

# Beautiful Oasis Childcare

## A Provider Success Story from Maricopa County



### Beautiful Oasis Childcare

- ADHS Licensed Child Care Center
- For infants to school-aged children
- Two Locations in Mesa, Maricopa County
  - Southern Avenue
    - Opened 2016
    - Quality First: 4-star
    - \$200,000 Grant
  - Stapley Drive
    - Opened 2017
    - Quality First: 3-star
    - \$160,000 Grant

[beautifuloasischildcare.com](http://beautifuloasischildcare.com)

**“We have made incredible improvements to the overall look and feel of both our centers. I would never have been able to do all of this without this funding.”** — Toshina Thames

As the owner of two Beautiful Oasis Childcare centers, Toshina Thames knows intimately the challenges of running child care businesses. With so many pressing demands, it's difficult for child care businesses to make facility improvements without increasing costs for families. That's why Toshina is thrilled about the improvements made possible by the infrastructure grants.

“My passion is to educate children,” said Toshina. “Because of that, we emphasize teacher training and professional development in our centers so that children receive the highest quality education.”

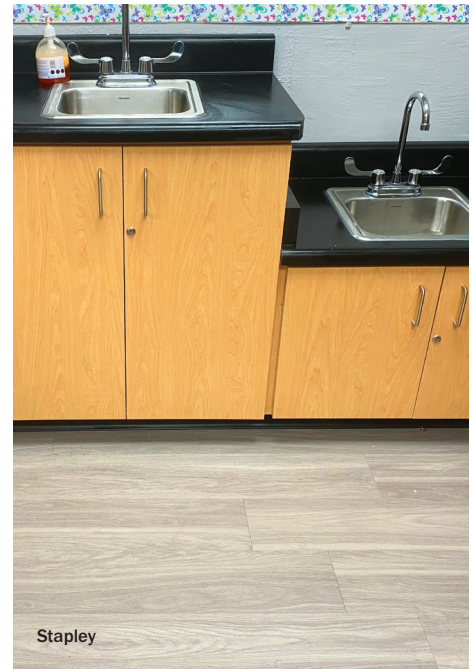
Toshina made several updates to Beautiful Oasis Childcare locations on Southern Avenue and Stapley Drive in Mesa. Both centers are in communities where there is limited access to child care and serve a majority of children whose families are eligible for child care assistance through the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The Beautiful Oasis locations are off bus lines in mixed-use neighborhoods, which also makes them convenient for families to access.

Toshina used most of the funds for the Southern location to redo the playground. Previously, the Southern playground was divided into two areas—one for 0-5 years and another for 6-12 years. This was not ideal for safety or motor skill development. Now there are three separate playground spaces uniquely designed with age-

appropriate equipment for 0-2 years, 3-5 years, and 6-12 years. Toshina removed the old rough gravel and installed beautiful shade structures to make the space more comfortable for the children.

The Stapley location received a complete renovation. Every classroom received new sinks, cabinets, and countertops. Toshina replaced the old carpet with tile flooring that makes it easier to clean accidents and spills. The kitchen cabinets were replaced, and the counters updated to antimicrobial surfaces, reducing germs and bacteria. Staff now have an overhauled breakroom and a bathroom that has been brought up to building code. Toshina improved the safety of the outdoor space by replacing the crumbling brick wall and adding new playground items. Toshina hopes these grant improvements will help increase the Stapley location's Quality First rating and lower her insurance costs, stretching each dollar further.

Toshina upgraded the security systems at both centers with key fobs for parents to enter at one site and a keypad at the other. New iPads ensure both locations have the same equipment, making training processes more seamless for staff and improving the adoption of ProCare child care management software. With this new technology, Beautiful Oasis will shift to paperless invoicing and electronic reporting, freeing up more staff time for the care and education of the kids.



## Arizona Child Care Infrastructure Grant

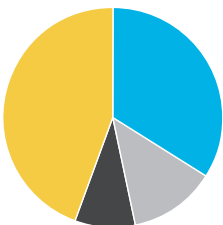
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is one the country’s largest community development organizations, helping forge vibrant, resilient communities across America. In 2022-23, the Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES) and First Things First (FTF) awarded \$65 million to LISC Phoenix for child care infrastructure grants, training, and technical assistance. This funding came from the Child Care Stabilization Grants appropriated in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021. Child care providers received nearly \$60 million to rapidly improve and expand their facilities increasing access to high-quality early childhood learning environments statewide.

The need was substantial: Arizona providers submitted 969 applications requesting more than \$176 million in funding in just two weeks. Providers from 14 of Arizona’s 15 counties applied.

Equity was a focus: Child care providers located in low-to-moderate income areas with limited access to child care were the first priority. Additional priorities included providers caring for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children who receive child care assistance through the ADES, as well as providers with waitlists and those open nights and weekends.

Ultimately, 478 sites received grants with an average award of \$124,750.

### Statewide

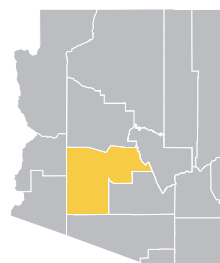


#### Grants Awarded by Provider Type

- 323 ADHS Licensed Centers received \$52,615,115
- 88 ADHS Certified Group Homes received \$4,312,397
- 63 ADES Certified Family Child Care Homes received \$1,600,000
- 4 Tribal Providers received \$1,103,048

**Total: \$59,630,560**

### Maricopa County



#### Highlights

- 475 applications requesting \$99,495,890
- 207 grants awarded totaling \$31,105,945
- 1,205 new child care slots created
- 89% of grantees increased quality of outdoor play space
- 1 in 5 grantees increased care for infants and toddlers
- 45% of grantees removed hazards in outdoor activity spaces