



# Patty Blankenship

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## Home Child Care Provider

After years of working with children's church programs and caring for neighborhood children, Patty Blankenship was encouraged to open her own home day care. Twenty-nine years later the doors to Miss Patty's Kids opens daily. She pours love into the children as if they are her own and gives them the confidence to go out into the world and conquer anything they set their mind to.

*"I always try to teach the children life principals that will take them far beyond their years with me. The children are having fun, but we also associate everything we do with learning."*

Surrounded by gardens and animals, Patty's home provides the ultimate opportunity for hands-on learning. Instead of farm-to-table, they are actually garden-to-table. The children start by potting seeds indoors and then transferring those to the garden or raised beds where they grow everything from turnips to orange trees. They help in the kitchen with age-appropriate tools and work to prepare food by following recipes. Patty encourages the children to 'handle the food' using all their senses to increase interest.

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

Patty ensures that the children eat healthy breakfasts, lunches and snacks in between. She has even served dinner to both children and their parents when needed. She credits her ability to do as much as she does to her participation in the CACFP which allows her to give the children the absolute best meals possible treating everyone the same, regardless of their circumstances. Patty knows that food is critical to the children's success and she believes treating people with kindness can create a domino effect for everyone.

Patty shares her servant's heart and love for the community with the children. She takes them to the senior citizen residence to share food from their garden and bring Christmas cards. The children enjoy making the postman lunch and visiting with local pastors when they come in for arts and crafts activities. Patty is continually motivated by the way something as simple as a child's touch and innocence can brighten even the dreariest day.

From Ariton, AL, Patty Blankenship has been a member of CACFP through Southeast Alabama Community Action Partnership since 1991.

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