

TENDER LOVE AND CARE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER PARENT HANDBOOK

Mission Statement

At Tender Love & Care CDC, we unify our creativity by fostering children's strengths and talents. Each child has a fantastic learning capability, and learning is best accomplished in an emotionally secure, physically safe, and fun place!

Tender Love & Care Child Development Center

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Tender Love & Care is proud to be a five-star facility.



Welcome to Tender Love & Care Child Development Center!

We welcome you and your child(ren) to Tender Love & Care Child Development Center with open arms! We understand you are extending tremendous trust when enrolling your child at our center. You and your family are encouraged to visit our center before the first day of enrollment to allow our teachers and your child to meet and become better acquainted. Separating on the first day will be more manageable. We strive to create an environment where your child will thrive and flourish while giving you peace of mind.

The *Parent Handbook* describes our program, philosophy, policies, and all the practical details that make each day as happy and successful as possible. Please carefully read this handbook and keep it for future reference. If you have any questions or concerns, the staff at Tender Love & Care CDC will be glad to help.

Our Philosophy

We believe...

- We are committed to supporting children's development and learning, respecting individual differences, and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively in an enriched environment with free-choice, ageappropriate materials.
- Children are loved and must receive care from capable, caring adults whose values enable them to be excellent role models.
- Our core values include putting children first by ensuring their safety and security, respecting families, developing partnerships, and supporting creativity using fun and innovative strategies to scaffold children's growth and meet them where they are.
- Parents contribute to and enhance the quality of care offered at Tender Love and Care CDC.

Our Vision

Our vision at Tender Love & Care Child Development Center is to provide childcare services for working families in the community. We provide the best care possible for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. We plan to work towards earning an NAEYC Accreditation of Early Learning in our community, which will demonstrate our commitment to high-quality early learning education.

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Cultural Competence and Accountability

Cultural competence is not just a concept; it is a crucial skill that involves a profound understanding of our own culture and ethnicity, along with a firm commitment to learning about the cultural practices and worldviews of others. This includes maintaining a positive attitude towards cultural differences and actively respecting and accepting them. This plan aims to raise awareness about unconscious biases within our community of teachers and learners. Understanding diverse cultures is essential, as it directly influences management styles, problem-solving approaches, help-seeking behavior, and learning processes. Children, families, and teachers must develop awareness, foster a positive attitude, embrace a willingness to learn, and cultivate strong communication skills.

Diversity is multifaceted, including various faiths, gender roles, socioeconomic statuses, and ethnic backgrounds. However, it extends beyond these categories to encompass a range of physical, cognitive, and social abilities. We are committed to creating a developmentally appropriate classroom environment with an anti-bias curriculum that celebrates each child's uniqueness, home culture, heritage, and beliefs.

One of the most powerful ways to instill an understanding of diversity in our children is through consistent role modeling of respect and kindness toward all individuals. While it is impossible to enumerate every action we take to promote diversity, we are proud to present some of the specific ways we integrate diversity into our curriculum at Tender Love & Care CDC:

- Our CHILD ENROLLMENT form encourages families to share their home traditions with us. On the back of the application, please list additional information about your family (e.g., home, culture, heritage, and beliefs).
- Each classroom invites students to bring a picture board highlighting family traditions and likes/dislikes to hang in the school.
- We collaborate with NC Child Development and Early Education to ensure that families can receive tuition assistance and participate in a high-quality childcare program.
- We collaborate with Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRI), which assists families with childcare expenses.
- Our teachers incorporate props and materials into the learning environments that reflect diversity in the abovementioned areas.

Enrollment and Tuition

Children between 8 weeks and 12 years old are eligible for Tender Love and Care enrollment. They may attend the center for up to 10.5 hours, Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Documents to be completed and returned **before** enrollment are:

- Application for Enrollment
- Emergency Medical Care Information/ Medical Action Plan
- Medical Report
- Immunization Record
- Documentation of Receipt: Discipline Policy,
- Center Operational Policies, Summary of Child Care Law, and Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policies.
- Emergency Medical Care Authorization
- Off-Premises Activities Authorization (as needed)
- Notification of Smoking and Tobacco Restriction
- Documentation of Discussion: Parent Participation Plan

Once the director has assigned a start date, a registration fee of \$60 is due. This is a one-time, nonrefundable charge. A second enrollment fee will be expected if a child withdraws and reenrolls later.

Tuition for full- or part-time childcare is based on one of the following two options:

- Monthly Payment due the 1st day of each month. Late after the 5th day.
- <u>Weekly Payment</u>- due by the time of drop-off in the morning on the child's first scheduled day. Late after 5:30 p.m. that day.

**Tuition is based on 52 weeks. **

<u>Payment methods: Payments can be made via Brightwheel, money order, or cash in person.</u>

Late Fees

A \$10 fee is charged for late tuition payments on the 5th of the month or Tuesday of each week (depending on how you make your childcare payments). Special payment arrangements may be made in advance with the director.

Tuition is *still expected* for the days your child may be absent due to illness, family emergencies, doctor visits, hospitalizations, vacations, or other reasons. *Please note that tuition rates do not change in the event of a week, including a holiday.*

After extensive research, we found our policy consistent with that of other child daycare centers. Because our costs remain the same throughout the year, we rely on the specified tuition to be paid each week to cover our expenses. Consequently, as much as we might like to, we cannot make allowance for any days missed in your regular attendance schedule.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Parents using CCRI childcare assistance should remember to pay the regular tuition rate until we receive your authorization paperwork for the CCRI Agency or the voucher from the portal. Once we receive the CCRI payment, we'll apply that credit to your account for the following month! Just a reminder, it's important for you to pay your CCRI co-pay directly to us each month. Please note that rates can change based on CCRI disbursement. If there's a gap in CCRI billing, we kindly ask that you continue to pay the full tuition until we hear otherwise from CCRI.

Withdrawal & Dismissal Policy

A two-week notice is *required* before withdrawing a child from our center. The account must be paid in full, including your child's tuition for those two weeks.

The director (Mrs. Atoya) at Tender Love & Care CDC reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at their discretion or for the following possible reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments of tuition and fees.
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parental agreement.
- Our current staffing patterns cannot adequately meet the child's unique needs.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.
- Expired or non-immunization and/or physical.

Communication

Proper communication between parents, Tender Love & Care (TLC) teachers, and staff is critical. Teachers will provide information regularly or per your special request. You are welcome to call to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher—even just to become better acquainted! Concerns about our program or your child's care may be expressed to the center director (Mrs. Atoya or Ms. Tammy). <u>Concerns about our staff or teachers must be expressed to Mrs. Atoya directly.</u>

The director must be informed of any of the following changes:

- address and/or phone numbers, or e-mail address
- parent/guardian employment,
- health/immunizations up-dates
- other pertinent information related to your child.

Confidentiality

Each family has the right to confidentiality. TLC keeps certain personal information about children and families on file. We maintain this information in confidence and do not discuss it or release it to people outside of TLC unless the parent(s) have given written permission.

Drop-off and Pick-up Policies

Parents are required to accompany their children to the center. The teachers will gladly assist you and your child at drop-off time. However, teachers will not assume direct responsibility for your child until you are ready to leave the building. Teachers need to observe all the children in their care. You are welcome to stay briefly and assist your child through this transition. Notify the classroom teacher when you are ready to leave, and the teacher will help.

Only the individuals listed on the Child Information Record or a written permission note from the parent will be allowed to leave with a child. The staff must request a picture ID from any unfamiliar person (including grandparents). If there is any concern, Tender Love & Care (TLC) staff reserves the right to deny a person's request to pick up a child.

Your child's teacher may be available at pick-up time for short questions. For more extended discussions or concerns, please schedule an appointment. Parents are expected to assume full responsibility for their children once they enter the classroom.

Your child has waited all day to see you and is excited when you walk in the door. At pick-up, please put away your cell phone and give your full attention to your child. Children enrolled part-time are expected to be picked up at the agreed-upon daily time. The parent or guardian of a child is not picked up until after the agreed time or past closing (5:30 p.m.) will be **charged \$1 per minute**. **Families who pick up late more than 3x in one year will pay \$5 per minute after 5:30 pm.** All late fees are expected by 5:30 p.m. the following day. This fee applies per family. Payment should be given directly to the staff member. **Excessive abuse of late pickup times can result in disenrollment.**

We discourage leaving your idling vehicle in the parking lot during drop-off and pick-up times. In extreme cold or heat, please brief your transitions so the car is not left unattended for an extended period. **Never** leave a child in an idling vehicle unattended.

Building Security and Access

Our buildings are open for business from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm and can be accessed by doorbell or knocking. If someone is picking up your child who doesn't usually pick up but is listed on your emergency contact information, please have them ring the bell or knock on the door.

For your child's safety, please do not allow your child to touch the exit door handles or open the doors and/or play yard gates. We work hard to teach the children not to touch the exit doors/gates.

Custody Orders

Until a court action has established custody, one parent may not limit the other from picking up a child in our care UNLESS the secondary parent is not listed as a pickup person. The center must be notified immediately of any changes in custody orders, and certified custody orders must be given to the center director.

Holidays

Tender Love & Care will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve Day.

The center will be closed the day before if it falls on a Saturday or the day after if it falls on a Sunday. Regular tuition is expected as our teachers are paid for these days. Please note that additional days may be added throughout the year based on the circumstances (e.g., summer and spring break, emergencies, etc). Tuition is still expected. There is a detailed closing schedule for your review in Brightwheel. In addition to holidays, TLC closes for selected teacher development days. We will provide two weeks' notice in advance as planned on these days.

Unexpected Closings

Our center may be forced to close on rare occasions due to a situation beyond our control (e.g., an ice storm, electrical outage, or no water service). Every attempt will be made to inform parents of an emergency closing. In cases where TLC is told we must close temporarily, and it is beyond our control, tuition is still due. TLC will try to prorate, discount, or credit accounts as necessary.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Staff members are required *by law* to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. Teachers are trained on what to watch for and how to report it properly.

Possessions

Sometimes, children must bring unique toys or newfound treasures to use as a "bridge" between home and school. We will work with you and your child on these occasions to make it a positive sharing experience. Experience has shown us that toys from home often create school problems. We encourage you to keep personal belongings and toys at home unless the teacher has scheduled a "show-and-tell" day. Videos brought in to share with the class must be 'G' rated. Tender Love & Care (TLC) will not be responsible for lost items.

Important: there are a few items we strongly believe should stay at home: toy guns, gum, money, candy, outside food, and snacks (e.g., chips and cookies).

Clothing

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children wear washable, comfortable clothing. The center will provide plastic aprons for art and water activities.

Water activities, sand play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate an extra set of clothing that must always be kept at the center. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name and placed in a labeled plastic bag. Clothing should include underwear, socks, pants, and shirt. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set the next morning. Licensing requires that children be taken outdoors each day. The children will play outdoors if the temperature is 20° or warmer. Children should be dressed accordingly: light jacket, cap, rain boots (for damp days) in fall and spring; heavy winter jacket, mittens, scarf, hat, and snow boots in winter.

Diapers & Toilet Training

Parents supply all diapers and wipes at TLC. Our teachers are experienced in training young children to use the bathroom. The parent and teacher must communicate about the child's needs and work together to make this developmental milestone positive and successful.

We recommend that your child wear "user-friendly" clothing during training. Overalls, zippers, and snaps are rugged for small children to manage—incredibly quickly! Parents should provide thick training underwear, plastic pants, socks, and outer clothing during toilet training.

Bodies and Boundaries

Children are naturally curious about their bodies. When discussing body parts with them, we use anatomically correct terms. We also teach children that every person has boundaries and that their bodies are private and should be respected. Parents will be notified if situations occur in the classroom that directly affect their child(ren).

Bottles, Blankets and Pacifiers

You may send extra bottles (infant room), a small security blanket, and/or a pacifier for your child. Staff will try to keep track of these items but will not be held responsible if lost. When ready to wean your child, please communicate with your child's teacher to establish a consistent strategy between home and our center.

Field Trips

Field Trips and nature walks are considered an essential part of the educational program and will be taken periodically. The center will provide the same adequate and responsible adult supervision for these excursions as children do while they attend the center. Your permission for your child to participate in walking excursions is part of this agreement. You will be notified of all field trips.

We will occasionally take classroom field trips to museums, parks, libraries, apple orchards, and other community places. Families will be notified before any trips involving transportation. A permission slip must be signed and returned--including emergency phone numbers for that day. Parent volunteers are welcome to assist with field trips (and other special events). A child may be excluded from field trips for safety, health, or disciplinary reasons.

Birthday Celebrations

Parents are welcome to bring a treat to share with their child's classmates on birthdays or special occasions, but they *must* stay on-site to participate in the event. TLC will not celebrate the birthday and/or give out food if the parent is absent. Some classrooms have strict allergy guidelines. For the safety of all the children, inform your child's teacher beforehand about what kind of treat you will bring. Ask your child's teacher for suggestions.

If a birthday is to be celebrated away from school and the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. If the whole class is asked, you may distribute the invitations in the cubbies. Our center will not distribute mailing lists or phone numbers.

Photographs and Publicity

Photographs of the children in our programs may be taken occasionally and appear in brochures, on our website, publicity materials, and/or educational training. Your permission to use photos of this agreement includes using your child's photo without compensation. Your child's image may also be displayed on their classroom's Brightwheel and Google site.

Meals, Snacks and Food Allergies

The center will provide daily milk for lunch, breakfast and a snack with water. Parents must provide formula or breast milk for children up to 12 months of age. TLC will give whole vitamin D milk to children between 12 and 24 months of age and 1% milk to children from 25 months to 12 years of age.

If a child has dietary needs or allergies, the parent must notify the center director and the classroom teacher and supply any special foods required. An Allergy Action Plan and a Medical Action Plan are available in the main office and must be filled out if a child has an allergy or medical need.

Immunizations and Physicals

All children attending childcare programs in North Carolina are legally required to be fully vaccinated. TLC requires all children enrolled in the program to be immunized. Families must contact their local health department to obtain a signed certified Nonmedical Waiver Form for delayed vaccines. A Health Appraisal form is required before enrollment. This form requests a record of your child's immunizations and the date of the last physical examination.

You are the best judge of your child's health, and we trust you will not bring a sick child to the center. However, if while in our care, your child becomes ill, displays an unknown rash, or acts out of character, your child's teacher will consult the director, and you may be called to take your child home. When called, you (or an alternate emergency person) *must go within the hour.* This is to protect the health of your child and their classmates. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

Wellness Policy (Please read 1-9)

- 1. Fever of 100.5° or higher. For a mild fever, muscle aches, toothache, or headache, Tylenol (supplied from home) may be administered. The child must be fever-free for 24 hours without Tylenol or other fever-reducing medications.
- 2. Diarrhea (more than two loose, watery stools) or vomiting. Consideration will be taken if your child is allergic to certain food/drink products or on medication. The child may return when bowel movements are regular and no other symptoms of illness are present. The child may return 24 hours after the last time they vomited, and no other disease symptoms are present.
- **3.** Persistent cough or runny nose for an extended period (cough suppressants and/or allergy medications are not recommended unless prescribed by a doctor). The child may return cough-free for 24 hours without cough suppressants or allergy medication.
- **4.** Crying and irritability for a long time or not eating or drinking usually. Anytime a child is not themselves, cannot be soothed by a teacher, requires one-on-one care, complains about discomfort, or does not interact with the class, it is a reason to take a Wellness Day and spend time in the comfort of their parent(s) arms.
- **5.** Chickenpox and Hand-Food Mouth: The child must be fever-free and have scabbed-over sores. For strep throat, the child must have 24 hours of antibiotics in his/her system.
- **6.** With highly contagious conditions such as head lice, the child cannot return to school.
- **7.** Mumps, pinworm, impetigo, conjunctivitis (pink eye), etc.: Follow the doctor's recommendations.
- **8.** If your child is too ill to play outside with their class or participate in regular classroom activities, he or she is too sick to attend the center.
- **9.** If there is an outbreak of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease in which more than one child is affected, the affected classroom will be shut down for at least 24 hours.

Administration of Medicine

Non-prescriptive medication (Tylenol, nose drops, etc.) and prescription medication will only be administered after a parent signs and dates a form entitled Medication Permission. The parent must provide all medications. Prescription medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name. A parent or guardian must administer the first dosage under their supervision, never the center staff. 10 We will not administer cold medications to any child.

Staff cannot administer over-the-counter medication.

Pandemics

Our Preparedness and Response Plan (available upon request) will be followed during any pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control, Department of Health, and/or State Childcare Licensing Rules will also be followed. The response will include, but is not limited to, monitoring staff and student symptoms, practicing social distancing, following proper hygiene protocol, implementing any new safety equipment, isolating infected staff and/or students, decreasing class sizes, and transparently communicating with families and regulating agencies.

Conflict Resolution

Suppose an issue should arise between a family and a staff member or between two families. In that case, we encourage the concerned party to speak directly to the staff member or family before coming to the directors. If the problem remains unresolved, or the parent wants to ensure the administration is aware, our door is always open. The administration will be moderators in situations requiring more attention or reoccurring. We will make every effort to remain fair, with our main priority being the safety and quality of care of the children at Tender Love & Care Child Development Center.

Center Happenings

Tender Love & Care attempts to keep parents updated on what is happening at the center and in the community. To this end, we added Brightwheel to give parents a glimpse into their child's day. We also have a website.

Center newsletters are sent out at least once a month. Parent bulletin boards are in each classroom, and whiteboards are in each school and updated daily. Please read them. It is also the parent's responsibility to keep up to date by being aware and checking for updates. As partners, we can provide your child with a fun and safe learning environment.

Injuries and Accidents

Every consideration will be taken to ensure your child's safety while in our care. Should an injury occur, a Minor Incident Report will be completed by the closest adult and signed by the Center Director, Assistant Director, or appropriate person. A copy of this report will be sent home. A parent or guardian will be notified regarding any injury that occurs while your child is in our care. In a major medical emergency or accident, the center teacher or director will call 911 first. The child will be transported to the hospital, as noted on the Child Information Record (or the closest hospital). The parent/guardian will be called immediately.

Daily Routines

Every classroom's daily routine is posted in the classroom and available on Brightwheel. Infants do not have a set schedule for activities, as their care is based on their individual needs.

Changes in Policies

The fees, procedures, and policies in this handbook may be changed at the discretion of the center's owner.

<u>Tender Love & Care (TLC) Child Care</u> <u>Discipline Policy</u>

At Tender Love & Care (TLC) Child Care, the term "guidance" is used for several reasons. It is a positive term that implies collaborating with children to foster their internal control over behavior. Our objective is to encourage children to become creative, independent, responsible, and socially mature individuals. This involves learning to make responsible choices and accepting the consequences of those choices. Guidance takes various forms within our center:

- Environment--A place designed for children. Each room is age-appropriate in furniture size, large and small manipulatives, and supplies required for hands-on experiences.
- Logical Rules—such as keeping our hands to ourselves and taking care of the learning environment—are discussed with the children, along with why such rules are needed.
- Curriculum--Is developmentally appropriate, based on the children's interest and level of readiness.
- Positive Behavior--We reinforce the behaviors we wish to see repeated.
- Redirection—Often, engaging a child in another activity can eliminate potential difficulty. For example, we might ask a child to help us or send the child to a different area to play.
- Positive Reminder: We should tell the children what we want them to do rather than using "no" or "don't."
- Renewal Time--Occasionally, as a last resort, a child must be removed for a brief break. This allows the child time to calm down and consider alternative behavior.

<u>Difficult Behavior</u>

We will work with the parent or guardian to ensure a cooperative approach for children having difficulties with behavior. We are here to serve and protect all our children! A parent may be called at work or home whenever the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that the center's staff cannot modify. The parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. The following steps may be taken regarding children who display chronic disruptive behavior, upsetting the emotional or physical well-being of another child or an adult.

Initial Consultation:

The director may request that the parent or guardian meet for a conference. The problem will be defined on paper, intervention strategies will be discussed, and the center director, teacher, and parent or guardian will agree on the best solution to solve it.

Second Consultation:

If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent will again be asked to meet with the director and teaching staff involved. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem and establish a new or revised approach to solving it. Parents may be asked to consult outside professionals or bring in behavioral specialists to help identify the issues or provide new strategies for TLC to continue care. Our goal is to work as a team to better serve each child.

Disenrolled: If the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made toward solving the problem, the center director may disenroll the child.

NOTE: Corporal punishment, which includes negative physical touching (spanking, slapping, pinching, etc.), exclusion from large motor or outdoor activities, or exclusion from any learning activity, will not be allowed. In certain instances, a child may be physically restrained to keep the child, other children, or staff safe from harm. No unusual punishment, such as humiliation, ridicule, threat, or coercion, will be allowed.

Special Needs Statement of Support

Twice a year, each family can meet with their child(ren)'s teachers to review developmental assessments and set individual goals. This Special Needs Statement of Support aims to create a plan to support the child(ren) if there is a developmental concern. The earlier an area of concern is identified, the better chance that the child must reach that developmental goal before going off to an elementary school setting. TLC works with the families, outside agencies, and school special education departments to advocate for the child(ren) and their needs.

TENDER LOVE & CARE (TLC) CHILD CARE POLICY CONTRACT

Please read, sign, and return the form to the center director.

I have been provided with a Tender Love & Care (TLC) Child Care Parent Handbook and agree to abide by all its policies and procedures. I agree to pay the following tuition, any late fees, or change-in-scheduled fee amounts, and understand that these may change depending on schedule and rate adjustments during enrollment. A two-week notice must be given for disenrollment. TLC can terminate this contract at any time if parents or guardians disregarded its policies and procedures.

1st Child's Name	Monthly Tuition	Weekly	
Tuition			
2nd Child's Name	Monthly Tuition	Weekly	
Tuition			
3rd Child's Name	Monthly Tuition	Weekly	
Tuition			
Monthly Tuition is due on the 1 Express. If paying by check every mon	st of every month and processed to	_	
backup. If payment is not made by th			
through Tuition Express. A \$15 late for	•	•	
Weekly Tuition is due on the first day of attendance every week. If you pay by check every week, Tuition Express will be kept on file at TLC as a backup. If payment is not made by the second day of attendance every week, tuition will be processed through Tuition Express. A \$15 late fee will be assessed to the account.			
Registration Fee \$ is due upon enrollment.			
Approved Start Date			
Weekly			
Schedule/Day	*Hours		
I have read and agree to the Tu	ition and Payment Policy for Tend	er Love & Care	
(TLC) Child Care.			
I have read and agree to the Dis	scipline & Guidance Policy for Ten	der Love & Care	
(TLC) Child Care.		(=, 0) 0, 1, 1	
I have read and agree to the We	ellness Policy for Tender Love & Ca	are (TLC) Child	
Care.			

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^{*}TLC limits daily enrollment to a maximum of 10 hours. Fees will be applied for hours over 10. Any change in originally scheduled hours must be approved by the Director or owner of Tender Love & Care (TLC) Child Care. Due to possible staffing and ratio restrictions, it is not guaranteed. Change-in-scheduled fees will be applied.