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mans never needed snacks, but now schools literally require it."

While physical activity is the core of his business, Fournier said exercise simply isn't enough anymore, to the point where his fitness studio has added a program that teaches people to make meals again and eat properly.

"The old adage that you can't out-exercise a bad diet is truer than ever," he said.

On the exercise front, the kindergarten parent survey indicates that only 39 per cent of Halton children meet the recommended amount of 60 minutes of physical activity per day. However, 94 per cent of kindergarten parents say that their kids attended recreational programs in the past 12 months.

It appears that a lack of programming isn't the is-

"The survey results don't surprise me. Portion sizes have become huge," "We don't teach cooking to kids anymore, at home or at school. Processed food is now considered acceptable. For millennia, humans never needed snacks, but now schools literally require it."

- Jason Fournier, owner of Local Motion Fitness in Halton Hills

sue - but rather a deficit in outdoor, unstructured playtime where children have the opportunity to take risks, surmises a recent report from Halton commissioner of social and community services Alex Sarchuk.

"Play involving uncertainty and risk is associated with increases in vigorous physical activity and improved motor skill," he wrote.

"However, kindergarten parent survey results suggest Halton parents

and caregivers are reluctant to permit children to take risks in their physical play. For example, only half of parents believe children should engage in 'rough and tumble' play by age four."

But letting children outside for this type of play isn't as simple as it sounds. Just ask any parent living in today's hypervigilant society where mothers and fathers are scrutinized more than ever, like Lisa Kearns, a mother of two and city

councillor in Burlington.

"There's no way I'm letting my six-year-old out on the street, because it's actually shamed," she said. "We need to reset those social expectations because I tell my kid that the 'mom police' will come and get me if I let you run down the road."

Kearns said she would love to see society revert back to an 1980s-style approach to parenting, when letting children play freely outside was encouraged and neigh-

bouring families supported each other.

"It continues to take a village to raise a child," she said. "We need that village approach again."

Indeed, it would appear that parents are feeling disconnected from other families in their area, with only 23 per cent reporting high levels of neighbourhood cohesion in the kindergarten parent survey, down from 28 per cent in 2012.

Sarchuk said that even lower levels of connectedness were reported among families with low incomes.

So what can be done?

To start, Kearns suggested an increased focus on things like neighbourhood parties to break down barriers, along with the use of Halton Region's social media platforms to promote a 'new norm' that makes it acceptable for children to go outside on their own and play.

Meghani said the

health department is taking a multifaceted approach to address childhood obesity, starting with working alongside doctors and hospitals on improving exclusive breastfeeding rates.

Halton health officials also target neighbourhoods where vulnerabilities have been identified to support community programs, child care centres, etc. with messaging that stresses the importance of healthy eating and physical activity for children.

For further details on Halton's health initiatives, visit halton.ca/For-Residents/Public-Health

STORY BEHIND THE STORY

We examined the results of the recent Halton kindergarten parent survey and dug into the timely and concerning issue of childhood obesity.

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Halton Hills Sports Museum Seeks 2020 Nominees



The Halton Hills Sports Museum is looking for athletes, teams or builders worthy of being inductees into the Halton Hills Sports Museum Hall of Fame.

The museum, located at the Mold-Masters SportsPlex, is seeking nominees for the Museum's gala induction ceremony set for Thursday, June 25, 2020 at the John Elliott Theatre.

Tickets are \$30 each and the evening starts at 6pm for a reception and then the formal awards ceremony begins at 7pm.

Any person or team who is, or has been distinguished as an athlete, an executive member or coach, or who has brought honour to Halton Hills shall be eligible for election provided he or she was a resident of the Town of Halton Hills at the time of the achievement which is the basis for his or her or their consideration.

Builder candidates may be either active or inactive at the time of their consideration.

Full nomination criteria and forms are available on the Museum's website, www.hhsm.ca

Deadline for nominations is Feb. 28, 2020

The HHSM Selection Committee
Chairperson, Anne Andrews
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