



Brenda's Kids Club

www.cacfp.org

Child Care Center

Brenda's Kids Club Day Care Center originally opened as a home childcare, but with increasing demand and rising popularity, Brenda transitioned her program into a center. Now there are 15 teachers and they serve 129 kids through full-time and after school child care programs. Yanetzi Cirino is responsible for all of the CACFP regulations and menu planning.

"We want parents to know that we are doing our absolute best to provide the services that every child deserves to have. These children are treated as if they were our own."

A critical component in taking the best care of children is providing healthy snacks and meals for them on a daily basis. Yanetzi thoroughly studies the CACFP guidelines and attends workshops to keep up-to-date on the newest regulations to help plan menus. She communicates the new changes to the parents and shares why they are better for the children. When implementing new recipes and ingredients she relies on teacher feedback and student reactions about those new items to improve future menu development and to create more appealing recipes.

CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.

The children take home the weekly menu, but nutrition and healthy habit communication goes beyond that for the families. Each month the children are given an assignment to go to the store with their guardians where they choose a fruit or vegetable that they would like to learn about and share with the class. At the end of class sharing time, a huge fruit salad is made and tasted. Along with nutrition resources, physical fitness classes and other learning opportunities are encouraged.

In addition to basic skills, Brenda, Yanetzi and the other staff members stress the importance of nutrition and teach the children that by eating healthy foods they are able to reduce health issues in their future and can lead a healthier, more active life. Teachers take the children to the grocery store to discuss food and they teach lessons during family style meals and snacks. It is imperative at Brenda's Kids Club Day Care Center for teachers to be role models and good sources of nutritional information for the kids in their care. They truly want these kids to live their best, healthy lives.

In Chicago, IL, Brenda's Kids Club Day Care Center has been a CACFP member through Illinois Board of Education since 2017.

