



# Darlene Abraham

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## Home Child Care Provider

Few people can say that they truly love what they do each day and could not imagine doing anything else. Darlene Abraham is fortunate to be one of these lucky few. Since 2001, she has operated her own home child care and started in the profession simply because she loves children and wanted to be around them. Enjoying the smallest of life's milestones and striving to be a positive influence on the children in her care keeps her going day to day.

Part of being a positive influence is helping the children experience and try new ideas. Darlene takes this to heart when introducing the children to different cultures. For one month out of the year, they "travel" around the world to places like Poland, France, Spain and Australia. Through their travels, they learn about animals, music, games, and read various books about the culture. At each location, their passport is stamped and they're ready to continue their journey. They extend their cultural studies by also incorporating nutrition.

At family style meals, Darlene encourages the children to pick out something they have not eaten before. When making a healthy pizza, the children must choose two new veggies to try and a new variety of cheese. Salads go beyond spinach and often include arugula or spring mix. Darlene even shops at different cultural grocery stores to try variations on products the children are already familiar with.

*"When introducing a new food, try not to go too far from what they know and like. Find something similar that will help to broaden their palate."*

Learning about cultures starts within the community. The children walk around their neighborhood meeting neighbors and investigating their surroundings. Community events are emphasized and encouraged. By exposing the children to community and cultures, Darlene hopes the children learn about the world around them and develop skills to take with them as they grow.

From Baltimore, MD, Darlene has been a CACFP participant through Family League of Baltimore since 2012.

***CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.***

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