



Belinda Mercer

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Home Child Care Provider

Belinda Mercer took an interesting path that led her to home child care. After 25 years in training adults in the banking industry, she decided she wanted to ‘train’ preschool children. Her desire was to set up a home child care where children are loved and respected so Belinda opened Postive Images of Love. This is not just a name, but also a philosophy. Belinda is teaching the children how to love, care and be respectful of the people around them, in addition to learning basic preschool skills.

In every aspect of her home child care, Belinda tries to maintain that positive image, including food and nutrition. She believes that a healthy diet can work “miracles” in children—changing them not only physically, but mentally and academically as well. The children read books, see videos, and review nutrition daily. Her strategy is simple as she tries to relate food to items or ideas that kids are already familiar with such as a color or shape they are studying. When learning about foods, she always tries to get them to take it one step further by asking what foods they could make with a specific fruit or vegetable.

CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.

At times, successes in asking children to taste new things can be few. Children are very good at telling you what they do not like, but Belinda does not give up. She asks that everyone at least take a bite and cooks the food in various ways to give the children different experiences. With older children as role models, she encourages younger children to taste new dishes with positive conversation about the food.

“If you give up on getting the children to taste new food, they will too. I don’t give up.”

Realizing the cost of food, Belinda joined the food program to achieve her goal of feeding the children healthy meals. She truly feels that without the food program she would not be able to provide the children with nutritious meals. Belinda considers it a privilege to be a part of CACFP which helps her better the lives of the children in her care.

From Baltimore, MD, Belinda has been a CACFP participant through Family League of Baltimore since 2011.

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