

# Chicago Parent

April 1988

## My Own Meals

The night's finally arrived—you had to make your reservations three months ago, the sitter's on her way over, and you're going to dinner at Chicago's fabulous LaMirage Restaurant.

But suddenly everywhere you look you see little shining faces smiling up at you, haunting you, reminding you that the refrigerator's practically empty, the cupboards are all but bare, and the sitter can't cook anyway—she's only thirteen! Guilt washes over you in high-cholesterol, non-nutritive waves of sucrose and MSG. How can you lavish this wonderful night out on yourself and consign the children to another crummy frozen pizza, cheapo cookies and sugary soda pop?

Well, Mary Ann Jackson has come to your rescue. She may not be able to do anything about your guilt, but she can certainly help your children's nutrition when you're not home to prepare meals. Her company, My Own Meals, Inc., caters to children whose parents want them to eat something healthier than fast food. She provides well-balanced, tasty, and appealing meals that children like.

It all started when Mary Ann went back to work after her son was born. She found herself worrying about what the sitter was feeding her children, so she cooked and froze meals and left instructions for the sitter. "I got really tired of Spaghetios," she says. Before long, friends started calling her up with suggestions and questions, and Mary Ann, who was working for a major food company, began to develop and test various menus.

My Own Meals include such delectable kiddy items as chicken and rice with peas and carrots ("The kids we tested kept asking, 'How come there's no chicken and rice?' I'd never have thought of that otherwise," Mary Ann says); chicken with corn, potatoes and carrots; turkey meatballs; beef meatballs and macaroni with barley, and lentils in a creamy tomato sauce.

"My foods are formulated for *children's* tastes and nutrition, and come in portioned sizes. It's the kind of food mothers will feel good about serving. They don't need to rely on junk," Mary Ann says.

There are no preservatives in any of the foods, and the only artificial ingredients are the vitamin enrichments. My Own Meals will be available in area grocery stores around the end of April. If you'd like to try them before then, call Mary Ann at 948-1118.