WHEN WILL CHILDCARE RETURN?

May 17, 2022
To the Editors:

I’m here to say that it’s time to bring back childcare as a work-shift option and as a much-needed relief to members who have been going through the pandemic as parents or guardians of children.

Since work shifts came back, my wife and I have been doing our best to schedule them, but it’s definitely been a stress-inducing challenge at times. As working parents with an 8- and a 5-year-old, weekdays are busy. Weekends are sometimes our only time to get chores done. Needless to say, we’re currently in the hole.

So, I must ask. What is the reason childcare has not come back? I’m a teacher. The school I work at in Manhattan has been in-person for the past two school years. At this point, masks are optional and COVID-related restrictions are minimal. Same goes for the school our children attend.

Why must the Coop make it that much harder for parents and guardians to get their work shifts done now, when in the past, the childcare option was a staple to the overall member work program?

Before the pandemic, my wife and I had more flexibility knowing that one of us could work our shift while the other had something else scheduled. The kids could enjoy time in the childcare area while one of us got our shift done.

I can’t even imagine how single parents are dealing with this. Do they need to hire babysitters just to put in their required shifts?

Childcare has always been an essential aspect of the Coop that enabled parents to be part of the community in the first place. I know several families who have since quit

the Coop, with work shifts being reinstated and childcare not brought back.

If childcare is a thing of the past and the number of work slots for parents/guardians isn’t going to change, the Coop needs to ask itself if it really is an institution that is friendly to working families.

Thanks,

Brian Russ