



## Media Release

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## Latest results of Kindergarten Parent Survey will drive change

## Our Kids Network says parent voices essential to school boards, service providers

Halton Region, Ontario – Thousands of parents of Halton kindergarten students have spoken, providing new insight into the health, wellbeing, and experiences of local families with young children.

In this sixth cycle of the Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS), completed every three years, 2,681 parents participated, a response rate of 44%. The survey was developed by Our Kids Network, a Halton-wide partnership of organizations and agencies serving children and youth.

Since 2003, 14,717 families have participated in the survey.

Dr. Elisabeth Wells, Research and Knowledge Broker for Our Kids Network, said high participation among parents is critical.

“We rely on parents to give us a window into their homes and communities,” she said. “When we have so many parents telling us about their lives and their children’s lives, we know we have relevant, credible data to share with our partners.”

Those partners include both Halton boards of education and other groups and individuals who serve children and families through community and social services.

Wells reported that among the most interesting results of the survey is an indication that less than one-quarter of parents feel connected to their community. Just 23% of parents of kindergarten children in Halton report high levels of neighbourhood cohesion.

“Having a sense of belonging to the community leads to positive outcomes for children and families,” she said. “It means that children have role models outside their families and that people are more likely to contribute to the community. Feeling connected to our neighbourhood and our neighbours matters.”

This need for community connection is one reason why Our Kids Network works to nurture and support partnership and collaboration at the neighbourhood level. Community agencies, faith groups, schools, regional and municipal staff, recreation departments, and community members all work together to provide and improve opportunities for local children, youth, and their families.

Other highlights from the 2018 KPS include:

- 74% of kindergarten children receive child care on a regular basis
- 41% of parents of kindergarten children often or very often feel rushed and pressed for time
- Parenting confidence has decreased since 2015; 60% of parents feel very or extremely confident as a parent, compared to 68% in 2015

- 94% of kindergarten children are eating breakfast, and 77% eat fruits and vegetables three or more times a day
- 40% of kindergarten students get the recommended one hour of physical activity every day

The parents surveyed have children attending kindergarten in either the Halton District School Board or the Halton Catholic District School Board.

“People are getting the message that data makes a difference in real life,” Wells said. “Our Kids Network has the important job of collecting and reporting on data directly related to the issues that matter to families in Halton. Our work leads to policies and programs that meet specific community needs.”

View the [KPS infographic](#) for more survey details and learn more about Our Kids Network at [ourkidsnetwork.ca](http://ourkidsnetwork.ca).

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