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Media Release

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Survey results shed light on the wellbeing and needs of Halton kindergarten children and their families

Our Kids Network releases results of 2023 Kindergarten Parent Survey

Halton Region, Ontario – Our Kids Network has released the results of its [2023 Kindergarten Parent Survey \(KPS\)](#). Since its inception in 2003, the KPS has given Halton families a voice and is an essential tool used to shape strategies, resources, and programs for children across the region.

Our Kids Network (OKN) is a Halton-wide partnership of agencies and organizations working together to ensure all children and youth thrive. Executive Director Elisabeth Wells explained that the network includes more than 80 organizations, from libraries to mental health services to early years programs.

“Professionals analyze and use our research reports and resources for their unique part of Halton to develop tailored approaches and activities. The Kindergarten Parent Survey helps us to compare data and track progress over time on topics such as health, learning, safety, school, and parenting.”

Parents of senior kindergarten students were invited to participate via the Halton District School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board. “We work in partnership with both school boards and Halton Region Children’s Services to collect and distribute the results. Partnership and collaboration are central to the success of the Kindergarten Parent Survey. By working together, we can increase our impact.” Wells said.

Learning about families

The survey is important because it allows us to compare data and track how kids and families are doing over time in Halton. Wells explained that the survey questions cover a variety of important elements of a child’s life, as well as the experiences of the parent or caregiver. “We want to know how often children are exercising and having meals together with their families, and how they feel about learning and school. Do they see their neighbourhood as a comfortable and supportive place? Are parents feeling stressed? When you put all this information together, you have a good picture of the challenges and opportunities in the community and can develop ways to address them.”

Survey content is organized under the “[Halton 7](#),” which are the seven evidence-based conditions of well-being needed for children, families, and the community to thrive. Highlights from the 2023 survey results include:

1. Health

- 61% of kindergarten children were reported to be physically active for 60 minutes daily
- 91% eat breakfast daily

2. Learning

- 95% of parents reported that their kindergarten child is excited about learning
- 79% had visited a library in the previous 12 months

3. Positive connections

- 97% of parents say their kindergarten child gets along with others of the same age

4. Safety

- 80% of parents of kindergarteners report that their child feels safe at school

5. Strong and stable families

- 74% of families reported having regular family meals
- 44% of parents of kindergarten children feel pressured for time at least five days a week

6. Schools

- 98% reported their child's school is a friendly and welcoming place

7. Neighbourhoods

- 97% of parents felt that their neighbourhood is a safe place to bring up children
- 85% reported people in their neighbourhood help each other

Wells added that in 2023, more newcomers participated in the KPS compared to previous years, and that this change aligns with population shifts in Halton Region.

“Overall, the KPS builds awareness of the needs of Halton children and promotes collective community action to help children get the best possible start in life. When parents and caregivers tell us how they’re doing, our network listens, discusses, collaborates, and responds. This is meaningful information that makes a difference.”

History of the KPS

The KPS is completed every three years (with the exception of a gap during the pandemic) and asks Halton families of children in kindergarten about their experiences and their children’s wellbeing. This [seventh cycle](#), completed in June 2023, saw 2,497 parents participate. The [sixth cycle](#) was completed in 2018, and since 2003, 17,214 families have participated in the survey.

The information gathered about the experiences of kindergarten students and their families is used hand-in-hand with the [Early Development Instrument](#). That survey, completed by kindergarten teachers, assesses children’s ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations.

Our Kids Network is online at ourkidsnetwork.ca. The KPS data, along with other OKN and Census data, can be accessed in the [OKN Data Portal](#).

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