



NIGHTCARE

THE GROWING CHALLENGE
FOR PARENTS ON THE LATE SHIFT

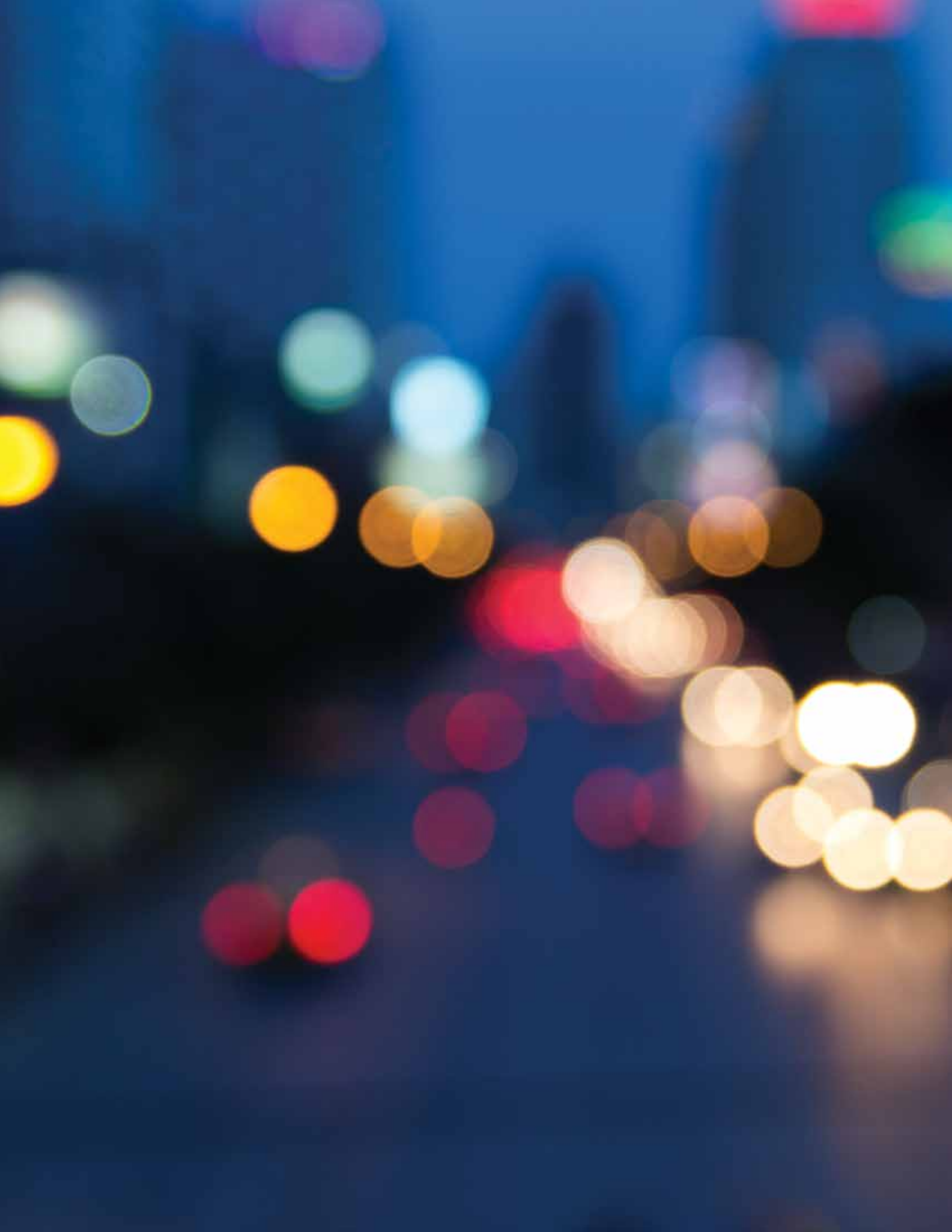
BY

RESTAURANT OPPORTUNITIES
CENTERS UNITED

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The continued growth of the restaurant industry means that an increasing number of low-wage workers must work in the evening or at night and depend on child care after regular business hours, otherwise known as nightcare. The subminimum wage for tipped workers exacerbates this problem by forcing tipped restaurant workers to place a premium on evening and weekend shifts where the earning potential is highest. However, nightcare is often inaccessible for restaurant workers, either due to location or cost, causing tremendous strain on workers and their families.

The restaurant industry has grown to become the fifth largest employer in the country, accounting for 10% of private sector employment.¹ Across the United States there are nearly 3.5 million parents working in the restaurant industry, and over one million of these are single moms. Over 40% of these live in poverty, and 74% live at or below twice the poverty level.²

In New York State alone, there are over 200,000 parents working in the restaurant industry; 92,000 are mothers and nearly half, or 45,000 are single mothers.³ Over 67,000 of these parents depend on tips for their income, and of these tipped workers over 38,000 are women, and half, or 19,000 are single moms.⁴

Nineteen percent of restaurant workers live in poverty in New York State, and nearly half (48%) live at or below twice the poverty line. As a result, restaurant workers are twice as likely to depend on food stamps and Medicaid to get by as other workers in the state.⁵ Among single moms the rates are higher, with 35% living in poverty, and 70% living at or below twice the poverty line. Simply put, many parents—and the vast majority of single moms working in the restaurant industry—lack economic security and are unable to meet their basic needs.

Previous estimates gathered by ROC United have found that nearly half of all mothers working in the restaurant industry have unpredictable schedules, with 40%

experiencing last-minute shift changes.⁶ Mothers spend 35% of their weekly wages on child care, yet fewer than 7% receive child care assistance.⁷

The high cost of rent means that workers must live far from their place of employment. Mothers report that their average commute time is 53 minutes to account for travel both to a child care provider and work. Nearly half of mothers have experienced some form of reprimand for arriving late or leaving early due to child care needs, and a third of these said that child care made it difficult to work desirable shifts.⁸

For tipped restaurant workers in particular, weekend and closing shifts are often essential for paying bills and making ends meet, since tipped workers earn a wage lower than the minimum wage and depend on tips as their primary source of income. A dependable wage regardless of shift would reduce the premium parents who are tipped workers place on those late shifts where tips are highest. A parent working one of these shifts must make an arrangement for nightcare. In most cases, this type of care will be informal and unlicensed due to the lack of traditional child care options at night.



KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ **A growing number of low-wage workers in our economy depend on nighttime care for their children that is affordable and in their neighborhood. This is especially true for tipped restaurant workers, where prime shifts and earning possibilities exist at night.**

“The day shift, you aren’t [earning] much, but I couldn’t work the night, because I needed to be there with [my daughter], because she was young... But sometimes I did work at night, and when I did work at night, I had people that came to the house from my church to stay with her.” —WORKING MOM

- ◆ **The tipped subminimum wage exacerbates the need for nighttime care due to the lack of a dependable wage. Parents who are tipped workers earn as low as \$2.13 per hour and must vie for the highest earning shifts at night and on weekends, when tips are highest, in order to maximize their income. This makes tipped workers dependent on nighttime care to work those shifts and increasingly dependent on those shifts to afford the rising cost of child care.**

“Yeah, unlike a traditional restaurant,... [in a One Fair Wage restaurant]... you don’t have to work Saturday nights, because you can work Tuesdays during the day... You don’t have to work the prime shifts to make the most money.” —EMPLOYER

- ◆ **However, nightcare is largely inaccessible through licensed providers and restaurant workers must depend on informal and underground networks to provide for their children. There are few licensed nightcare providers, and limited efforts to assist with licensing or expansion of coverage.**

“There’s a thousand daycares, private, and then they have, like, five private ones in the block, and then the city one is right there on the corner. So it is like, that’s too much... and then not one person, not one daycare out of those private daycares has nightcare.” —WORKING MOM

- ◆ **In the restaurant industry, the lack of affordable nightcare in one’s neighborhood has led many restaurant workers to supplement their income or switch their occupation and engage in child care work, in particular during their children’s early years.**

“Sometimes I do nightcare,... if it is a person that can pay 20 dollars for overnight, I will take care of your child for the night... because I came out of a situation that I had people that helped me.” —WORKING MOM

- ◆ **In the absence of accessible licensed nightcare, unlicensed providers that specialize in nightcare for low-wage workers like restaurant workers and security guards have grown in number.**

“For the most part, there wasn’t a lot of overnight provided for at all... it was never, you know, an agency that I could go to, or that was recommended to me, or that said, this agency is open and they will stay open, it was always someone that I knew [someone you trust, ok.]” —WORKING MOM

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Policymakers should respond to the growing need for nightcare by increasing the provision of affordable nightcare and ensuring it is accessible in workers’ neighborhoods.**

“I live in the Bronx, [but] there’s more accessible [child care] in Manhattan, or Harlem, than in my neighborhood, so sometimes it makes it hard. If I am at work, I don’t have anyone that can just go down there... and that is a strain if I am getting off at eleven o’clock. And then I gotta go down to Harlem... to pick up my kids. The trains are running slow, late, then I gotta get back home. If I’m getting home around two in the morning, and my kids still have to get up at six o’clock in the morning to school, that is strenuous. Especially on the kids.” —WORKING MOM



- ◆ **Policymakers should support programmatic interventions allowing the restaurant industry to ‘grow our own,’ and draw upon restaurant workers’ child care experience to help license restaurant workers as nightcare providers focused on the restaurant industry, expand existing nightcare providers, and help license existing unlicensed providers.**

“I had that idea so many years ago to do a nightcare, and I was told that it would be quite a task to ask for a non-profit licensing, and also at the time I had Section 8 for myself and my daughter, and if you were on Section 8, it was like a conflict of interest.... So I didn’t know what to do, how to pursue it.” —WORKING MOM

- ◆ **Policymakers should follow the lead of high road employers and eliminate the subminimum wage and raise the minimum wage, thereby reducing demand for nightcare in the restaurant industry by making daytime shifts as lucrative as nighttime positions.**

“With a base wage of \$15 per hour plus weekly profit sharing, it doesn’t matter which day of the week you work. You get the same amount based on your hours of work. We set the schedule so it’s very clear ahead of time when people are working.” —EMPLOYER

METHODS

This report is an effort to document our experience addressing the child care needs of restaurant workers over the last two years. This effort began with the publication of ‘The Third Shift: Child Care Needs and Access for Working Mothers in Restaurants in 2013, based on a survey of 200 working mothers and focus groups with 16 workers in multiple cities across the country. After publishing that report, we spent two years conducting outreach and case management with over 2000 restaurant workers in New York, resulting in new information emerging about how restaurant workers are addressing a lack of child care, and in particular child care in non-traditional hours.

In order to document what we were finding about the non-traditional child care needs of restaurant workers, we built upon the data set produced from the ‘Third Shift’ report, and conducted structured focus groups and interviews with 25 restaurant workers, five non-traditional child care providers, and five high road restaurant employers from May to August 2016. The structured focus groups and interviews with restaurant workers in New York documented where and how workers accessed child care during non-traditional hours, or nightcare, what they knew about the unlicensed networks of providers that specialize in low-wage workers who need nightcare, the experience of moving in between child care and restaurant work, and

how they afforded child care generally. Structured interviews with child care providers in New York documented their provision of nightcare, if at all, what they knew about underground networks of providers, and what they thought of as available solutions to cover low-wage workers' need for nightcare in their neighborhood. A set of high road employers in multiple cities were interviewed on their knowledge, experience, and practice regarding non-traditional child care, and on how they assessed and addressed their employees' needs.

FINDINGS

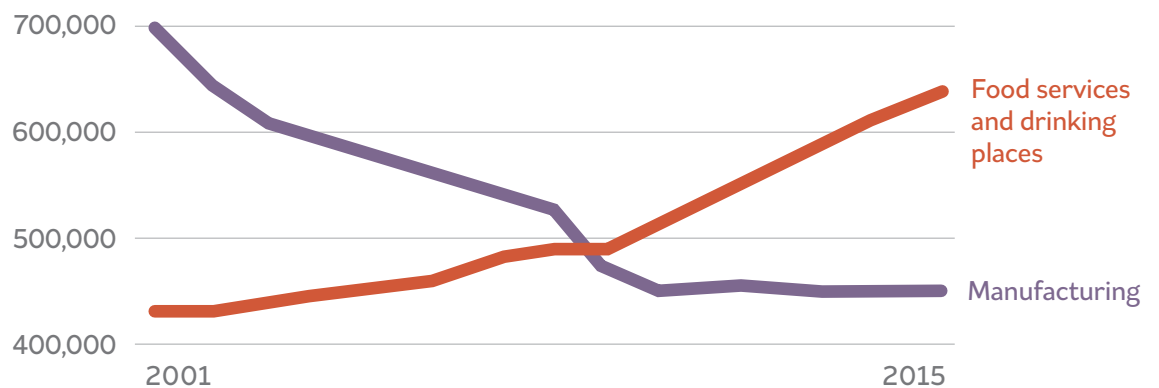
◆ **A growing number of low-wage workers in our economy depend on nightcare for their children that is affordable and accessible in their neighborhood. This is especially true for tipped restaurant workers, where prime shifts and high earning possibilities exist primarily at night.**

“The day shift, you aren’t [earning] much, but I couldn’t work the night, because I needed to be there with [my daughter], because she was young... But sometimes I did work at night, and when I did work at night, I had people that came to the house from my church to stay with her.” —

WORKING MOM

Over the past decade the restaurant industry has surpassed manufacturing to become one of the largest employers in New York State, and over 50% of that growth has occurred in full service restaurants (SEE FIG.1).⁹ In that time, the number of parents in the industry has increased from 162,000 to 202,000, and the number of single moms working in the industry has grown from 40,000 to 45,000. However, the restaurant industry continues to grow on the backs of low-wage labor. Seven of the ten lowest paid occupations are in the restaurant industry,¹⁰ and, for tipped

FIGURE 1
Restaurant Industry and Manufacturing Employment in New York State





GLOSSARY OF TERMS

HIGH ROAD

High road and low road are industry terms referring to opposing business strategies for achieving productivity and profitability. In this report, high road is used to denote employer practices that involve investing in workers by paying livable wages, providing comprehensive benefits, opportunities for career advancement, and safe workplace conditions as means to maximize productivity. The results are often reduced turnover as well as better quality food and service. Low road refers to strategies that involve chronic understaffing, failing to provide benefits, pushing workers to cut corners, and violating labor, employment and health and safety standards. Low-road practices are not simply illegal practices — they are employment practices, such as providing low wages and little or no access to benefits, that are not sustainable for workers and their families, and that have a long-term negative impact on both consumers and employers.

ONE FAIR WAGE

Seven states disallow a separate, lower minimum wage for tipped workers — California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, Montana, and Alaska. Tipped workers in those states receive the full minimum wage, and their tips function as a gratuity over and above their wages. One Fair Wage refers to a system where all workers receive a minimum wage that is sufficient to cover their basic needs.

SUBMINIMUM WAGE

A two-tiered wage system that allows for the employment of tipped workers at rates below the minimum wage. The Fair Labor Standards Act sets the federal minimum wage (currently \$7.25 per hour), as well as the subminimum wage for tipped workers (currently \$2.13 per hour). Twenty-six states (and the District of Columbia) have a subminimum wage higher than \$2.13 but lower than the state's minimum wage.

TIPPED WORKERS

This report considers the following occupations, as tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “customarily tipped occupations”: Massage Therapists; Bartenders; Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop workers; Waiters and Waitresses; Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop; Food servers, Nonrestaurant (including food delivery and room service); Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers; Gaming Service Workers; Barbers; Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists; Miscellaneous Personal Appearance Workers (including Manicurists and Pedicurists; Shampoos; Makeup Artists, Theatrical and Performance; and Skincare Specialists); Baggage Porters and Bellhops; Concierges; Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs; and Parking Lot Attendants.

workers, the primary way to ensure sufficient income is to work lucrative shifts at night and on weekends.¹¹

“It’s really hard in this industry, because the whole world is designed for people who work 9 to 5 and the restaurant just isn’t like that. There’s no daycare that’s open from 5pm to midnight. Maybe there is, but I don’t know about it. I think it’s a big challenge. I mean, they call it daycare not nightcare.” —EMPLOYER

Restaurant workers interviewed for this report noted that the primary users of nightcare are restaurant workers that work after 6pm, bakery workers, retail workers, security guards, medical workers, and similar occupations. Child care practitioners stated that users were primarily single mothers working as restaurant workers (including fast food), nursing home workers, retail workers, exotic dancers, and workers at “any business that closes late.” One child care advocate noted that 911 operators and medical workers were especially in need of nightcare.

“Schedules are hard, because early and late night, to me is the problem. Because our staff... coverage is hard. But we don’t ask the question if they have children or not.” —EMPLOYER

Most workers interviewed were unable to afford child care, and therefore depended on informal networks including friends and family. Those who needed nightcare did not have access to licensed care, and depended on their partners, friends, family, and church for child care. The few workers we interviewed that had access to formal daycare all received subsidies. A small number of the respondents (4) depended on subsidized professional daycare during the day, but had to depend on babysitters or family when daycare was closed.

A few workers had to stop working because they couldn’t afford child care. Several workers could not go to work and missed shifts, had to quit, or were fired due to lack of nightcare. Most schedules changed daily or weekly. Unpredictable schedules made child care more difficult, since child care costs increased as the schedule changed, in particular over multiple nights. A few had to turn down nights, and two had to refuse work. Some could not work without family caring for the child. As one mother explained, “If I don’t find care, then it means I can’t work and pay will be less.”

“I think they do the best they can, but it is very challenging. Especially the employees who work at night, [or] who work during the day, but have small children and aren’t in school.... Where do you put your kid while you’re at work?... The ones that work at night, a lot of people that have kids here use their families to help them out.” —EMPLOYER

The employers we interviewed noted the challenges parents faced due to scheduling, and added that many workers were forced to use paid sick days to take care of their children.

“Our staff can use their paid sick days to take care of their kid if they need to, but it’s never enough. Over the course of a year, how many times can you have an emergency situation to take care of your child? It’s probably more than five. We’ve had employees call and say they can’t come in, I have to deal with my kid today, and we’re like, ok, well, it’s just like any other call-out. You’ve got to respect it.”

—EMPLOYER



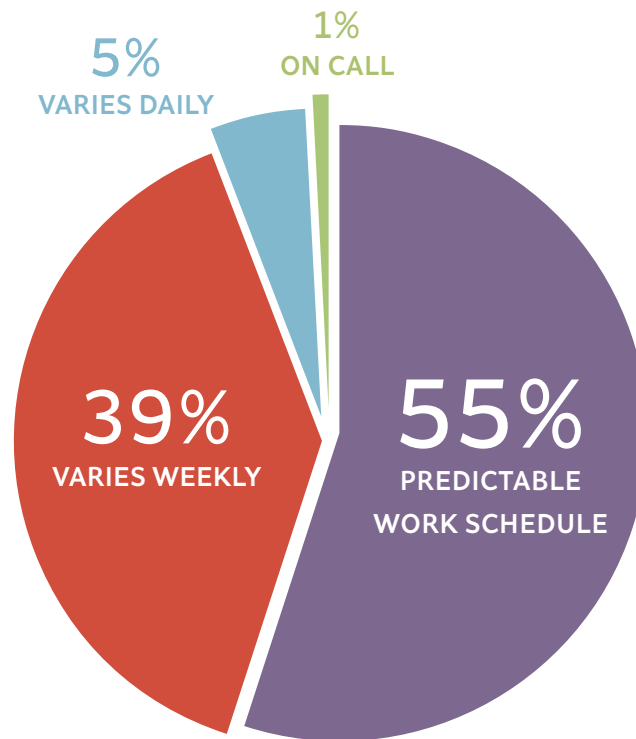
However, only 10% of mothers who work in restaurants have access to paid sick days. Mothers who have access to paid sick days are less likely to be fired, and less likely to leave their position, increasing retention and reducing turnover.¹² However, paid sick days are not a realistic solution to nightcare needs due to the limited number of days available. Instead, workers need regular and dependable access to nightcare or reduced need for nightcare.

Only three workers interviewed reported a steady schedule, and had to fight to keep it. A few reported they had to turn down profitable shifts or refuse overtime due to child care needs. Half of the workers had to refuse to work at night, even though this meant turning down the most profitable shifts. Other workers were able to accept shifts at night due to support from partners, family, or unlicensed babysitters.

“Well, we have a lot of parents, and parents of real small kids... those of us in the restaurant industry understand that their workweek includes weekends, and what, one of the things that we do try to do is get you on a regular schedule based on the availability that you tell us. And, so we try and maintain a really steady schedule for you, so you know what to expect, so you do have that opportunity to plan. We also plan out two or three weeks of scheduling ahead of time, which is really challenging, but that is another thing. We did have a Mom who, she is a single Mom. She and her sister who both work here are their only family.... They were trying to schedule around each other’s schedules so they always had a babysitter for this little child.... We were able to try and figure out a way that we could have them both have schedules that worked.” —EMPLOYER

High road employers allow their employees a strong say in scheduling. However, a voice in scheduling is not sufficient to ensure access to dependable nightcare. Previously, ROC United has found that forty five percent of working mothers report unpredictable schedules, and one out of every five mothers working in the industry have lost their child care provider due to changes in their schedule (SEE FIG. 2).¹³

FIGURE 2
Restaurant Schedules
for Working Mothers



◆ **Nightcare is largely inaccessible through licensed providers and restaurant workers must depend on informal and underground networks to provide for their children. There are few licensed nighttime providers, and limited efforts to assist with licensing or expansion of coverage.**

“There’s a thousand daycares, private, and then they have, like, five private ones in the block, and then the city one is right there on the corner. So it is like, that’s too much... and then not one person, not one daycare out of those private daycares has nighttime.” —WORKING MOM

Nearly all workers stated they did not know where a worker might find nighttime care. Several stated they had to depend on family and friends, and one person stated that, “restaurant workers do not know that child care includes cost of working at night.” Many of the workers we spoke with expressed great gratitude for having a partner: “I am blessed. I have a good partner that helps when I have to work;” or other family members that cared for their children at night: “I am so lucky to have my family, because if I didn’t, I don’t know where I would be.” However, not all workers could depend on family, making the lack of available nighttime care an acute problem.

We corroborated the lack of available nighttime care by contacting the Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCO), which licenses nighttime providers and maintains a database of licensed (and exempt) providers. WHEDCO provided a list of 20 self-identified ‘non-traditional hours’ providers in the five boroughs. ROC United contacted all 20 providers and only two verified that they provided nighttime care. All others stated that they did not provide nighttime care, or no longer did.

Reliable care is a challenge, in particular at night. As an employer noted, “It is still a challenge, especially for single parents. The evidence is in how many times we get call outs because the babysitter didn’t show up.”



Workers said they had to forego shifts and income due to the need for nightcare, but were concerned about reliable service, the safety of their children, lack of stability in scheduling (both for the disruption this caused their children, and difficulties in finding care on an inconsistent basis: “our schedule changes every week, and child care service doesn’t”). They were also concerned about the price of nightcare, and the location and scheduling of pick-ups and drop-offs.

Only two respondents expressed that they were comfortable with nightcare, either hypothetically (“Yes, if the facility is a safe one, why not?”) or because they trusted their actual provider. Almost all workers expressed dismay at the prospect of nightcare, both fearing for the safety of their child at the nightcare provider or due to the travel, a problem compounded by sporadic schedules.

Half of the workers interviewed knew other workers who needed nightcare, and one knew workers who were unable to work at night because they knew of no nightcare opportunities. Due to this, several workers interviewed provided nightcare for other restaurant workers and friends, and one of the workers expressed pride that she also offered reliable nightcare.

◆ **The tipped subminimum wage exacerbates the need for nightcare due to the lack of a dependable wage. Parents who are tipped workers earn as low as \$2.13 per hour and must vie for the highest earning shifts at night and on weekends, when tips are highest, in order to maximize their income. This makes tipped workers dependent on nightcare to work those shifts and increasingly dependent on those shifts to afford the rising cost of child care.**

“Yeah, unlike a traditional restaurant,... [in a One Fair Wage restaurant]... you don’t have to work Saturday nights, because you can work Tuesdays during the day... You don’t have to work the prime shifts to make the most money.” —EMPLOYER

The federal subminimum wage for tipped workers is \$2.13 per hour. This means that all of a restaurant worker’s wages go towards taxes, and they are entirely dependent on tips for their income. A worker needs to work a prime shift, such as a Thursday, Friday, or Saturday night to earn a viable income. At times, earnings during a slow shift can barely cover transportation to and from work.¹⁴ In New York, the subminimum wage is now \$7.50 per hour, significantly less than the full minimum wage. Parents who are tipped workers must work at night to provide for themselves and their families, and thus depend on nightcare to work. In a wage system where a tipped workers’ income is not entirely dependent on tips, workers can choose to work slower shifts during the week that are less desired by other workers, benefiting the entire workforce.

◆ In the restaurant industry, this lack of affordable nightcare in one’s neighborhood has led many restaurant workers to supplement their income, switch their occupation and engage in child care work during their children’s early years, or leave the industry entirely.

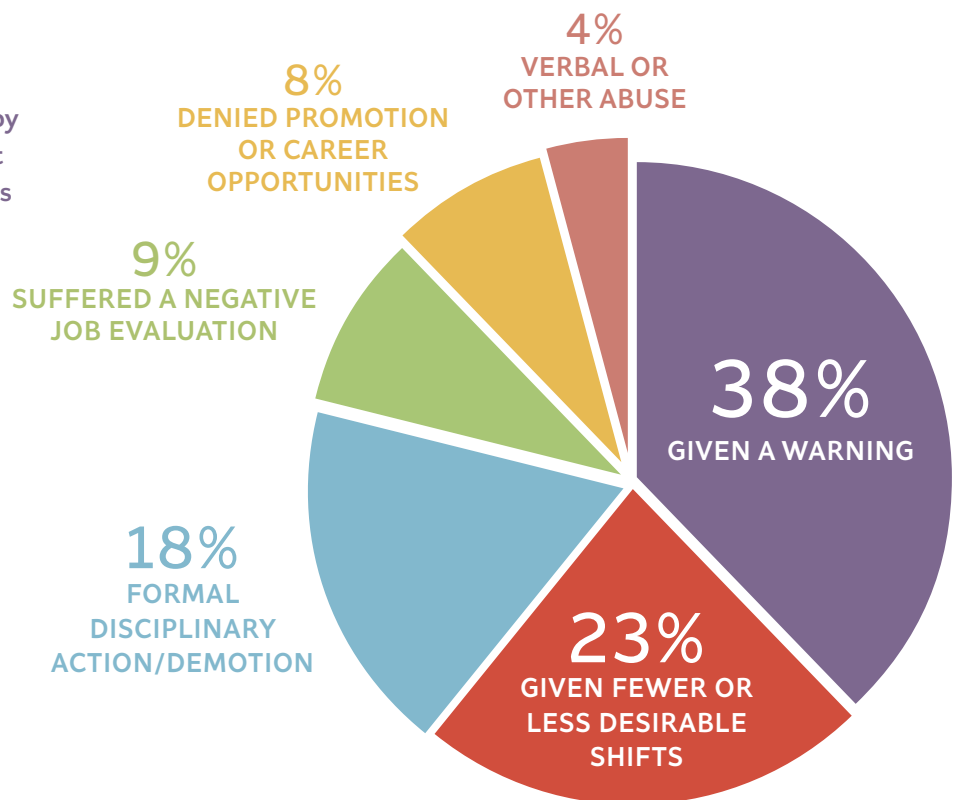
“Sometimes I do nightcare,... if it is a person that can pay 20 dollars for overnight, I will take care of your child for the night... because I came out of a situation that I had people that helped me.”

—WORKING MOM

The vast majority of the workers we spoke with felt that the need for child care had impacted their opportunities for obtaining steady schedules or advancing, taking on better schedules, accepting overtime, etc. Most jobs did not accommodate the need for child care, and the concern for child care prevented workers from being as dedicated as they would like. The few workers who felt it had not impacted them depended on family members to cover all of their child care needs. Previous research by ROC United found that 44% of working mothers experienced negative consequences at work due to their child care needs, with 23% of these given less desirable shifts, 8% denied a promotion, and 18% demoted or otherwise disciplined (SEE FIG. 3).¹⁵

As a result of the challenges of scheduling and nightcare, four of the workers we interviewed either currently or previously worked as child care providers, and one worker was seeking support to work as a child care provider. Additionally, the child care providers we interviewed became night-care providers due to their own experiences of needing child care. All but one had worked in the restaurant industry, and all had previously needed nightcare and had to seek it out through word of mouth or “asking around.”

FIGURE 3
Negative Consequences Faced by Working Mothers in Restaurant Industry Due to Childcare Needs



Workers noted that many restaurant workers had lost their jobs, reduced hours, or left the industry entirely because of the lack of accessible nightcare. One worker noted, “after my son came, yeah, it was a little difficult... leaving him at that young age. So I lost that job because the time frame changes, and I couldn’t do that. Then I got back in the restaurant business when he got a little older.”



“My job wanted me to take a full schedule shift, but the shift that could accommodate me wasn’t available. So I just continued to float. Because, like I said, it made it convenient for me to say, ok, I can’t work this weekend. And I wouldn’t be penalized for it. It made it kind of difficult because there would be times when I could get a 40 hour work shift, and there were times when I was only working two days.” —WORKING MOM

◆ **In the absence of accessible licensed nightcare, unlicensed providers have emerged that specialize in nightcare for low-wage workers like restaurant workers and security guards.**

“For the most part, there wasn’t a lot of overnight provided for at all... it was never, you know, an agency that I could go to, or that was recommended to me, or that said, this agency is open and they will stay open, it was always someone that I knew [someone you trust, ok.]” —WORKING MOM

Over the last two years addressing the child care needs of restaurant workers, workers reported using unlicensed providers who specialize in serving workers with nightcare needs, particularly restaurant workers, security guards, 911 responders, and others.

“I mean, almost every industry, EMTs, firefighters, cops, and a lot of them have young children and they need that same nightcare that restaurant or security workers need. Not everyone has that financial security or available care that they depend on.” —WORKING MOM

Many of the restaurant workers we interviewed were unsure of the legality of nightcare. A few thought nightcare was legal, and qualified for subsidies, but most did not know or were certain it was illegal and unregulated.

“There’s other single mothers working in nightcare trying to do what I do, take care of their kids. A lot of them can’t get licensed because they don’t have the proper exits, or equipment to have the children in their homes. They don’t have money for space or equipment.” —WORKING MOM

“You learn of nightcare through word of mouth, through friends. Friends recommend them, saying they trusted their children with these people. That’s a chance you take... no one wants to leave their children with anyone overnight.” —WORKING MOM

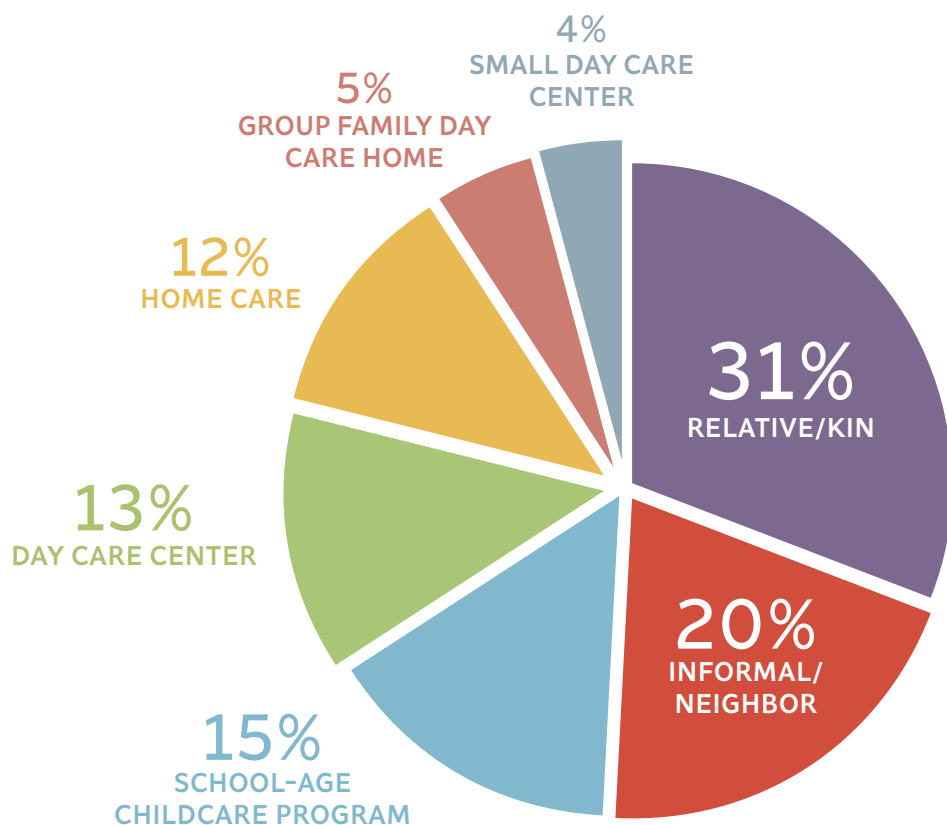
The child care providers we interviewed could think of no licensed operating nightcare centers, and felt that nightcare in general is not accessible to everyone that needs it.

“Right now, I know of at least four unlicensed nightcare providers. One keeps my nephew for days on end. My sister is a home health-care aide and works for four days straight—so [her provider] keeps my nephew for those four days. [Her provider] was licensed and is trying to get relicensed, but to do what she wants, she doesn’t have the space.” —WORKING MOM

Nightcare is a cause of stress and difficult to find. As one provider noted, “This is a crisis for people who work at night.” These providers felt workers could access nightcare either online or through case workers, or via nightcare providers registered with the state, but that the primary method was through word of mouth for unlicensed care. Previous research conducted by ROC United found that over 60% of child care arrangements were with informal or unlicensed facilities, and given the lack of accessible nightcare options the percentage of informal or unlicensed nightcare is much higher, approaching 90% (SEE FIG. 4).¹⁶

Reliable nightcare, licensed and regulated, would be a tremendous boon to restaurant workers and other low wage workers required to work at night.

FIGURE 3
Childcare Arrangements
for working Mothers in the
Restaurant Industry



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

All the working parents we interviewed felt nightcare was a necessity that should be licensed and regulated, called for a network of reliable nighttime providers akin to daycare, and called on the restaurant industry to help provide nighttime care. Additionally, workers felt greater education about subsidies was needed, since many workers did not know aid was available.

Workers also expressed that child care should be a right, not a privilege, and shared a far-reaching vision of universal free nighttime care, augmented by a nanny program to support working parents.

Child care providers noted that without nighttime care, their clients would lose their job or have to leave work. Of the providers we interviewed, only two were licensed, although three accepted subsidies. They all felt nighttime care needed to be regulated to help grow their business, and sought greater technical assistance and assistance with licensing, including support with bringing facilities up to code: for instance, one provider stated that “I need help with installing a second exit and a sleep section.” The child care advocate explained that the key challenges were affordability, accessibility, and ease of application process.

High road employers noted that ‘One Fair Wage’ or raising the minimum wage and eliminating the subminimum wage “would give tipped workers a higher base pay, thereby allowing them to budget child care better than if they were making the subminimum wage. The lower minimum wage generally just goes to paying taxes so an employee cannot count on that income to help pay child care expenses. They are at the mercy of the guests’ tips which fluctuate based on the shifts worked, the weather, and a number of other factors.” Employers also felt that rising wages might reduce opportunities for overtime, which “would help people do other things with their time, like have families.” Higher wages and no subminimum wage could reduce demand for “prime shifts,” on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights when most tips are earned, and ease the pressures for nighttime care. A worker who seeks to advance to those best shifts must find a nighttime provider. ‘One Fair Wage’ reduces inequality between shifts and reduces the need for nighttime care.

“I do think that if you are not chasing shifts, then a little bit more of the power lies on the employee’s side... because they know they would not be as penalized financially for requesting one kind of shift over another. So I do think that... the ability to control a little bit more of the front of house pay into the hands of the business instead of the hands of the guests... also empowers the employees to have more of a say in how they work.” —EMPLOYER

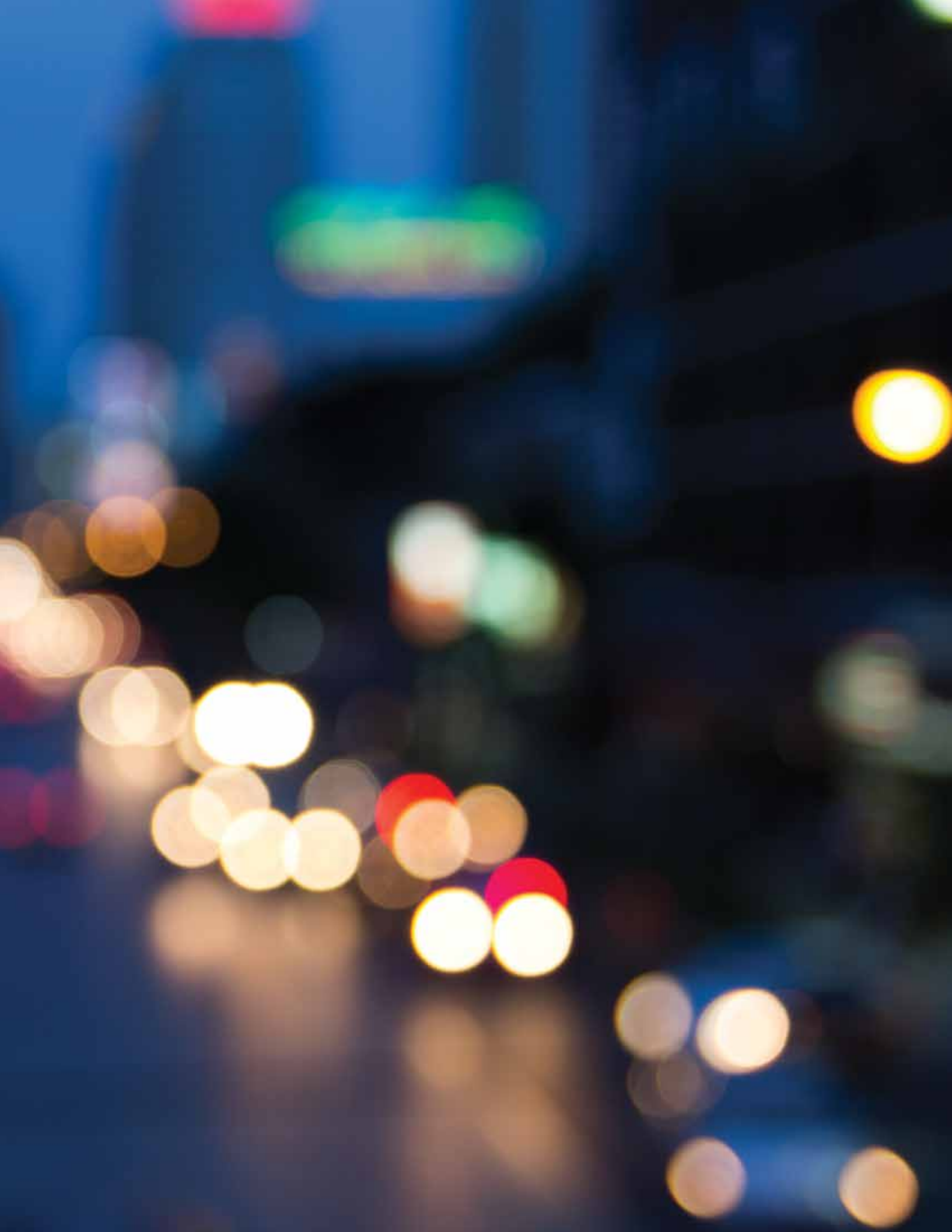
Employers also suggested expanded public nightcare services, a social benefit system to provide quality child care, a bank of trained temporary workers to support businesses complying with parental leave, and tax incentives for businesses that provided child care, along with shared child care services by like-minded employers to pool and spread the costs of the benefit.

“If we were to do it, it’s just one business. But if there were more restaurants, businesses, doing this... we might be able to do shared services... it’s like supply and demand.... If there’s a lot of people that are willing... you could probably pool your efforts. If we were just to get child care for just our restaurant, that would be extremely expensive... but if there were ten restaurants in our neighborhood that all wanted to do it, we could probably pool our efforts and make it something that really impacted the community.... I think if it were national or statewide, that would help create the systems needed to make it a benefit for everybody.” —EMPLOYER

- ◆ **POLICYMAKERS SHOULD RESPOND TO THE GROWING NEED FOR NIGHTCARE** by increasing the provision of affordable nightcare and ensuring it is accessible in workers’ neighborhoods.
- ◆ **POLICYMAKERS SHOULD SUPPORT PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS** allowing the restaurant industry to ‘grow our own,’ and draw upon restaurant workers’ child care experience to help license restaurant workers as nightcare providers focused on the restaurant industry, expand existing nightcare providers, and help license existing unlicensed providers.
- ◆ **POLICYMAKERS SHOULD FOLLOW THE LEAD OF HIGH ROAD EMPLOYERS AND ELIMINATE THE SUBMINIMUM WAGE AND RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE,** thereby reducing demand for nightcare in the restaurant industry by making daytime shifts as lucrative as nighttime positions. As one of the mothers noted, “they should provide a higher salary so single mothers can afford child care expenses.”

ENDNOTES

- 1** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2001–2015. Restaurant Opportunities Centers United analysis of employment reports for NAICS 722 Food Services and Drinking Places and total, all private industry in the United States, or in New York State as noted.
- 2** American Community Survey, 2014. Calculations by the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United), examining data for individuals employed in the restaurant industry, customarily tipped occupations, or other occupations, nationally or in New York State as noted, based on Ruggles et al., Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: Minnesota Population Center, 2010.
- 3** Ibid.
- 4** Ibid.
- 5** Ibid.
- 6** Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, et al. July, 2013. The Third Shift: Child Care Needs And Access for working Mothers In Restaurants. New York, NY: ROC-United.
- 7** Ibid.
- 8** Ibid.
- 9** See note 1.
- 10** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, May, 2015. “Employment and wages for the highest and lowest paying occupations.”
- 11** National Restaurant Association, 2015. Restaurant Industry Forecast.
- 12** See note 6.
- 13** Ibid.
- 14** Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, et al. February, 2012. Tipped Over the Edge: Gender Inequity in the Restaurant Industry. New York, NY: ROC-United.
- 15** See note 6.
- 16** Ibid. The estimate of 90% is based on the lack of nightcare providers, as well as an analysis of the experiences provided by workers, providers, and employers in the structured interviews. The actual percentage may be smaller, but greater than the 60% for child care overall.





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