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## Gateway Child Care Center Director Marla Minden Brings Nearly 20 Years of Experience to Job

By Laura Kloth  
*Staff Writer*

(Dec. 1, 2009) Newly hired director of the Metro Gateway Child Care Learning Center Marla Minden says she's still settling into her position while making "gradual" changes as she enjoys completing her daily tasks.



Metro Gateway Child Care Learning Center  
Director Marla Minden Photo: Michael D. White

Minden was hired in August to oversee 17 employees who care for 84 children ranging in age from infant to 5. And she says one of her objectives has been to continue monthly meetings with parents, and maintain open access and steady communication with emails.

"The fact that these parents could walk in here throughout the day is the best of everything," she said noting that parent involvement has been critical. "They've [parents] really been extremely supportive. That's what makes the school very special," she said.

Minden says another objective has been to study her staff and work to provide necessary resources to support and "empower" them so they could do the best job possible.

Minden said her assistant Stacy Rendondo has turned out to be a great fit. "We really think the same way with the same values and ethics," she said.

A Los Angeles native, Minden holds a B.A in Early Childhood Education from Cal-State, Northridge and completed coursework in administration at UCLA. She says she strives for a steady and stable environment both at home and at work.

She remembers that, as a child, her family moved five times because of her father's national sales job, and that sort of made her gravitate toward more stability as an adult.

Minden is the proud mother of a 24-year-old son who works as a professional choreographer and has worked with the Pussycat Dolls. Her 22-year-old son also works and attends a junior college.

Minden says she decided to become a stay-at-home mom when her children were young, and really never intended to work full time. Then one day, her children began attending classes at the Valley Cities Jewish Community Center in Sherman Oaks, and she became very involved there, and ended up teaching one class, and later becoming its executive

director.

Minden assumed her new position at Gateway after losing her job at the community center after having worked there since 1990.

"It was a very heartfelt kind of sad experience," Minden said indicating that the 50-year-old Valley based center offered a variety of programs for children, adults and seniors, and served the community well. "You name it, we had it," she added.

The challenge now at Gateway, she said, is working to create a positive environment so that parents can tell other parents about the center, and more children will register.

"We have a waiting list, but we're pretty much through it. The best gift a parent can give us is a referral," she said.

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