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## Media Release

### For immediate release

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## Another year of research, information sharing, and collaboration to help Halton children and youth thrive

### Our Kids Network releases 2023-2024 Collective Impact Report

Halton Region, Ontario – Our Kids Network (OKN) has released its [2023-2024 Collective Impact Report](#), highlighting how people and organizations across Halton are collaborating to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.

Executive Director Elisabeth Wells said that reflecting on the past year brings feelings of pride to all involved in OKN activities. “When we have this chance to develop and share our Collective Impact Report, we see a clear picture of a remarkable year. The power of research, knowledge, and relationships truly has an impact on the everyday lives of Halton families.”

Christine Hartley, President & CEO for ErinoakKids Centre for Treatment and Development, congratulated OKN on another successful year “made possible by passionate and dedicated people.” “We are grateful for our long and productive partnership with Our Kids Network. They build capacity in the region and help us all to collectively advance child and youth well-being. We look forward to continuing our work together to ensure children and youth are supported.”

### New website and enhanced data portal

One of the year’s accomplishments is a newly designed OKN website, including a [resource hub](#) with more than 450 entries. The recently enhanced [OKN Data Portal](#), a searchable database of Halton-specific data can now be explored and mapped by municipality, census tract, or OKN neighbourhood. The portal equips professionals with information and insights as they design programs and services for children and youth.

The Collective Impact report notes 42,000 visits to the OKN website during the year, with 1,900 downloads of resource materials. Social media efforts garnered 35,000 views.

### Powerful research projects

Since 2003, more than 128,000 children, youth, and adults have participated in OKN surveys and research activities. Wells said that turning data into action is always at the heart of OKN’s activities.

“In this year’s report, we talk about the 2023 Kindergarten Parent Survey, which gave us a comprehensive picture of the well-being of that age group and their families. We also mobilized evidence to advocate for youth well-

being, with the release of five Data to Action Bulletins from the Halton Youth Impact Survey. These explore key topics like mental health, community engagement, and access to recreation spaces and programs.”

### **Leadership in the community**

OKN has led Truth and Reconciliation awareness and activities for its network of agencies and beyond. OKN has been vital in educating professionals in Halton through workshops, webinars, blogs, and our Resource Hub. More than 650 professionals have taken OKN’s Four Seasons of Reconciliation online course, enhancing their Indigenous knowledge and understanding.

Educational events, such as the Knowledge Translation Conference on child and youth mental health, provide opportunities for learning and networking, and this year were enjoyed by 960 participants.

“The OKN report highlights their meaningful work,” said Alex Sarchuk, Halton Region’s Commissioner, Social & Community Services. “It also demonstrates the important role collaboration plays in driving positive change. Together we can overcome obstacles, unlock new opportunities, and create a community where every child and youth thrives.”

Wells added that OKN’s work commits them to considering social determinants of well-being and addressing inequities. “We’re proud of our ability to guide and encourage positive change, through our network of dedicated, skilled professionals. Our Collective Impact Report reminds us, and shows others, how we’re having an impact on neighbourhoods and individuals. We’ll continue down this path, always keeping equity and fairness in mind, and always leaving room to learn and grow.”

*Our Kids Network is a Halton-wide partnership of agencies and organizations working together to ensure all children and youth thrive. For more than 25 years, OKN has been gathering evidence to improve everyone’s understanding of the strengths and needs of Halton’s youngest citizens. And connections among OKN’s network of more than 80 organizations lead to ever-improving supports and services for families.*

Our Kids Network is online at [ourkidsnetwork.ca](http://ourkidsnetwork.ca).

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