



## Frequently Asked Questions

*A brief overview of Our Kids Network for participating agencies and organizations*

### What is Our Kids Network (OKN)?

Our Kids Network is a partnership of agencies and organizations serving children and youth in Halton Region.

### What are the benefits of participating in Our Kids Network?

Most OKN participants surveyed in a 2011 evaluation say that the benefits of their involvement in the network 'exceeded' or 'greatly exceeded' any drawbacks. A strong majority say OKN enhanced their ability to address important issues in the community while 100% say they acquired useful knowledge that helped them in their daily work. Moreover, the vast majority of individuals surveyed say that working together with others in Halton Region meant they had a greater impact on the well-being of children than working on their own.

### What are the Halton 7?

OKN makes an important distinction between population and performance accountability. In **population accountability**, the entire community – including public and private sectors – shares the responsibility for achieving the conditions of well-being for children and families. In comparison, **performance accountability** is held at a program, agency or service level and focuses on whether the clients of the program or service are better off.

### Our Kids Network identifies seven population results.

#### Population Results (known as the Halton 7):

1. Children are healthy
2. Children are learning
3. Children are positively connected
4. Children are safe
5. Families are strong and stable
6. Schools are connected to the community
7. Neighbourhoods are where we live, work and play

**Vision:** All children thrive!

**Mission:** To promote the healthy development, security and safety of all children, youth and families through neighbourhood collaboration, services integration and measuring results.

**Over 120,000 children**, under age 18, live in Halton Region.

**88% of participants surveyed said that the benefits exceed or greatly exceed the drawbacks of participating in OKN.**

## **What are some of the key findings in the 2011 OKN evaluation report?**

The report provides the evaluation of performance results of the OKN six-year pilot phase. It found that significant progress has been made in moving towards service integration.

1. Most notably, there has been increased participation in the network; increased collaboration and partnership functioning; and increased infrastructures to support integration.
2. The Community Hubs have become established in their communities and are adept at providing connections and referrals to the specific services and programs that meet the needs of children and families.
3. Numerous Halton agencies use OKN local data to improve service planning.

## **How is OKN research used?**

Over the past six years, OKN has invested heavily in conducting original research in Halton Region. We have transferred this research into important knowledge, shared it with our community, and, finally, invested in strategies that mobilize positive action that helps children thrive in Halton Region.

**What are OKN Neighbourhood Hubs?** Through 3 neighbourhood Hubs, OKN mobilizes people to create positive opportunities, experiences and environments for children and youth. OKN Hubs are located in schools and are within walking distance for most families who are involved. Each of the Hubs has a distinct character that reflects the needs of the families and service partners who connect in that environment.

## **Who participates in OKN?**

These organizations provide leadership for Our Kids Network: Halton Children's Aid Society; Regional Municipality of Halton; Halton Regional Police Services; Halton District School Board; Halton Catholic District School Board; ROCK Reach Out Centre for Kids; Halton Multicultural Council and ErinoakKids, Centre for Treatment and Development. Committees work at planning effective systems and initiatives to build a seamless support network. Each hub has a local planning team focused on neighbourhood capacity building, collaboration and service integration.

Our Kids Network operates with the financial commitment of the Protocol Partners and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Halton Children's Aid Society provides significant administrative services and office space. Specific projects and initiatives receive financial support from other funding organizations.

## **How can my agency or organization get involved?**

Visit [www.ourkidsnetwork.ca](http://www.ourkidsnetwork.ca) for more information.

Contact:

Elena DiBattista, Director  
[Elena@ourkidsnetwork.ca](mailto:Elena@ourkidsnetwork.ca)  
905-333-4226

Beth Williams, Communications Manager  
[beth@ourkidsnetwork.ca](mailto:beth@ourkidsnetwork.ca)  
905-635-0728