



# Karen Schneider

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## Home Child Care Provider

Karen Schneider has raised eleven children and she carries that love of children into her own home child care. Karen began working at a pre-k center where her youngest attended and later went on to earn credentials to become a licensed child care provider and director. While the children in her care learn pre-k curriculum, Karen's central focus is nutrition.

*"In the world we live in today with so much nutrition education, there is no reason not to provide these children with healthy foods. If they learn to eat healthy foods now while they are young, they are so much ahead of the health game later in life."*

Karen joined CACFP because of the resources and support to teach nutrition to children and parents. At mealtimes, they discuss questions like "what makes a healthy breakfast" and "what do you know about vegetables?" At the end of the day, parents might arrive to a pick-up time picnic or a tea party where they see all of the healthy foods their children will eat when given the opportunity.

Weaving Pre-K curriculum together with nutrition is not difficult for Karen. She takes books like Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and discusses how sick the caterpillar felt after eating all the junk food and how that also effects our bodies. Another favorite is *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss. She uses this for her picky eaters and reminds them that Sam liked it once he tried it. When children do not want to taste a recipe, she even uses the phrase 'Sam I am'.

Karen loves to stimulate the children's imagination through exploration of food choices. On pirate's day the children create their own treasure map pizza where they use red bell peppers for an X to mark the spot and broccoli pieces as trees. When learning about rainbows, the children create their own veggie and fruit rainbow mixing all of the colors together. Karen works to make all nutritional learning fun and creative. Her goal is to have healthy, happy kids for a lifetime, not just while they are in her care.

From Overland Park, KS, Karen has been a CACFP participant through Day Care Connection since 2011.

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

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