



Cooperative After-School Care Agreement

Resilient Tomorrow Community Series

What it is:

The preschool co-op model - where parents contribute labor to the school in exchange for reduced tuition - adapted for after-school care. Parents rotate as "care leaders" on a weekly schedule. One family hosts most days. Other families offset the load through meals, snacks, and backup coverage.

How it works:

A formal or informal group of families
Each family commits to being the "lead care" parent X days per month
On your lead day, you manage pickup and run activities
Other days, your child is cared for by other parents

Key finding:

This requires the most social coordination but has the lowest cost and highest community building payoff.

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How to Start a Cooperative After School Care Model (Step by Step)

Step 1: Gauge Interest

Post in neighborhood Facebook group, Nextdoor, or building email list
Keep it low-stakes: "Looking to connect with 2-3 families for a casual after-school care circle"
Aim for 3-5 families with kids in similar age range
This is easiest if you are planning to be the primary home and care provider

Step 2: Initial Meetup (coffee, 1 hour)

Share your situation and needs honestly
Identify: who works late? who works from home? who has flexibility?
Look for schedule compatibility and geographic proximity
Be clear on expectations, house rules, time needed, etc.

Step 3: Draft the Agreement ("[30-Day Trial Agreement](#)" Tab)

Walk through it together as a group
Agree on schedule, backup system, communication norms
Complete and all families sign off on the [Care Leader Commitment](#)
Don't skip the review date - set it for 8 weeks out

Step 4: Start Small

Begin with 2-3 families for the first month
Add families as trust builds
Resist the urge to scale too fast

Step 5: Communicate Like Your Neighbor Depends On You (because they do)

Use a dedicated group chat (not mixed with other topics)
Post the week-ahead schedule every Sunday
Flag changes 24+ hours in advance

Step 6: Review and Iterate

First review at 4, 6, or 8 weeks
Quarterly after that
Don't wait for a problem - check in proactively

House Rules Agreement

Each family fills out their hosting rules. Update as needed before it's your turn to host.

Default House Rules (All Families)

Rule	Policy
Screen Time	[e.g., No screens during homework; 30 min free tablet after homework]
Snacks	[e.g., Fruit and crackers provided; send snack from home if allergies]
Homework	[e.g., Must be completed before free play]
Pets	[e.g., We have a dog — friendly, hypoallergenic]
Visitors	[e.g., No additional friends unless pre-approved]
Bathroom	[e.g., Child knows to ask and where bathroom is]
Religious Observances	[e.g., We observe... no issue if child participates or not]

Per-Family Hosting Rules

Family	Additional Rules
[Family 1]	[their specific rules when hosting]
[Family 2]	[their specific rules when hosting]
[Family 3]	[their specific rules when hosting]

Signatures

Family	Printed Name	Signature	Date	Note

30-Day Trial Agreement

Trial period

[Start Date] to [End Date]

Trial Details

Host Family Name

Supporting Families

Trial Start Date

Trial End Date

[2, 4, 6, or 8]-Week Check-In Date

Host Family Commitment

Days providing care [e.g., Mon / Wed / Fri]

Pickup [school name + time]

Max children at once

Supporting Families Contributions

(offset = snacks, meals, backup coverage, or coordination)

Family	Contribution Type	Frequency	Notes

Exit Clause

Either family may exit the trial at any time with 48 hours notice. No financial penalties. No blame.

Transition plan

Signatures

Family	Printed Name	Signature	Date

Care Leader Commitment

Example: One family leads each month; others provide meals, snacks, or backup coverage as offset.

Care Leader Responsibilities

- Pickup children from school on time, every day
- Provide a safe, present environment after school
- Coordinate with backup families if unable to cover a day
- Keep the group informed of schedule changes before 8 AM
- Communicate any issues with the children to their parents within 24 hours
- Follows and maintains planned schedules and rules to best of ability

Care Leader Schedule

Month	Lead Family	Weeks Hosted	Notes

Make-Up / Offset Contribution Log

Date	Providing Family	Type	Notes

Signatures

Family	Printed Name	Signature	Date	Notes

Quarterly Review Meeting

Review date:

[date] — All families should attend.

Agenda

1. Wins — What's working well? (5 min)
2. Schedule Review — Any changes for next quarter? (10 min)
3. Credit Log — Update and review balances (5 min)
4. Financial Reconciliation — If applicable (5 min)
5. Communication Check — Is the group chat working? (5 min)
6. Problem-Solving — Bring issues here (10 min)
7. Action Items — Who does what by when? (5 min)
8. Set Next Meeting Date

Credit Log Update

Date	Family Who Missed	Family Who Covered	Credit Given To	Earned / Used

Signatures

Family	Printed Name	Signature	Date

COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

Platform setup, message templates, and escalation protocols for care circles.

SETUP STEPS

1. Choose platform (recommend: GroupMe for simplicity, Signal for privacy)
2. Create group with distinctive name (e.g., 'Maple Care Circle')
3. Add 2-3 admins so there's always coverage

WEEKLY SCHEDULE POST (Post Sunday by 6 PM)

WEEK OF [MM/DD – MM/DD] — CARE SCHEDULE

Day of Week	Child	School Pickup Time	Who Picks Up?	Evening Pickup Time
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

CHANGES THIS WEEK: [None / describe changes]

Confirmed rides: [list drivers]

Questions? Call [Coordinator name] at [phone].

CARE COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

Day	Task	Done?
Sunday (by 6 PM)	Post weekly schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunday (by 8 PM)	Confirm all pickups with drivers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday	Post Friday reminder if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friday (evening)	Optional recap post	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHILD INFORMATION FORM

Complete one per child. Store securely — only share with hosting families.

BASIC INFORMATION

Child's Full Name [Emma Rose Smith]
Preferred Nickname [Emma / Emmy]
Age [8 years old]
Birthday [March 15, 2018]
School [Oak Elementary]
Grade [3rd]
Teacher [Ms. Rivera]
School Phone [555-0100]

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Food Allergies [Peanuts — severe (anaphylaxis)]
Environmental Allergies [Cats — causes hives; Dust — mild asthma trigger]
Medications [None / Albuterol inhaler / etc.]
Medical Conditions [Asthma / None]
EpiPen Required? [Yes — in backpack at all times]
EpiPen Location [Backpack outer pocket]
Medical Insurance [Blue Cross Blue Shield]
Policy Number [XYZ123456789]
Pediatrician [Dr. Sarah Chen — 555-0200]

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

#	Name	Relationship	Phone	Note
1	[Jane Smith]	[Mother / Parent]	[555-0101]	
2	[Tom Smith]	[Father / Parent]	[555-0102]	
3	[Maria Garcia]	[Care Circle — Bac]	[555-0201]	

DAILY ROUTINE

Typical Pickup Time [3:15 PM]
Bedtime at Host Home [8:00 PM]
Sensory Needs at Transitions [Needs 5-min warnings; prefers to walk ahead of group]
Adjustment Needs at New Places [Needs ~20 min to warm up; let her observe first]
How Child Expresses Fatigue [Gets quiet, sits apart, asks to lie down]
How Child Expresses Hunger [Gets irritable — needs snack within 30 min]

FOOD & NUTRITION

Allergies (repeated) [Peanuts — severe; Tree nuts — mild]
Foods to Avoid [All nuts, processed in facility with nuts]

CHILD INFORMATION FORM

Preferred Snacks	[Cheese crackers, fruit, crackers]
Foods Child Dislikes	[Vegetables (will eat carrots if hidden in muffins)]
Dietary Restrictions	[None / Vegetarian / Vegan / Gluten-free / etc.]
Special Feeding Notes	[Eats slowly; needs 20–30 min for meals]

ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

Favorite Games	[Board games (cooperative), Uno, Minecraft]
Favorite Toys/Items to Bring	[Sketchbook; stuffed rabbit (Buttons) for sleep]
What Keeps Them Calm	[Drawing, reading alone, quiet space]
What to Do If Upset	[Give space; ask 'draw or talk?' — usually draws]
Approach to Conflict	[Withdraws; will tell adult if gets bad]
Favorite Activities	[Art, swings, nature walks, chalk]

TRANSPORTATION

School	[Oak Elementary — 123 Oak St, SF 94110]
Pickup Person(s)	[Jane Smith, Tom Smith, Maria Garcia]
Carpool Notes	[Carpool with Garcias on Mon/Wed]
Max car time / restrictions	[Max 20 min; gets carsick if >30 min in back seat]

PARENT NOTES & PERMISSIONS

Anything else to know?	[Allergic to some playground chalk; picky eater but eats fruit]
Photo permission (personal)?	[Yes / No]
Photo permission (group chat)?	[Yes / No]
Social media permission?	[No — please never post]
Boundaries for host family?	[No physical punishment; don't single out in front of others] [We don't use food as reward/punishment]

Form Completed By	[Jane Smith]
Date Completed	[MM/DD/YYYY]

Store this form securely. Only share with hosting families, not in group chat.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

READ BEFORE CARE STARTS — Print and post on each family's fridge

THE GOLDEN RULES

1. Call first, text second. Phone is faster than group chat for emergencies.
2. Stay calm. Children take emotional cues from adults.
3. When in doubt, call 911. Better to call and not need it.
4. You are not alone — use your backup contacts.

WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 immediately if child has:

- Difficulty breathing or severe allergic reaction
- Unconscious or unresponsive
- Seizure
- Severe bleeding that won't stop
- Signs of shock (pale, cold, clammy, confused)

What to tell 911:

1. Your name and phone number
2. Location (exact address — use phone GPS if unsure)
3. What happened
4. Child's name and age
5. Child's condition (conscious, breathing, etc.)
6. Any known allergies or medical conditions
7. What help you're providing (EpiPen given, CPR, etc.)

WHEN TO CALL PARENTS FIRST

Call parents before 911 if: minor injury, fever but alert, vomiting, chronic condition flaring

Parent Contact Script:

"Hi [Name], this is [Your Name]. [Child] is with me. [Briefly describe what happened]. [She's/He's] [conscious and alert / running a fever of 101 / etc.]. I'm going to [describe what you're doing]. Do you want me to take her to urgent care, or would you prefer to come here?"

LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION PROTOCOL

Step	Who to Call	When	How
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EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

1	Scheduled family	Day before or morning	Call AND text group
2	Backup Family #1	If scheduled can't cover	Call directly (not just text)
3	Backup Family #2	If Backup #1 also can't	Call directly
4	The Group	If no backup can cover	"Does anyone have availability today?"

MAKE-UP CREDIT RULES

Situation	Who Earns	Who Uses	Notes
Cancel >12 hrs before	Scheduled family +1	—	Normal backup process
Cancel <12 hrs before	—	Scheduled family -1	Exception: illness = no penalty
Backup covers last-minute	Backup family +1	Scheduled -1	
Natural disaster / closure	No credits	No credits	Automatic freeze

NATURAL DISASTER PROTOCOL

FIRE: Evacuate immediately → Rendezvous point → Count kids → Call 911 → Call parents

EARTHQUAKE: DROP, COVER, HOLD ON → Open area → Count kids → Check injuries → Call 911

SEVERE WEATHER: Interior room on lowest floor → Stay away from windows → Wait for all-clear

LOCKDOWN: Follow school protocol → Text parents ONLY → Wait for official all-clear

INCIDENT REPORT (Complete within 24 hrs)

Date of Incident	[MM/DD/YYYY]	Notes
Time	[2:45 PM]	
Location	[Host family's home — backyard]	
Children Present	[Names of all children present]	
What Happened	[Describe in factual, chronological order]	
Injuries	[Describe injuries and severity]	
First Aid Given	[Describe what you did]	
Medical Attention Required?	[Yes / No]	
Parents Notified?	[Who, method, time, response]	

QUICK REFERENCE — PRINT AND TAPE TO FRIDGE

EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

LIFE THREATENING: Call 911 FIRST

MINOR INJURY / ILLNESS: Call parents — [555-0101]

BACKUP FAMILY #1: [The Garcias] — [555-0201]

BACKUP FAMILY #2: [The Patels] — [555-0301]

CARE COORDINATOR: [Name] — [555-0000]

POISON CONTROL: 1-800-222-1222

RENDEZVOUS POINT: [Oak Elementary parking lot]

SCHOOL: [Oak Elementary] — [555-0100]

HOW TO FIND FAMILIES

A practical guide for finding the right families to start an after-school care circle.

WHERE TO LOOK

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Nextdoor | Neighborhood-based care circles; people who live near you |
| 2. Facebook Groups | Search '[your neighborhood] parents' or '[your city] moms/dads' |
| 3. School Parent Lists | Check school website for PTA directory or Listserv |
| 4. Local Subreddits | r/[YourCity], r/[YourNeighborhood] |
| 5. Community Centers | Bulletin boards at libraries and community centers |
| 6. Word of Mouth | Neighbors, coworkers, kids' friends' parents, gym, place of worship |

SAMPLE POST

Looking for: After-school care circle partners ([School Name] area)

Hi neighbors! I'm a parent at [School] looking to set up a rotating care circle.

HOW IT WORKS:

A small group of families (3–5) take turns hosting each other's kids after school. Each family hosts 1–2 days per week. It's collaborative, flexible, and cuts costs.

WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR:

- Families with kids at [School] (grades K–4)
- Parents who work [in-office / hybrid / flexible hours]
- Families in the [neighborhood] area

WHAT A FIRST CONVERSATION LOOKS LIKE:

If interested, let's grab coffee (on us!) and chat about whether this might be a fit. No commitment, no pressure — just a conversation.

Reply here or DM me if you're interested!

QUALIFYING QUESTIONS TO ASK

Basic Logistics:

- What are your work hours? → Determines if schedules overlap
- What school do your kids go to? → Pickup logistics
- Where do you live? → Geographic clustering matters

Values & Expectations:

- What's your screen time policy? → Major friction point if different
- How do you handle food allergies? → Safety critical
- What's your discipline approach? → Can conflict with hosting family's values

HOW TO FIND FAMILIES

- What would make you nervous → Reveals unspoken concerns

Reliability & Commitment:

- What do you need in a backup → Reveals flexibility
- How do you handle it when → Flexibility indicator
- Are you looking for something → Commitment alignment

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

Families who seem transactional — only interested in what they get

Families who don't respond proactively — pattern of missed meetings

Very different values (screen time, food, discipline)

Families under stress (divorce, job change, move)

THE GUT CHECK

- Did they show up on time to the coffee meeting?
- Did they follow through on small commitments?
- Did they ask questions about how this works?
- Do you actually like them? (You'll be seeing them a lot.)

HOW MANY FAMILIES TO AIM FOR

3 families: Simple coordination; each hosts ~2 days/week

4 families: Good balance; 1 backup family available — RECOMMENDED

5 families: Ideal balance; 2 backup families; each hosts ~1-2 days

6+ families: Too complex to coordinate well

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

- Post in Nextdoor / Facebook group / school list
- Ask your network (word of mouth)
- Screen with qualifying questions
- Coffee meeting with potential matches
- Compare with compatibility scoring
- Narrow to top 2-3 matches
- Start 30-day trial (Template 06)
- Sign full agreement (Template 01)