SUMMARY OF STEPS TO ORGANIZE A CHILD CARE CO-OP

Note: Each step represents a decision point for whether to proceed with organizing the cooperative.

1. Prepare for cooperative development
   Primary Goals:
   - Identify resources for assistance
   - Become better informed about the issues central to starting a child care center (licensing etc)
   - Begin to understand community child care needs and parent interest in a cooperative

2. Establish structure to coordinate organizing process. Clarify group needs & vision.
   Primary goals:
   - Clarify the child care needs of people in the organizing group and prospective members
   - Establish the leadership & structure for the organizing process.

3. Conduct a feasibility study; obtain baseline information for business plan.
   Primary Goal: estimate the start-up and operational costs and determine whether the cooperative is financially viable.

4. Initiate funding and membership commitments.
   Primary Goals:
   - Begin the funding processes
   - Obtain membership commitments & clarify participation expectations

5. Prepare a business plan
   Primary Goal: Prepare planning document that clearly communicates how the co-op will be structured, how it will operate, and how it will be financed.

6. Develop legal documents
   Primary Goals:
   - Select a name for the cooperative
   - Prepare draft membership agreement, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws

7. Hold the cooperative’s first, or charter meeting.
   Primary Goals:
   - Formally approve legal documents & elect the board of directors.
   - Celebrate an important accomplishment.

8. Prepare for business start-up and implement the business plan.
   Primary Goal: Prepare the cooperative to start operations

   Primary Goal: this step is a reminder that ongoing operations always refers back to the documents created during the organizing process.