

Shirley Pokipala

Twenty five years ago as a young mother and newlywed, Shirley Pokipala found herself considering advice to care for a couple of children while raising her own. A year later, she stumbled upon a PATCH article and attended her first training to become a family childcare provider. Shirley went on to obtain her Child Development Associate and her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education. She turned that education and love of children into a full-fledge career in child care. Shirley has evolved from being what she calls, “a typical young provider with young children making an income” to becoming an “educator, a nurturing caretaker and someone making a difference in children’s lives.” She understands the importance of laying a good foundation in a child’s first five years of life and works towards helping them to grow and develop using the knowledge and skills she has attained throughout the years.

Shirley participates in the USDA Food Program to ensure quality nutrition for the children in her care. She feels it is important to work with the “whole child,” which not only includes the child him/herself, but also includes the child’s parents, culture, living environment, and other caregivers and relatives. She provides a secure place for the children and a welcoming place for the parents, understanding the uniqueness of each child and each parent. Shirley describes herself as “an expressive person who is down to earth.”

What parents had to say about Shirley:

“Shirley was the child care provider for both of my children. She not only provided a loving, safe, educational environment for my son and daughter but she taught me valuable parenting skills throughout the years...She has taught me to be a better parent and for that I will always be grateful to her...Shirley is a completely self-less person. She give her whole heart and soul to each child in her care.”

“Shirley has her home set up like a day care facility, apart from her living space...The children are the main focus for her during the day...How Shirley sets up her home to care for children starts the base for their school years...Throughout the years we were with Shirley, her home was always welcoming and clean. My children loved being with her and loved the environment she provided.”

“My daughter started at Shirley’s when she was just 4 months old and, as most parents are, we were so nervous leaving her so young. Shirley understands parent’s fears and concerns and really works closely with families to make the transition into child care easy for everyone. Shirley had a book just for my daughter that she would tell me about her day...I would read her notes and it really felt like we were a part of our daughter’s day. Simply priceless!”