



T LAB



TIPPING POINT COMMUNITY

T Lab, Tipping Point's R+D team, researches, prototypes, and tests new social services in partnership with our grantees and the Bay Area community at large.

T LAB REPORT: CONCEPT GENERATION PHASE

Exploring New After-Hours Child Care Avenues for Working Parents in Partnership with Restaurant Opportunities Centers United

As we left off last time, T Lab and our partner, [Restaurant Opportunities Centers United \(ROC\)](#), were looking toward new scalable childcare models, and focusing specifically on low-wage shift workers in need of 24-hour child care.

OUR GUIDING QUESTIONS

The team identified three critical questions that were central to achieving the project's key outcomes:

01

What are the needs and barriers for parents trying to connect to 24-hour child care in San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties? Is it possible for these needs to be addressed by new child care models?

02

What are the needs and barriers for restaurant businesses to support their workers in accessing child care?

03

What sustainable business models would support 24-hour child care for this audience? How would it potentially extend to serve other audiences?

WHAT WE KNOW

Demand vastly outpaces supply for after-hour child care.



OF THE 100,000 AFTER-HOURS SHIFT WORKERS IN ALAMEDA COUNTY, A QUARTER ARE RESTAURANT WORKERS.*



21,100 CHILDREN NEED AFTER-HOURS CARE IN ALAMEDA COUNTY ALONE.**

* Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2016; Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Careers for Night Owls and Early Birds," October 2015

** US Census Bureau "America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2012," August 2013; Pew Research Center, "The Rise in Dual Income Households," June 18, 2015; American Community Survey, 2016

The demand for available child care slots greatly outweighs the supply: there are 30% more children who need after-hours care than existing slots with licensed home family child care providers (FCCs). FCCs often make a better fit for after-hours care, because they are more likely to offer child care in the evenings than formal child care centers. Given the size of this gap, T Lab decided to consider multiple approaches to meet the needs of after-hours workers and their children.

THE KEY PLAYERS

Through a series of interviews and workshops to co-create new after-hours child care ideas, the team learned more about our key three stakeholders, specifically relating to their roles in providing or accessing after-hours child care.

First, we considered the **employer**. Because margins among many independent restaurants are slim, many employers hesitate to provide resources for their employees, and are still adjusting to the budgetary burden of providing healthcare. Employers often feel they lack the resources to provide both healthcare and child care, and prioritize health care because it more immediately supports their employees' capacity to work. Additionally, employers are hesitant to take on the extra responsibility and potential liability involved in child care. *Given these hesitations, the team concluded that it would be more productive to pursue solutions that do not require additional work or support from employers.*



“Currently, we’re doing well enough that we can offer our full-time employees medical. If we’re talking about taking this [child care benefits] on, it’s going to be, what do you prefer? There’s no way that we can do both. So the employee has to figure out, do I want personal health care or child care.” - Co-owner of Oakland Restaurant



While researching the needs of **parents** working in the restaurant industry, information emerged as a major barrier in parents' search for child care. Parents consistently mentioned not knowing where to find information about child care services, noting that they tended to search online or get information through word of mouth or social services to which they were already connected. Many parents weren't familiar with resource and referral agencies, the primary organizations that support parents with vouchers and connections to care opportunities.

Secondly, parents raised the issue of affordability. **Existing after-hours child care costs between \$20-\$30 an hour, while shift workers generally make minimum wage, roughly \$14.***

While most parents preferred a licensed child care provider, they were deterred from this option due to cost and lack of existing trust and shared values. More often, they were more likely to rely upon friends, family and neighbors (FFN). Unfortunately, FFN aren't always fairly compensated for their efforts

and aren't necessarily the best option for children. *Overall, conversations with parents in the restaurant industry highlighted the lack of suitable affordable options, and the challenge of even locating services to which they might get access.*

Lastly, the team considered the needs of **child care providers**, most of whom aren't familiar with models for after-hours care. Some providers expressed interest in helping parents out after hours, but were concerned about how offering care during non-traditional hours would compare financially to their daycare business and how after-hours care curriculum differs from daycare. *Without clear models of financially viable and developmentally appropriate after-hours care, providers hesitate to support parents at night.*

"The child itself is on a different clock—if you're providing for a child at night, it'd be us learning a whole new routine. Psychologically, [we would want to learn] what happens with children during the evening. In school, we learn what happens with the child during the daytime. You'd have to learn a routine." – Oakland family child care provider

* Restaurant Opportunities Centers United. "Childcare Survey of Restaurant Parents in The Bay". Survey. 1 July 2018

WHAT WE'LL TEST

Based on the needs expressed by the stakeholders, the team distilled four levers by which we could increase child care supply and utilization:

1. Increase the quantity and quality of Family Friend Neighbor (FFN) providers,
2. Transition interested FFN to licensed family care providers (FCC),
3. Encourage FFN and FCC to provide after-hours care, and
4. Make it easier for parents to access the child care systems they need, including referral listings and resource materials

With these levers as the focal points, a few opportunities rose to the top to test in the next phase of this project:

To help increase the quantity and quality of Family Friend Neighbor (FFN) providers, we will test a **child care exchange**, in which two parents who typically watch their own children are matched to then take turns sharing child care responsibilities at a free or reduced cost. Within this framework, we'll test the ideal cost of the service and vetting processes of the parents, among other aspects of shared care.

To help transition interested FFN to licensed family care providers (FCC) and encourage FFN and FCC to provide after-hours care, we will also test the impact of **after-hours training for providers** who are dedicated to the requirements, best practices and business needs for after-hours care. With this test we'll examine the demand for a training from providers, the resources they need to provide after-hours care, and whether agencies might offer these trainings in the future.

A third concept was focused on making it easier for parents to access the child care system by leveraging ROC's existing outreach with restaurants to share child care resources. We chose not to prototype this concept because the channels already exist and the path to implementation is more defined than other concepts.

Stay tuned for the results of the prototyping phase in the coming months.

Follow along at tippingpoint.org/what-we-do/tlab.



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Tipping Point works to break the cycle of poverty for individuals and families in the Bay Area by focusing the resources of our community towards nonprofits and public systems providing housing, education, early childhood wellness, and employment services. Since 2013, Tipping Point has invested in Research and Development to fill gaps in the nonprofit sector and develop new poverty-fighting ideas. Known as **T Lab**, our R+D team researches, prototypes, and tests new social services in partnership with our grantees and the Bay Area community at large.