

Updated 08/22/2014

**Kids' Co-operative Cambridge**  
**Policies and Procedures**

**I. OVERVIEW**

Kids' Co-operative Cambridge is a group of parents and Caregivers who value and love children. We wish to create a stimulating and safe environment where children are free to play, explore, learn, and socialize with their peers and experience the supervision of another adult. Co -op provides parents and Caregivers an informal forum for sharing ideas on parenting young children, time to interact with and meet other adults, and some "kid free" personal time each week.

Kids' Co-operative Cambridge is located at Responsible Grace Church of the Nazarene in Davis Square at 52 Russell Street, Cambridge, MA 02140.

Co-op is open from 9 AM to 11:50 AM Monday through Friday excluding holidays and snow days (according to the Cambridge Public Schools calendar and snow day announcements).

Co-op has an open floor plan for circle time, reading, dress-up, kitchen play, arts and crafts, puzzles, blocks, snack time, group activities, and music time. There is also a two-story loft, a train table, a doll house, and a bus. Additionally, we have bathroom facilities convenient to our room.

There are 15 member families. Each family is responsible for one caregiving shift per week (the parent's "work day") and one Co-op job that contributes to Co-op's functioning. The maximum number of children attending on any day (including infants) is 12. The ratio of children to Caregivers will never exceed 4:1 (this includes any siblings that parents may bring along during that parent's work day). Of the accompanying siblings, there may be only one infant at Co-op per day. Infant is defined as less than one year old. The maximum number of Co-op member children at any one time is 20. Each child may stay at Co-op three scheduled mornings per week. On one of those three mornings, that child's parent

also stays to work as one of the three Caregivers scheduled to work that day. On the other two mornings, the child may be dropped off or accompanied.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP POLICIES**

Members join on a first-come, first-served, nondiscriminatory basis. New members are taken from the Waiting List. Former members who left in good standing are "grandfathered in" to continuing membership at the Co-op and will be placed at the top of the Wait List.

For the smooth functioning of Co-op, it is strongly recommended that members meet the following guidelines:

- Members are able to read and understand all Co-op documents and are able to communicate effectively in English with other Caregivers and with the children for safety purposes.
- Members have Internet access. Members must be able to check email and be able to respond at least once a week - daily is ideal. This is the main way we are able to communicate with each other since we don't see each other every day. Members must also be able to access our Yahoo! Group website, as that is the source for all of our internal Co-op files such as our Schedule, Contact List, Calendar, and Co-op job-related documents.
- Members pay fees on time.
- Members have some flexibility in their weekly schedules to be able to substitute for other members in case of illness or other contingencies.
- Member children need to be able to safely navigate the loft equipment. If a child is unable to safely navigate the loft equipment, it is the parent's responsibility to stay during drop off days to ensure safety until the child can safely navigate the loft equipment.

When families join Co-op, they can decide if just one parent will be the Caregiver who works on the work day or if both parents will be Caregivers. For example, the parents of a child may have flexible work schedules or changing work schedules.

Some weeks parent 1 may be available to work as Caregiver; other weeks parent 2 may be available to work. Families are asked to decide at the beginning of the year how they will participate. If both parents want to work as a Caregiver, both

parents will need to go through training. If a member family wants an extended family member such as a grandparent to be the designated Co-op Caregiver instead of a child's parent, board approval is required. If approved, the extended family member would need to go through training. In addition, one parent can decide to hold the Co-op job while the other parent is the Caregiver or both parents may decide to hold the Co-op job together even if only one parent is the designated Co-op Caregiver.

All members must meet the expectations set forth in the Policies and Procedures, the Job Descriptions document, and the Caregivers' Typical Day document. If there are concerns that a member is not meeting expectations, a Board member, Advocacy, or President should be contacted. Any lapses in meeting Co-op expectations should be documented in writing and communicated to the member. If there are three lapses in meeting Co-op expectations, Advocacy and President confer with the Board and meet with the member to review expectations and to inform the member that s/he is on probation. If there is a fourth lapse in meeting expectations, the Board can vote (2/3 majority) to terminate membership immediately. The departing member would receive a pro-rated tuition reimbursement minus \$50 per missed shift until a new member can take his/her place.

As of September 1st of each school year, children attending Co-op must be between 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  years old, able to walk, and able to negotiate stairs without help. The Board may, on a case-by-case basis, grant exceptions to these requirements for returning members or siblings. There will be no exceptions for new members.

## **A. FEES**

Fees are payable by semester at the start of each semester (not per month). Fees are subject to change from one semester to the next. No refunds will be given when members take vacations or miss scheduled Co-op time. If you leave Co-op mid-semester, you may have to forfeit your tuition. If you come into Co-op mid-semester, your tuition will be pro-rated. Each semester is 20 weeks long (Fall

semester starts in September, Spring in February). If Co-op ever needs to close unexpectedly due to weather, maintenance, or other issues, days will be added to the end of the school year to compensate (see Holidays / Inclement Weather). No child can attend Co-op without a completed medical form and until tuition, deposits, and fees are paid in full.

**Current Fees:**

Application Fee: \$30, non-refundable

Tuition Deposit: \$100 deposit

*This deposit holds membership for the coming year and is applied toward the first semester's tuition rate as listed below. Should a member cancel membership prior to the first day of Co-op in September, this deposit is forfeited. Even returning members make a tuition deposit.*

Meeting Deposit: \$100, refundable after fulfilling attendance requirements

Tuition: \$460 for one child per semester  
\$400 for any additional child per semester  
\$130 per semester for any non-infant sibling who attends work days only\*\*  
\$6.50 per day for a visiting non-infant sibling who attends a work day

\*\* Note: An infant, defined as 0 - 1 year old, can attend Co-op for free on the Caregiver's work day.

In the event of a tuition reimbursement, a new member entering mid-semester, or a sibling visiting for a day, calculate fees using the following information:

1 semester is 20 weeks long

1 week of first child tuition at Co-op is \$22.50

1 day of first child tuition at Co-op is \$7.50

## **Fee Payment Schedule:**

- Tuition and Meeting Deposit for the Fall semester are due at the August General Meeting.
- Tuition for the Spring semester is due by the January Cleaning Night.
- Tuition Deposit for new members is due upon acceptance.
- Tuition Deposit for returning members is due May 1.

## **Fee Reimbursements**

It is possible for tuition to be reimbursed to members departing mid-semester. However, no tuition refunds are available if a member gives notice to depart after October 31 during the Fall semester and after March 31 during the Spring semester.

### **B. DEPARTING CO-OP MID-SEMESTER**

When departing Co-op mid-semester, members are required to give six weeks' notice prior to their last day at Co-op. The departing member must work their shifts during that period or until a new member can join and cover their shifts, whichever happens first. For each shift missed, \$50 would be deducted from any tuition refund or meeting deposit refund due to that member (or collected from the departing member, as necessary). The \$50 would be paid by Co-op to the member who fills the shift missed by the departing member. Departing members should fulfill all swap obligations prior to leaving Co-op. For any exceptions to this policy, there needs to be board approval.

During Spring semester, members have until March 31st to give notice if they intend to leave before the end of the school year. If they give notice after that time, they forfeit any remaining tuition and their entire deposit. The member would remain responsible for finding people to cover their remaining shifts for the year, in the manner and with the consequences described above.

For any member leaving mid-year, on the last day for that member, everyone is invited to attend Co-op from 11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. to say their good-byes. The departing member is responsible for sharing something special such as muffins,

cupcakes, or stickers. The Events Coordinator is responsible for reminding the departing member to consider bringing something to share and for emailing the entire group about the departing member's last day.

Members departing mid-year are requested to complete an Exit Interview via phone, email, or face-to-face with Membership. Information from this interview would be shared with Board Members.

## **C. MEMBER REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. DROP OFF DAYS**

If your child will be absent, send an email to the Yahoo Group to provide notice of that fact. There are no "make-up" days for your child's absences.

When you arrive at Co-op, please help your child hang up all clothing on his/her designated hook. If applicable, change from outdoor boots to inside shoes. Be sure to check in with a Caregiver about any relevant information or particular concerns regarding your child.

If your child has never been left before and has a difficult time in your absence, plan to leave your child for short periods of time (perhaps as short as 15 minutes to start). Increase the length of time as your child becomes more comfortable with the environment. Try to help your child create a special bond with one Caregiver on each day he or she will be dropped off.

While your child is at Co-op, you (or your partner) must be able to be reached, as you may be called and requested to come back to Co-op.

While Co-op Caregivers try not to call parents unless the parents are immediately needed to return, parents may be called for the following reasons:

- If a child has cried for 10 minutes and is still unable to be consoled
- If a child has insufficient clothing
- If a child is ill

- If a child requests to call the parent (If, over time, the parent feels the child does this too often for insufficient cause, the parent may then direct that day's Caregivers not to grant this request.)

If a child has hit or displayed other forms of unwelcome physical behavior 3 times during a Co-op day, the parent will be called to take the child home immediately.

Arrive no later than 11:50am to pick up your child and to "check off" your child's name on the attendance board. If you arrive at 11:55 or later, this will automatically be considered a late pick up (time based on everyone's cell phone time instead of Co-op's wall clocks). The Board member working that day will inform the member that it is a late pick up. Board members will notify Advocacy of any late pickups, and Advocacy will keep track of late pickups. If a parent arrives after 11:55 a.m. three times, Advocacy will advise the parent that if s/he is late again, a \$15 late pick-up fee will be charged. If the parent continues to arrive late three more times, incurring a \$15 late pick-up fee each time, the Board member will bring the issue to the Board for further discussion and action.

Be sure to check in with a Caregiver to get the details of any events or situations that may have happened that day. Please also help the Caregivers put the toys away so that everyone, Caregivers included, can go home on time. Pick-up time can be confusing and Caregivers may be distracted by arriving parents and departing families. Do not "check off" your child's name until you are re-assuming responsibility for your child. Parents need to be clear - "I'm taking Isaiah." Remember to state clearly to the Caregivers that you are leaving with your child (and whomever else you may be picking up that day). For example, "Anne, thanks a lot. I'm taking Benjamin." This will help the Caregivers keep straight the kids who are picked up and those who remain. If a parent is unable to pick up their child, Caregivers must be notified in advance of who will be picking up the child; Caregivers should then check that person's ID before releasing the child to that person's care.

Your child may stay at Co-op on a day that he/she is not regularly scheduled if you are also staying that day as a substitute Caregiver. However, short-term and one-off changes for your child's drop day(s) are not permitted. In order to best ensure safety, the children on any given day should not vary week-to-week so that

the Caregivers may develop a relationship with the children. This also makes it much easier to keep track of the children, particularly at transition times during the Co-op day. Long-term schedule changes are permitted only as long as they fit in with Co-op rules and practices. Webmaster maintains the Weekly Schedule.

## **2. WORK DAYS**

### **a. CAREGIVER COVERAGE**

The recommended arrival time for Caregivers is 8:30am. Caregivers must arrive at Co-op no later than 8:45am. If circumstances force a Caregiver to arrive later than 8:45am, that Caregiver should notify that day's other Caregivers.

Members are required to work once/week (on a scheduled day) or to find another member to work their shift. In order to provide maximum consistency for the children, partners may not substitute for each other at will. However, a family when joining can decide that one parent will do the work day and one parent will do the job or that both parents will alternate working on scheduled work days.

In order to conform to required parent/child ratios, there may be (in rare cases) the need to ask a child/children to stay home. This should only be considered an option if the responsible member has researched all other options. The member(s) who needed to keep a child home should be compensated by the responsible member in one of the following ways:

- The responsible member would work one caregiving shift for the affected member(s).
- The member(s) whose child(ren) were asked to stay home would be refunded for that day by Co-op and the responsible member - \$10 from Co-op; \$5 from the responsible member [*Note - these amounts may be updated*]
- The responsible member could arrange to babysit for the affected member(s) for some amount of time.

### **b. SWAPPING DAYS**

In general, a member is expected to work on his/her scheduled workday. However, there are often circumstances that cause members to swap workdays amongst

themselves. Sometimes the swaps are next day surprises (a child's fever), and sometimes they are foreseen events (new baby, long vacation). When possible, arrange swaps as far ahead of time as you can, so that the Co-op Calendar may be updated, and parents and children can know who will be the Caregivers on any particular day ahead of time.

When a member swaps workdays with another member, the member no longer working that day **might not** be able to drop off his/her child, even though that child usually attends Co-op on that day. This is because the covering member will need to bring his/her child(ren) in order to cover the workday, and the 4:1 maximum ratio must be respected. If the member still wants to drop off his/her child on a day that that member usually works but swapped, the member first needs to ensure that the ratio will be respected even if the child is dropped off. If so, the member then also needs to notify that day's Caregivers that there will be, in essence, more children attending that day than usual.

Once two members have agreed upon a swap, one of those two members needs to update the Yahoo! Group Calendar as soon as possible or have the Webmaster do it. As soon as a member changes the Calendar, that member needs to email any and all other members who were affected by the change - even if the Calendar change seems obvious, a confirmation email of the change must be sent to the other involved parties.

### **c. MATERNITY LEAVE**

Members can take up to eight consecutive weeks of Maternity Leave. During Maternity Leave the member's child may continue coming to Co-op during drop-off days. It is the member's responsibility to find coverage for the work days missed during Maternity Leave. A member can swap a work day with another member prior to the start of Maternity Leave thus "banking" days. A member can have her spouse or partner work all or some of the Maternity Leave. However, for a spouse or partner to work, like new members, the partner or spouse must be trained by Membership by coming into Co-op two times before Maternity Leave begins in order to learn the routines and to become familiar with and a familiar face to the children. If a member is unable to find coverage for a Maternity Leave work day,

like any other missed work day, Co-op would find someone to work, but the member would be charged \$50, and that money would be paid to the member who worked that day. It is the member's responsibility either to continue doing her

Co-op Job during Maternity Leave or to identify member(s) who will take on job tasks during the Maternity Leave. How the member's Co-op Job will be handled during Maternity Leave needs to be communicated by the member in writing to the group prior to the start of Maternity Leave. If a member is on Maternity Leave, that member is not responsible for attending Co-op events including Cleaning Nights and General Meetings. No fees would apply.

#### **d. MEDICAL LEAVE / EXTENDED LEAVE**

The maximum consecutive time off for Medical Leave or Extended Leave is eight weeks. Substitutions for Medical Leave or an Extended Leave must be arranged in advance. If a member is on Medical Leave, that member is not responsible for attending Co-op events including Cleaning Nights and General Meetings. No fees would apply. Long term care of a sick family member or attending a family funeral does not necessarily count as medical leave. For such situations, the Board will make decisions regarding time off from Co-op on a case by case basis.

### **3. SNACK**

Every day, the children receive a snack at Co-op that contains both a dry starch (crackers, rice cakes, etc.), fresh produce, and a protein such as cheese, hummus, or almond butter. Co-op buys a variety of dry snacks and protein to be on-hand every day. One Caregiver each day is responsible for buying and preparing the fresh produce part of snack, then assembling the complete snacks for the children.

The fresh produce should be:

- something that all children attending that day can eat (check the allergies list).
- organic.

- washed and prepared into bite-size pieces ahead of time (no choking hazards).

Grapes, when served, always need to be cut in half.

Cheese, when served, should be made from organic milk.

Co-op has a "One Snack For All" policy. This means that all children will be offered the same snack. If there are certain foods listed on the Allergy List, then those foods will never be served at Co-op.

Co-op has a "No Peanuts" policy. This means that no peanuts can be present during Co-op operation hours. The church space, however, is not a nut free zone.

#### **4. DIAPERS / POTTY TRAINING**

If a child wears a diaper, members should take care to make sure the child arrives at Co-op wearing as fresh a diaper as possible.

It is Co-op policy to change diapers only after bowel movements. When changing a diaper

- Use gloves while changing a diaper.
- Put the diaper in a plastic bag and seal / tie it before throwing it away in the diaper pail.
- After the change, throw the gloves out into the diaper pail.
- Wipe the changing table mat down with peroxide spray and paper towels. Let the mat air dry.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.

Co-op encourages children to be independent in self care, including potty training. Whether your child is just learning to use the potty or is already trained, Caregivers provide opportunities for children to use the bathroom several times throughout the morning. If your child is in the first few weeks/months of potty training, he/she will be taken to the potty during the scheduled time after snack and upon the child's request. Children often learn from each other and are more willing to try something new if they are with a friend. We ask that your child

wear a pull up during Co-op hours until he/she is demonstrating 90% independence with using the potty at home and outside of the home for several weeks before wearing underwear to Co-op. Co-op Caregivers are capable of handling potty accidents that occur on occasion, but if your child is having one or more accidents in underwear each day, he/she should remain in pull ups at Co-op until more independence is achieved. Parents of potty-training children should still be extra-prepared in terms of providing changes of clothes for their children (including, perhaps, even extra shoes).

## 5. SANITATION

Hand washing is a significant protection against the spread of many communicable diseases. It takes about 20 seconds of soaping up with water and lots of bubbles to wash away germs. There is no need for significant germicides or antibacterials - just soap and water.

- All Caregivers must wash hands when arriving and after every visit to the bathroom or changing table.
- Food preparers and servers wash hands before touching food, dishes, or cups.
- Children have their hands washed before snack time and after every visit to the potty. While washing the children's hands, sing one song with each kid (for about 20 seconds). We're teaching them a lifelong habit of taking time to wash hands.

Purell hand sanitizer is located throughout the Co -op space for Caregivers to use after helping kids with runny noses or other such events.

Before snack, we wash down the tables with a bleach/water solution.

Every day, dishes are washed with soapy hot water and air dried. Toys which were in a child's mouth are placed in the Mouthed Toy bin are washed in soapy hot water and air dried by that day's Cleaner.

Co-op sponges need to be replaced once a month and soaked in peroxide once a week by Cleaning Coordinator.

## **6. SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

If a child is missing, call the police 3-5 minutes after it is noticed the child is missing.

Co-op has an Evacuation Plan for emergencies such as fire alarms. All members must read this document before the beginning of the Co-op year. It is also posted on the Co-op bulletin board by Health / Safety. Health / Safety, along with other Board members, will conduct Evacuation Drills at the beginning of each semester.

If you notice anything that needs repair or attention or that seems unsafe, send an email to the group. If it requires immediate attention, also notify Health / Safety by phone and/or email.

All members are very strongly encouraged to take a CPR class each year, and it is highly recommended that all members take a First Aid class. Health / Safety will arrange a CPR class at the beginning of the year for Co-op members. For those not able to attend that session, please look for information about classes in the community. At least one person on each day should feel confident that they can administer infant/child CPR and First Aid. All Co-op Board members will get CPR training (see "Co-op Governance" for an explanation of the Co-op Board structure.). Co-op will fund half the cost of a CPR class up to \$40. Co-op is willing to pay more if someone still felt this created a financial hardship. Money should not prevent anyone who wanted to from taking the class. Co-op asks that anyone who feels they are in a position to request a smaller or no subsidy to please do so. Only CPR classes taken in August or later in the Co-op year would qualify for reimbursement. To be reimbursed, members should put receipts into the Treasurer's folder on the Co-op bulletin board.

## **7. CHILDREN'S SAFETY**

At the end of the day, the parents of any children involved in any hurtful or scary incidences need to be told what happened during the day. For instance, if Julia had pushed Aidan, both Julia and Aidan's parents would be told of the incident at pick-up. Also, the Board member on that day will report via email to Advocacy every instance of physical behavior, who was involved, and the context. By doing

so, we will be able to respond to any patterns that develop in a timely and collaborative manner as well as to realize which points in the Co-op day may need a different approach (for instance, the transition time from snack to group activity).

If Advocacy sees that on two days within a week or two specific weekdays in a row (for instance, Wednesday and Wednesday), one child was involved in physical altercations, Advocacy will notify the parent of the child that there may be a pattern we should try to figure out and will then also notify the Caregivers for the next day the child attends so that they can be prepared for more of a proactive approach. If there is a third altercation despite the heightened awareness on the part of the Caregivers, then the parent may be asked to escort the child for a time to help the Caregivers understand what's going on, to help the Caregivers and the child work together, and to prevent further physical altercations via the parent's more one-on-one attention. Advocacy will send a Co-op-wide email to let the group know what is going on to allow for a collaborative, brainstorming approach so as to help avoid future altercations and to help Caregivers know about other days' concerns in case a Caregiver works a different day than usual due to a swap.

As soon as each one of the two drop-off days' Caregivers feel the parent's "guardian angel"ship is no longer necessary to prevent physical altercations, the Board member for that specific day can let the parent know that that day can resume being a drop-off day. On the other hand, if, after two weeks of escort, the child is still involved in physical altercations *despite* the parent's escort, Advocacy may propose another approach (for instance, a schedule change so a particular dynamic is avoided). If Advocacy's approach is not accepted by the involved parties or if two additional weeks pass without improvement despite the strategies tried, then a family may be asked to leave Co-op.

Under no circumstances will a Caregiver hit a child. If a Caregiver hits a child, the family's membership at Co-op will be terminated immediately.

If there is ever an incident in which a Caregiver behaves inappropriately, the incident should be reported to Advocacy and President. Advocacy and President will determine a range of next steps depending on the situation. In the case of

minor infractions (e.g. excessively raising one's voice), Advocacy could review the situation with the Caregiver, and they could come up with ways of handling the situation in the future that fall within Co-op's philosophy. If there are repeated problematic incidents by a particular Caregiver, Advocacy and President may raise the issue with the Board. In extreme cases, the member would be asked to leave Co-op immediately and would receive a prorated tuition reimbursement minus \$50 per missed shift until a new member can take his/her place.

## **8. CO-OP JOB**

All members are required to take on a job that serves the needs of Co-op. It will take approximately 1-4 hours/week, on average, in addition to the weekly caregiving day. The positions are: Advocacy, Classroom Manager, Cleaning Coordinator, Co-Presidents, Curriculum I, Curriculum II, Events Coordinator, Health / Safety, Membership, Outreach, Purchaser, Recruiter, Treasurer, and Webmaster. Please see the Co-op document "Job Descriptions" to see the exact duties of each of these positions.

### **D. GENERAL MEETINGS**

General meetings for the adult members are held every other month (August, October, December, February, and April). Children should not be present at these meetings. Each member may miss only one general meeting per year. If you miss more than one meeting, you will be fined \$25 per meeting missed. Unless approved by the President, partners may not attend meetings in place of the member.

### **E. CLEANING NIGHTS**

There are five major clean-ups per year: Set-Up Day in September, three mid-year cleanings, and June Clean-Up. Each member must attend both September Set-Up Day and June Clean-Up. Each member must attend two of the three mid-year cleanings. Missing more than one of these mid-year clean-ups or missing either the September Set-Up Day or the June Clean-Up will result in a fine (\$25 per missed meeting). Clean -ups take approximately two and a half hours and are held on a weekday evening with the exception of Set-Up Day. Members are

expected to arrive on time and stay for the full time allotted for the cleaning or until the job is done. Spouses or partners can attend with (or instead of) the member.

All members are expected to take home two bins of toys to clean during each of the five cleanings. If you do not attend a Cleaning Night, you are still obliged to wash two bins.

Bins should be taken home to wash on your last Co-op day the week before Cleaning Night and returned to Co-op by Cleaning Night OR by your first Co-op day the week of Cleaning Night. If you do not take and return the bins by one week after Cleaning Night, you will be charged \$5 a day until the bins are returned. Cleaning Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the return of all bins and informing members and Treasurer of any fines.

## **F. OPEN HOUSES**

Twice a year, in October and February, Co -op organizes an Open House. All members, whether or not they attend the Open House, are expected to contribute in some fashion to the success of these Open Houses, whether by doing advance work (signage, food prep, advertising) or by working at the event.

## **G. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Before the first day of Co-op, input all other members' phone numbers into your personal cell phone. This will help you in case of any emergency evacuation while at Co-op and if you are running late for your workday. As Co-op membership may turnover a bit throughout the year, make sure to keep updating your cell phone's phonebook. Also, make sure your contact information is correct in the Yahoo! Group. Make sure that the Medical Form and Emergency Contact Form is always current.

## **H. PHONE USE**

There is a land line phone at Co-op located in the kitchen next to the microwave. This phone is for emergency use. When contacting emergency services, use the land line phone so that our address can be established. Members are expected to bring their cell phone on their work day and to have it on during their work day.

## I. HOLIDAYS / INCLEMENT WEATHER

Co-op follows the Cambridge Public Schools calendar. Co-op will close if Cambridge Public Schools are **either** closed **or** delayed. Additionally, we welcome families to share their holiday traditions with the Co-op. We have removed any curriculum based holiday songs, crafts, and activities while encouraging anyone interested in sharing their own family tradition.

It is the President's responsibility to notify Co-op members via a Yahoo Group email of a non-scheduled Co-op school closure prior to the start of a Co-op day (e.g. Cambridge Public Schools closes due to inclement weather). If Co-op needs to close while it is in session due to inclement weather, it is that day's Board member's responsibility to make the decision, to notify families to pick up children, and to remain at Co-op until the last child is picked up.

## J. SIBLINGS

For various reasons, some members may need to bring a Co-op child's sibling to Co-op on occasion. Perhaps this sibling is a new baby who will need to come regularly during the member's workday, or perhaps it is an older child who may come along only while the parent is helping a new Co-op child adjust (and thus the family is staying even during the 'drop-off' days for a time). In either case, **the sibling is there because the parent needs to be there**. No non-member children may be "dropped off". Only full-fledged Co-op member children may be dropped off.

In any case, before bringing a sibling to Co-op, the member must first be sure that:

- There will be no more than one infant at Co-op at a time (defined as under one year-old).
- The ratio of children to adults will not become more than 4:1.

Then, the member must pay a fee (see Fee Schedule) so that the sibling may formally attend Co-op that day. By doing so, all three Caregivers working that day will be responsible for that sibling's safety, not just the parent. This is important in the case of any emergency evacuation, but it is also important during the day-to-day roles of the Caregivers, as some Caregiver tasks need to be done away from the main play space, away from the children (i.e., in the kitchen area).

## **K. CRAFT SUPPLIES**

Co-op is always happy to receive newspaper, toilet paper rolls, paper towel rolls, egg cartons, baby food jars, etc. to help stock our craft supplies!

## **L. LOANING EQUIPMENT**

In general, members are discouraged from loaning any item to Co-op for a period of time longer than one Co-op day. We are not the only tenants in our space, and it is impossible to guarantee any item's condition. If a member, despite this warning, chooses to loan an item to Co-op on a long-term basis, that member does so at his/her own risk. Co-op will not reimburse that member in case of damage.

Likewise, if a member chooses to bring in something from home to use as a prop during a Co-op workday, unsolicited by Co-op, the member does so at his/her own risk, and Co-op will not reimburse that member if the item is damaged over the course of the Co-op day. However, there are occasions upon which Co-op may ask members for a short-term loan, (for instance, for a punch bowl for a Co-op party event). In that case, if a member is willing to make the loan, yet the item is damaged during the Co-op event, Co-op will replace the item in the following way:

- First, Co-op will attempt to locate and purchase a used replacement.
- If, however, by the end of the Co-op semester, a replacement has not been purchased and given to the loaning member, Co-op will reimburse the Co-op member the cost of a new replacement up to \$100.

## **III. CO-OP GOVERNANCE**

### **A. DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATION**

As mentioned above, each of the 15 Co-op members holds a job that serves the needs of Co-op. Of the 15 positions, 5 are Board positions - Advocacy, Co-Presidents, Curriculum, and Treasurer. These positions, in addition to their job-specific duties, form the 'government' of Co-op.

Each day of Co-op, exactly one Board member is scheduled to work as a Caregiver. That Board member then represents the other Caregivers who work that day at the monthly Board meetings. Members who have concerns, questions, or suggestions should contact their Board representative first. The Board representative will bring up the matter at the next Board meeting.

In the case of an unexpected cancellation of Co-op (for example, due to weather), the Board member for that day is responsible for contacting the other Co-op families who expect to attend or work that day.

The Board meets every six to eight weeks. Various Co-op business and issues are discussed, and any necessary votes are taken at each meeting. All members are invited to attend Board meetings and may have a vote if present at a meeting. A two-thirds majority of those members in attendance at that particular general/board meeting will decide the vote.

Board members rotate the responsibility of taking the minutes of each Board meeting and post them to the Yahoo! Group for all members to review.

The President sets the dates of all meetings and events, using the Co-op Annual Calendar and Cambridge Public Schools Calendars as reference.

This Policy and Procedures document is a written document voted on by the entire Co-operative and maintained by the President. This document states all rules and standards the group agrees to follow for a smooth running Co-operative. The permanent Policies and Procedures document is on file at Co-op. Any electronic versions are for reading purposes only. To update the document, the President works with the Board regarding each proposed change and then provides a completed draft to the Co-op members for a vote. A 2/3 majority vote is necessary to approve the new version. Absentee votes are counted as approvals.

## B. BUDGET AND OTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Each June, the current Treasurer and Board, working with the future Treasurer and Board, set the budget for the next year. The Budget is stored on the Yahoo Group site for every member's review and the President then notifies each person who was assigned a budget for their particular Co-op job of the amount they will have for the next school year. At the October General Meeting, the Treasurer presents the overall budget and revenue projection for the year to the group. The January Board Meeting is specifically for a "Budget Check-In" with the Treasurer to see if the year-so-far matches with the estimates.

It is the policy of Co-op to have two members as signatories at the bank. This is usually the Treasurer and the President. Each year, new signatories may be selected due to the transition of families joining and leaving Co-op and also due to exchanging roles amongst the remaining members. The exiting signatory members will go together with the new signatory members to the bank and make the changes. A copy of this Policy and Procedures handout should be taken with the members for documentation of this policy.

Our tax ID is 04-3282199.

Despite meeting eligibility requirements, we have not applied for tax exempt status. We may not pursue nor accept donations as a "charity" or "nonprofit organization" (which gives donors the benefit of a tax deduction), but we may raise funds with the exchange of tangible goods. If we raise funds with the exchange of tangible goods, we will need to register a sales and use tax of 5% with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The funds raised count towards our gross receipts. We are not required to formally file and pay taxes to the IRS as long as our annual gross receipts are under \$25K.

*NOTE:* We may have had tax exempt treatment in the past when our gross receipts were smaller than they are currently. Any organization (other than a private foundation) normally having annual gross receipts of not more than \$5000 is not required to apply for formal tax exempt status and is treated as tax exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) without being required to file form 1023. However, while our receipts are greater than \$5000, we would need to apply if we

wish to be tax exempt. In order to apply for tax exempt status as a recognized nonprofit under 501(c)(3), Kids Co -op would need to file form 1023. Each year thereafter Kids Co-op would need to file form 990-N electronically to maintain status.

### *And Remember...*

Since we are a Co-operative, we need everyone's help, involvement and participation. If not you-who? If not now-when? Ask not what your Co-op can do for you, but what you can do for your Co-op!

## **C. HEALTH GUIDELINES**

Co-op requests that families adhere to the Cambridge Public Schools' immunization policy.

If you or your child is sick, do not come to Co-op. If you or your child have had a fever of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea within the previous twenty-four hours, do not come to Co-op. Trade day(s) with another member until you and/or your child are/is well. As a general guideline, if you wish your child didn't have whatever they have, please do not bring them to Co-op to pass it on.

Stay home if any of the following symptoms are present or have been present anytime **within the 24 hours prior to attending Co-op:**

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher orally; or above 101 degrees rectally
- Diarrhea - frequent, loose or watery stools
- Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- Copious thick, opaque nasal mucus indicative of a bacterial infection
- Red, inflamed, or discharging eyes (pink eye or conjunctivitis, not allergy-related)
- Swollen glands around jaws, ears, or neck
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions.
- Earache
- Open sores, rashes, or abscesses suggestive of impetigo or staph infections
- Head or body lice (until treated and no nits are present for 24 hours)
- Sore throat, acute (intense) cold symptoms

- Any other symptom suggestive of serious illness, such as fatigue or excessive irritability accompanying a temperature
- Tonsillitis or any communicable disease
- Taking antibiotic medication for 24 hours

Any child diagnosed as having an infectious disease such as chicken pox must be cleared by a pediatrician or nurse practitioner to ensure that he/she does not come to Co-op while potentially contagious.

**Children should not return to school following illnesses until they have been free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours.**

These policies were based on the health policies of Cambridge Community Playgroups and the Belmont Co-operative Nursery School.