



Guidelines for interpreting OKN data

The OKN Data Portal contains quality, local-level data and represents Our Kids Network's commitment to monitoring the well-being of young people in Halton. Although data are subject to limitations, we have made every effort to ensure accuracy. Limitations of the data used in the database include limited data points over time and self-reported information.

These guidelines for interpretation will help you to better understand how to use the data:

- Look for patterns of findings rather than focusing on a specific finding.
- While each indicator is important, using multiple indicators as evidence of strengths and needs provides a more comprehensive representation.
- Use caution when comparing across time and between municipalities and neighbourhoods. When comparing data across years, it is best to include at least three time points.
- Look for at least a 5% change or difference when comparing across time and between municipalities and neighbourhoods. This helps to avoid "over-interpreting" small changes as being important.
- Several types of response bias have been identified related to self-report surveys. Use caution when interpreting the meaning of the findings because some data have been generated through self-report surveys and may not represent all children and youth in Halton.
- Data presented are meant to provide a snapshot of information related to how Halton's children and youth are doing. The data cannot explain why an indicator is at a certain level.

Data sources

The following data sources have been used:

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The EDI is a developmental checklist completed by Kindergarten teachers and designed to measure how well a child is developing as he or she begins school.

Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS)

The KPS is a Halton-designed instrument that asks parents about the experiences of children and families in Halton. It allows us to examine some important child outcomes that are not measured in the EDI.

Halton Youth Survey (HYS)

The HYS, designed by Our Kids Network, is a region-wide survey that monitors school engagement, participation in community activities, physical and mental health, and participation in non-risk and risk-related activities. As well, 20 Development Assets[®] are measured. All students in Grades 7 and 10 are invited to complete the survey.

The HYS neighbourhood results are based solely on Grade 7 data because release of Grade 10 data by neighbourhood could result in individual secondary schools being identified, which is not permitted under the existing Our Kids Network Data Sharing Agreement.

Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)

EQAO assesses all students in Grades 3 and 6 in reading, writing, and mathematics. EQAO also administers the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics.

Integrated Services for Children Information System (ISCIS)

ISCIS collects information for Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC), an early intervention prevention initiative. Hospital nurses collect data on newborn babies, including information about the birth and the status of the mother's health, social, and family situation. Babies that score above the assessment threshold are considered at risk for future developmental difficulties and those families are offered additional supports through HBHC.

Ontario Child Care Management System (OCCMS)

The OCCMS database contains information about child care licensing, fee assistance, wage subsidy, and special needs resourcing.

Statistics Canada, Census (2006, 2011)

Statistics Canada Census data provide Halton demographic information. The data are also used by OKN to calculate the Social Risk Index (SRI) for each Halton neighbourhood. The SRI provides a picture of potential risks in communities. The index contains nine census variables that profile the socio-economic context of communities. The analysis of SRI variables is based on 2006 Census data.

Ontario Ministry of Finance, Ontario Population Projections

The Ministry of Finance produces a set of population projections to give planners and researchers a demographic outlook reflecting up-to-date trends and historical data. Data are from the 2009-2036 projections.

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