philosophy of Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare is intended to guide children and promote self esteem as they work toward independence and responsibility, by encouraging them to problem solve, giving positive reinforcement for desired behaviors, and teaching respect the rights of others.

We do this through:

- Modeling of appropriate behavior by staff members
- Setting clear, reasonable and developmentally appropriate limits
- Problem solving with the children
- Redirection of children's inappropriate behavior

Positive reinforcement keeps problems at a minimum. Some techniques I use include:

- **Reinforcing appropriate behavior.** I make it a point to watch for, praise and reward good behaviors in order to enforce them. This in and of itself circumvents many problems. Children will mirror behaviors and want approval.
- Supervise and observe children in order to anticipate potential difficulties.
- Being consistent is **EXTREMELY** important
- Explaining to the children what behavior will be acceptable and explaining the reason for the limits, doing so in a positive way and on their level.
- Focusing on the child's behavior, rather than on the child.
- Allowing the children time to respond to the expectations.
- Being willing to listen and respond in a fair and supportive manner.

While the children are allowed a great amount of freedom to engage in various activities the freedom must be exercised within the limits of physical safety of all children and also with respect and courtesy to others.

In the event a child is acting in a harmful manner, the teacher will talk with the child and try to redirect the behavior. If this approach is unsuccessful, the child will be removed from the group for a brief period of time or until the behavior (if extremely upsetting) comes under control. All discipline techniques will be carried out in a manner that is beneficial to the child in developing self-control and an understanding of the limits set. According to Georgia State Law, punishment which is humiliating or frightening to children is prohibited. Examples of prohibited punishment include:

- Beating, hitting, pinching, shaking, biting, or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family
- Binding or tying to restrict movement or enclosing in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle
- Withholding or forcing meals, snacks, or naps
- Children shall not be punished for lapses in toilet training.

Family Involvement and Communication

Parents have access to the areas where the children are cared for during the hours of operation. I do request that any changes in your schedule be communicated to me to eliminate disruption of our daily activities as little as possible. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will make opportunities available for parents to participate in their child's educational experience, when possible. Parents should check with the Director before planning a visit. Many children have a difficult time transitioning when visitors are in the classroom. This type of situation can be very disturbing to both the children and the teacher.

Parents are not allowed to linger in the center and should only have brief conversations with the teacher while other children are in that teacher's care especially around the start of the day or at dismissal.

Parents of infants will receive a form which includes observations regarding length of naps, amount and what types of food eaten, diaper changes or toilet training progress. This form also includes and any special notes/requests.

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare has an informative website (www.tenderlovin.com) that helps keep parents up to date on what's happening at daycare. There are many pictures that are posted for parents to enjoy on a regular basis. Email and text messaging is also used to keep parents in the loop. We try to make sure parents are kept well informed.

What are the parent responsibilities? Parents are responsible to be in partnership with the provider to enhance their child's experience in daycare. Some of our expectations are that parents:

- Keep us informed of any changes that would affect their child.
- To supply necessary information in a timely manner such as immunization updates, recent illnesses, medications being administered to the child, any recent accidents causing bruising or cuts
- Supply necessary documentation of change of custody or custody issues promptly
- All parents **MUST** escort their child to and from the daycare center and accept all responsibility regarding their health and safety from the moment they are handed their child. Although you may still be on the premises the provider relinquishes responsibility once you take possession of your child. It is **HIGHLY** recommended that you hold your child's hand while you're walking to your vehicle.
- Changes in emergency phone numbers, authorized persons to pick up child, change of address, employment or other pertinent information.

Children's Health Policy & Ill Procedure

Childhood illnesses are a frequent occurrence among children in the age range served by our Center. We ask for the cooperation of all families in trying to limit children's exposure to infectious diseases. For the health and well-being of your child and others, a child must be kept home if he/she develops any of the following symptoms of contagious disease until symptom free for 24 hours or the child's physician indicates a child can return to the center.

- Diarrhea
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Tears, redness of eyelids with discharge
- Mouth sores with or without drooling
- A fever of 100.9° or above
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Severe itching of body or scalp
- Unusually cranky, less active behavior
- Headache and stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Tea-colored urine
- Loss of appetite
- Gray or white stool
- Heavy nasal discharge that is not clear
- A parasite
- Any other contagious or communicable disease

If your child has any communicable disease, please inform the center immediately so we can take the necessary precautions. ***Children will be readmitted to the center when they have been symptom free or fever free for 24 hours without medication.*** In certain cases when an illness is contagious and communicable, a physician's written release stating the child is no longer contagious will be required. The Center Director will inform you when a written release is required. Children with other symptoms of illness, including runny nose, sore throat, headaches, cough or stomach aches will be evaluated by the center staff regarding their ability to attend the center. Children in attendance are expected to be able to participate in all daily activities. If there are medical reasons why your child cannot play outdoors but is well enough to be at the center, we will make every attempt to comply with your request when presented with a physician's written instructions.

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare has a no nit policy. If your child has nits (lice) you will be required to pick your child up from the facility. Your child will not be allowed to return to Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare until all nits are gone. The box top from the treatment kit will need to be provided upon return to the center.

Children who become ill at the center will be evaluated and parents will be notified. We ask that you come to pick up your child as soon as possible, at least within one hour, to avoid further exposures to the other children in our care. In the case of illness, accident or injury, we will attempt to reach you first. If we are unable to reach you, the emergency contact person will be contacted. In case of a perceived emergency, we will call an ambulance. If a child does not respond, is having trouble breathing or is having a seizure, we must call 911. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare will use the hospital you indicated in your enrollment contract.

Medication & First Aid

A Medicine Authorization Form or other state-specific form required by the licensing agency must be completed if your child is to be administered medicine (including diaper ointment, sunscreen, teething gel, etc.) while at the Center. This form can be obtained from us. The form is valid for one week. The only exception to this is for the use of sunscreen where, one form can be completed for each child for the entire summer.

All medicine must be kept in the original container with the child's name on it. All medication should be left with the Director. All medication will be dispensed once daily (mid-day) unless otherwise indicated in writing by the child's physician. No medications will be dispensed in a manner that is contrary to the label directions without a physician's written instructions. If your child's medicine needs to be carried home each day, please let us know.

All medicines should be picked up at the end of the week. Medicine that is left at the center for more than one week will be discarded. We will administer basic first aid if needed. Minor injuries will be washed with soap and water. Ice and Band-Aids will be applied if necessary. A record of the accident or injury will be recorded on an Incident Report. A copy of this form will be kept in the child's permanent file and one copy will be sent home with the child.

Due to the age of children that are in our care, biting may occur. In the event a child is bitten by another child, proper first aid procedures will be followed and parents will be notified by a staff member. The parent's of the child that bit will also be notified in order to try to prevent this from occurring again. Our staff will maintain certification in CPR and First Aid.

Nutrition Policy

Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare serves two nutritious snacks daily (at least two food groups in each snack at approximately 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.) and lunch is brought from home by each child. The children bring their lunches from home on a daily basis. Lunch must consist of vegetable or fruit or both; a protein (meat, poultry, fish, cheese, eggs, or protein substitute); bread; and milk unless the child has a specific health reason for prohibiting milk. Milk will be provided by the provider. Powdered nonfat dry milk will not be used.

I decided some years back that I wanted to dedicate more time to creating a well rounded program for the children I care for as opposed to, spending countless hours developing menus required by the state. I spend my prep time researching, studying, and developing activities that are fun and educationally simultaneously. The parents of the children in my care agree that it's worth the trade off.

Children will be taught the importance of good nutrition and they will be encouraged, but not forced, to eat all foods served.

Bottles for infants must be prepared at home and labeled with child's first and last name, and date. Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare staff cannot prepare bottles at the center. Let us know if you would like the bottles warmed.

Nap Time

All children that are at the Center between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. will have nap/rest time (infants will nap on their own schedules). Each child will have his/her own mat.

Evacuation Procedures

During an emergency evacuation, children are taught to stop what they are doing when they hear the signal and go directly to the closest exit door and meet at the mailbox. They are not to take any objects (toys, clothing, etc.) with them. During a tornado warning, children will move into the hallway, away from all outside windows.

If children are napping, they are to be awakened immediately and will continue with the appropriate evacuation procedures. Fire and severe weather evacuation drills are practiced monthly and semi annually.

Classroom Rules

Our classroom has age appropriate classroom rules. These rules are minimal and are set for the safety of all children in the classroom.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures

At Martinez Tender Lovin' Daycare we understand that parents are in a hurry in the morning time. We ask that all parents please cooperate with the following guidelines to ensure quick as possible drop off. Parents will not be allowed to gather inside the house before or during pick-up time – this causes too much confusion and creates an unsafe environment for the children. If a parent needs to discuss anything they must schedule a meeting in advance.

Thank you in advance for your full cooperation!

Sonia Howard
(706) 650-0550