Continuity of Operations (COOP) for Child Care Programs

What is it and Why is it Important?
Participants will be able to:

- Articulate the importance of having Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) in child care
- List the primary components of a COOP Plan
- Identify the resources available to child care programs to help support the COOP
COOP is a plan to eliminate or minimize interruptions to normal business operations in the event of an emergency/disaster.

What is a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)?
* All licensed child care programs must have a COOP according to the current NH Child Care Licensing Rules

* License-exempt child care programs that are enrolled to receive NH Child Care Scholarship must have a COOP according to the current NH License Exempt Rules
“Programs shall develop Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed during, or resumed rapidly after, a disruption of normal activities...”
Why have a COOP?

* Statistics show that 25% (1 in 4) businesses that are forced to close because of a disaster never reopen

* A COOP may decrease the time a child care program experiences disruption following an emergency/disaster
Importance of Child Care

Child care:
- Is an important support for families and communities
- Helps keep the economy moving by providing care for children while their families are working

What would happen if we lost a significant number of child care slots? Let’s take a look at a scenario.
Disaster Strikes . . .

Tornado  Flood  Hurricane
Disaster Strikes . . .

the West Side of Manchester. The potential number of licensed child care center slots lost:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Care Centers</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Licensed Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alpha Bits II</td>
<td>Allard Drive W. Manchester</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peter’s Home</td>
<td>Kelly Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Seals Child Development &amp; FRC</td>
<td>S. Main Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Marie Child Care Center</td>
<td>Wayne Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Growing Years</td>
<td>Harvell Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Licensed Capacity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1087</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And the potential number of licensed school age slots lost:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Age Programs</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Licensed Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YMCA – Polaris</td>
<td>Coolidge Ave. W. Manchester</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Morning - Northwest</td>
<td>Youville Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Morning – Parker Varney</td>
<td>James Pollock Drive W. Manchester</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Inc.</td>
<td>Varney Street W. Manchester</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Licensed Capacity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>297</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Day Without Child Care

* Let’s look at what happened in one town
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGpEXKgU20A
Possible Implications

Brainstorming activity

- Children no longer have care
- Families can’t work
- Businesses can’t operate
- Other?
COOP COOP Checklist and Supporting Documents

* COOP Checklist
* Insurance Considerations
* Sample Contact Lists
* Sample Delegation of Authority Letter
* Hazard/Threat, Risk and Mitigation Assessment Worksheets
* Recovery Resources
Readiness and Preparation:

* Program provides tools and resources to staff and enrolled families about personal emergency preparedness planning. See the Child Care Aware of NH website for information: http://nh.childcareaware.org/emergency-planning/

* Program has signed up for local and state electronic notification/alert systems

* Program has reviewed insurance coverage with insurance agent
Let’s talk COOP
Key COOP Planning Elements

* COOP Teams
* Essential Functions
* Orders of Succession
* Delegations of Authority
* Alternate Facility(s)
* Alternate Facility(s) Communications
* Essential Records and Database Management
* Recovery of Operations
* Training and Practice
* A team has been assigned to write the COOP

* Notification Team – Staff has been identified to:
  * Notify staff of COOP activation
  * Notify families of COOP activation
  * Notify external partners of COOP activation

  (Updated staff, family and external partners lists are maintained)

* Relocation Team – Staff has been identified to:
  * Move files
  * Move records
  * Move supplies and equipment
* Essential functions are what you do from day to day.

* In child care programs, essential functions may include:
  - Infant Program
  - Toddler Program
  - Preschool Program
  - Kindergarten Program
  - School Age Program
  - Administration Office
  - Other?
After a disaster, programs may find their selected alternate facility may not allow them to perform all of the essential functions due to space or other considerations. They will need to prioritize which functions they are able to continue in the alternate facility.
Consideration may be needed as to which programs (school-age, preschool, toddler, infant) generate the most income and have the least cost to operate, in order to maximize the income during the period of COOP activation.
Questions?
* Programs will need to identify who will assume the program leader’s role in the event that the individual is no longer able to continue in that role. (If possible, they will identify at least 2 alternatives.)

* Programs will need to identify who will assume other key roles.
Delegations of Authority are formal documents that identify, by order of succession position, the legal authority for individuals to make key decisions during a continuity event.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Check signing
- Payroll
- Hiring
- Termination
* It is encouraged that these Delegation of Authority letters are reviewed and approved by the program’s legal counsel or other legal authority. They may need to be notarized.
Alternate Facility(s)

- Alternate facility(s) should NOT be located in the same geographic area as the primary facility
- Agreement(s) with the alternate facility(s) should be created, signed, and included with important documents
- Detailed route(s) to the alternate facility(s) should be included in the COOP
Programs will need to:

- Develop processes and procedures to communicate with:
  - Leadership (administrators, executive director, BOD, etc.)
  - Staff
  - Families
  - Alternate facility(s) owner(s)

- Identify how communication will take place (email, social media, mobile App., text, etc.)
Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency Operations Plan
- Computer programs/databases
- Accounts receivable/payable
- Payroll
- Children and staff records
Programs will need to:

- Develop a plan to protect confidential information – hard copies and virtual
- Make decisions regarding storage/safekeeping of essential documents at alternate facility(s)
- Assure Go-Files are up-to-date and ready to transport, if needed
It is important to review the plan and train:

- At least annually
- If there is an actual COOP event that requires updates to procedures
- If there is any change in COOP staff/roles
- If alternate facility(s) no longer available, etc.
Activation of COOP

Programs must identify a decision-maker for COOP activation. Once activated, programs will:

* Activate Orders of Succession and Delegation of Authority, if needed
* Determine which alternate facility will be used
* Notify internal and external contacts
* Relocate to pre-identified alternate facility; transport Go-Files and Go-Kits
* Perform essential functions at the alternate facility
Programs will:

* Designate staff to determine when the original or new primary facility is ready to be occupied

* Designate staff to oversee the orderly transition back to the original or new primary facility

* Resume operations at the original or new primary facility when equipment, records, etc. are in place

* Notify appropriate partners indicating that operations have resumed at the original or new primary facility
* Annual training and practice of COOP policies and procedures (and if possible, at the alternate facility) is strongly recommended (could be one of the 2 required drills)

* Orientation and refresher training for COOP staff is recommended
For COOP Materials, see the Child Care Aware of NH website:
http://nh.childcareaware.org/emergency-planning/

* Materials include:
  - COOP Checklist
  - Insurance Considerations
  - Sample Contact List
  - Sample Delegations of Authority Letter
  - Recovery Resources
  - Cover sheets for your COOP
Questions
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For Additional Questions About COOP

Please contact:

* Child Care Aware of NH: 1 (855) 393-1731 ext. 32
* Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration: (603) 271-8167

If you have questions regarding the Child Care Licensing Rules around COOP, please contact the Child Care Licensing Unit at (603) 271-9025.