



Rural Development • Rural Housing Service • Community Facilities Direct Loan

## Serving More Rural Families with Expanded Child Care Center

Casselton, a town of 2,500 people, is like many rural communities across North Dakota struggling with the lack of available child care. In an effort to combat the shortage of services, the Sunshine Center recently expanded by building a new daycare and preschool facility.

“We, as well as other child care providers in the community, always have a long waiting list,” said Sunshine Co-Director Jessica Hoglund. “With the completion of our new building, five families will immediately benefit from our additional openings. As we hire more staff, we will be able to provide care for more children and continue to reduce our wait list.”



*Infants at the new Sunshine Center. left to right: McKinzie Keller, Hallie Hoglund, and Reese Myren. Leo Davis is in the swing in the background.*

With a \$969,300 Community Facilities loan from USDA Rural Development, the center built a 5,400-square-foot facility with the capacity to accommodate up to 88 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age. This increased their previous capacity by almost 30 children. The daycare opened in May of 2016, the culmination of over eight years of planning and hard work.

Sunshine’s previous facility served 60 children from two separate locations, leased space from a local motel and the other a school-owned facility. The separation created logistical issues for families when picking up and dropping off multiple children. It also made it difficult to provide meals to both locations.

The new facility solves all of those issues by bringing the children and amenities under one roof for convenience and improved efficiency. The building features fingerprinting for secure access and has a large, commercial kitchen. Ideally located near the city’s park, swimming pool and library, the center also has its own 5,000-square-foot outdoor play area with equipment.

Hoglund said that the new facility would not have been possible without the USDA financing, which accounted for more than 80 percent of construction costs.

**Obligation Amount:** \$969,300 Community Facilities loan

**Date of Obligation:** December 2015

**Congressional District:** Representative Cramer, ND-1; Senators Hoeven and Heitkamp

**Partners:** North Dakota Department of Commerce

**Demographics:** Community of Casselton (population 2,500)

**Impact:** Expanding child care services that are in high demand, which is evident by the provider’s waiting list. This project is providing parents with quality, reliable child care.