Kindex

2026-2029 Strategic Plan

Kindex is dedicated to generating diverse, multidisciplinary evidence to inform policy and practice; enhancing outcomes for children, youth, and families through high-quality research, evaluation, advocacy, and policy development; and sharing evidence and knowledge in accessible ways with practitioners, policymakers, and researchers.

Looking ahead

Hi!

As we reflect on Kindex's first two years, we are struck by the incredible generosity, collaboration, and shared commitment that have brought us to where we are today.

Kindex was established through a national co-design process that recognized the importance of bringing together research, practice expertise, lived experience, and partnership in service of children, youth, and families. Since then, we have worked alongside researchers, policymakers, and CYACs across Canada to build a trusted Research and Knowledge Centre grounded in relevance, rigour, and relationships.

As we developed this 2026-2029 Strategic Plan, we looked closely at what we have learned through our work and from our partners. One lesson stood out clearly: creating evidence is only part of the journey. To create meaningful change, we must also support implementation, strengthen partnerships, and engage more intentionally with policy and systems. This new strategic plan reflects that evolution.

We are excited to introduce a new **Policy and Partnerships Specialist** position that will help strengthen relationships, foster collaboration, and advance policy engagement across the sectors that influence outcomes for children and families. We are also launching a national **Implementation Champions** network, creating opportunities for peer leadership, reciprocal learning, and the practical application of evidence within CYACs and multidisciplinary teams. These new directions build on our original vision while deepening our impact and reach. They are possible because of the strong relationships that have shaped Kindex from the beginning.

As you read what follows, you will see what we've learned embedded in how we frame our goals, strengthen partnerships, and support change across practice, policy, and systems. Thank you for your partnership, your trust, and your willingness to learn alongside us. We look forward to continuing this work together and to the opportunities this next chapter will bring.

The Kindex Team

01

Our foundation

From the beginning, Kindex was envisioned not as a single organization, but as a shared endeavour—grounded in collective wisdom, lived experience, and a commitment to improving outcomes for children, youth, and their families. The principles that guided the establishment of Kindex continue to be the foundation of all our work moving forward.

Relevant and action-oriented
We generate knowledge that is timely, practical, and responsive to the needs of CYACs.

Participatory and context specific
We co-create knowledge with researchers, elders and knowledge keepers, youth, CYACs, and their multidisciplinary team partners.

Collaborative
We build strong relationships based on mutual respect, trust, and open communication.

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization
We recognize and value diverse identities, experiences, perspectives, and ways of knowing.

Generosity
We contribute openly to the strength and sustainability of CYACs.

02

What we've learned

We have been intentional about learning as we go. Through iterative evaluation, reflection, and ongoing feedback from partners, we have worked to better understand both our outcomes and the processes that shape them. These experiences have reinforced that being a good steward of this work requires not only attention to results, but care and integrity in how the work is done and who we engage with.

Partnerships are foundational to impact	Our progress to date has been built on strong, trusting relationships with CYACs and academic partners from across the country. Maintaining and deepening these relationships will be essential to sustaining momentum, broadening our learning community, and ensuring that Kindex continues to be a national connector.
Commitment to context and values strengthens our starting point	One of our greatest strengths has been our attention to the contextual realities of the CYACs we work with, and our alignment with shared values such as collaboration, respect, and equity. These principles have shaped not only our areas of research, but how we engage, communicate, and make decisions. Our values guide our approach and keep us grounded, responsive, and aligned with the needs of CYACs.
Implementation is a growing priority	Our mission has always been to ensure that research informs real change in practice. As we grow, it clear that we need to strengthen our capacity and understanding around implementation.
Practice relationships enable deeper policy engagement	We have established rich, reciprocal relationships with practice partners who enhance our work and help ensure relevance and impact. Building these policy relationships is a natural extension of our work, ensuring that our research can support change at every level of the system.
Generosity strengthens trust and momentum	Our work to date has been made possible by the generosity of CYACs across Canada. We have learned that generosity is not peripheral to meaningful collaboration; it is foundational to trust and learning. We are committed to practicing generosity in everything we do, by offering our best work, sharing knowledge openly, being consistent and reliable partners, and giving as much as we are able to support Canadian CYACs.

03

Our priorities

As we move forward we will continue to strengthen the approach that has brought us here, while intentionally expanding our focus in areas such as implementation and policy, where we can extend our influence and support change at every level of the system.

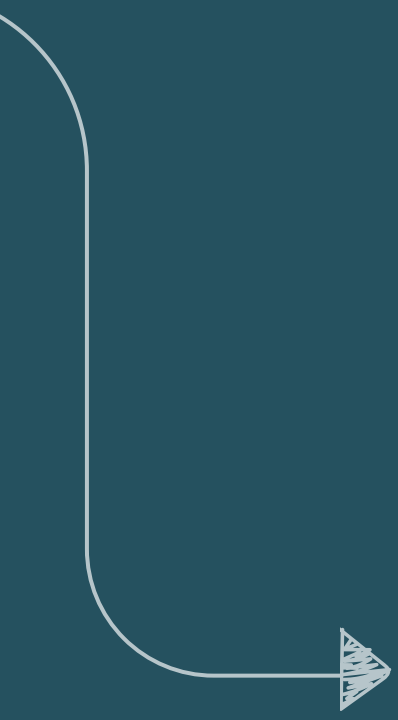
Roadmap to drive change

Foster partnerships.

Generate evidence.

Advance practice.

Build data capacity.



Foster partnerships.

We foster reciprocity among stakeholders, learn from one another, and build on our mutual strengths and resources. Our work is marked by mutual respect; recognition of knowledge, expertise, and resource capacities; and open communication.

Fostering partnerships are not an accessory to our work, they are the work.

We are working towards:

Establishing a Youth Rights Hub

Youth, CYACs, MDT partners, and broader networks demonstrate increased readiness to engage youth as rights holders and contributors, strengthening collaboration with the Youth Rights Hub while integrating youth-informed perspectives into practice, planning, and learning, and recognizing youth leaders as credible partners in policy dialogue, knowledge mobilization, and advocacy across systems.

Engagement systems increasingly reflect youth-centred, rights-based approaches, as cross-sector collaboration normalizes meaningful youth participation in decision-making and system-level practices more consistently integrate youth rights, lived experience, and coordinated responses to child abuse and neglect.

Strengthening our advisory groups

Advisors engage with and trust Kindex, and see their knowledge meaningfully reflected in Kindex actions while actively shaping priorities through equity-centred and trauma-informed lenses.

Advisory structures strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of Kindex's work, while evidence-informed, practice-relevant outputs enhance sector alignment and contribute to system practices that increasingly reflect inclusive, rights-based decision-making.

Mobilizing implementation champions

Members feel prepared, respected, and valued as contributors, while partners meaningfully integrate community insight into implementation decisions, strengthening community-based accountability.

Community knowledge is recognized and legitimized within implementation and learning processes, shaping practice and policy conversations to reflect lived realities and driving increasingly responsive and equitable implementation approaches.

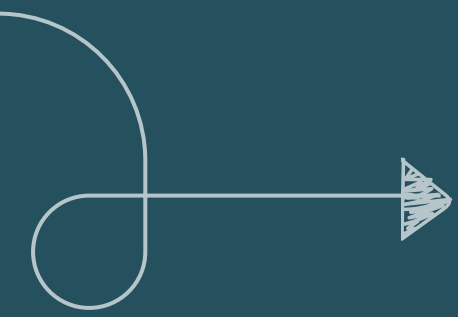
Foster partnerships

Goals	Actvities
Establish and sustain a Youth Rights Hub that meaningfully brings together young people, community partners, and advocates to advance youth rights, amplify youth voice, share knowledge, and drive collective action grounded in lived experience.	
By the end of **2026–27,** Kindex will formally establish the Youth Rights Hub by recruiting a diverse group of 12–15 youth and developing a clear, values-based framework that defines the Hub's purpose, roles, responsibilities, governance structure, and mandate. Foundational capacity-building opportunities will be embedded to support youth skill development (e.g., leadership, advocacy, research literacy, and collaboration) and to ensure meaningful, supported participation.	• Recruit diverse youth members (12–15) using transparent, equity-informed processes • Co-develop values-based framework, governance, and mandate with youth • Deliver foundational capacity-building (leadership, advocacy, research literacy, collaboration) • Provide relational, trauma-informed supports (honoraria, mentoring, accessibility supports)
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will evaluate the Youth Rights Hub framework and early outcomes, refine its structure based on youth and partner feedback, and establish intentional pathways for broader engagement from additional youth, community organizations, and system partners. This phase will focus on strengthening collaboration, documenting learning, and developing a sustainability plan to support the Hub's long-term viability and impact.	• Conduct participatory evaluation with youth and partners • Revise framework based on feedback • Create pathways for broader youth and partner engagement • Develop sustainability plan
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will integrate the Youth Rights Hub as a sustained, recognized component of its partnership ecosystem. The Hub will actively contribute to policy dialogue, knowledge mobilization, and advocacy initiatives, with youth leaders meaningfully shaping priorities and co-leading initiatives alongside partners. Sustainable resourcing, succession planning, and ongoing evaluation practices will be embedded to support long-term collective impact.	• Integrate Hub into policy dialogue, research planning, and KM activities • Support youth co-leadership in initiatives • Establish succession planning and evaluation processes

Maintain strong practice, policy, and scientific advisories with representation from diverse sectors, regions, and lived experiences. These advisory groups will ensure that our work is grounded in broad expertise, mutual respect, and an inclusive understanding of CYAC needs.

By the end of **2026–27**, Kindex will undertake a review of its existing advisory groups to clarify their purpose, scope, roles, and structures. This work will formalize processes that have historically evolved intuitively, including membership criteria, terms of reference, expectations, and communication pathways. During this period, Kindex will intentionally expand advisory membership to include new voices—particularly policy advisors, Indigenous partners, and individuals with diverse lived experiences—while ensuring alignment with Kindex's values and strategic priorities.	• Review advisory purposes, structures, and membership • Develop terms of reference and communication pathways • Recruit policy, Indigenous, and lived-experience members
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will deepen engagement with advisory groups through clearer mechanisms of communication, feedback, and accountability. This will include the implementation of regular reporting processes (e.g., quarterly summaries or reflections) to document insights, advice provided, and how advisory input informs Kindex's work. Communications with advisory members will be more intentional, transparent, and reciprocal, reinforcing trust and shared ownership. Meaningful engagement with Truth and Reconciliation commitments will be embedded across advisory processes, rather than treated as a standalone activity.	• Implement regular reporting and feedback loops • Embed TRC commitments into advisory processes • Communicate how advice is used
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will sustain well-functioning, diverse advisory structures that are embedded into organizational decision-making, policy development, research design, and knowledge mobilization. Advisory contributions—particularly from policy, Indigenous, and lived-experience perspectives—will be visibly reflected in Kindex outputs and strategic directions. Ongoing evaluation and renewal processes will ensure advisory groups remain relevant, inclusive, and responsive to emerging CYAC needs, while supporting long-term partnership strength and shared impact.	• Embed advisory input into research, policy, and KM workflows • Evaluate and renew membership and structures

Create a Community Jury to advance implementation and accountability. This structure will provide topic-specific insight, advise on implementation challenges, and support learning and policy- and practice-informed change grounded in community realities.	
By the end of **2026–27**, Kindex will clearly define the purpose, scope, and intended use of the Community Jury. This will include establishing selection criteria, terms of reference, ethical considerations, and processes for engagement. The framework will articulate how Community Jury insights will inform decision-making, implementation planning, and accountability across Kindex initiatives.	• Develop purpose, selection criteria, and ethics • Define use of insights for accountability
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will actively convene and use the Community Jury to provide input on priority topics, advise on implementation strategies, and highlight emerging issues or unintended impacts. Structured mechanisms will be established to document insights, respond to recommendations, and integrate community perspectives into policy, research, and practice initiatives.	• Convene Jury on priority topics • Document and respond to recommendations
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will evaluate the effectiveness of the Community Jury in advancing meaningful implementation, accountability, and system change. Findings will inform refinements to the model and support the long-term integration of community-informed feedback and shared learning into Kindex's core ways of working.	• Assess effectiveness • Refine and embed Jury into core work



Generate evidence.

We produce rigorous, context-specific research that addresses the unique challenges faced by CYACs across Canada. This evidence guides the development of effective interventions, policies, and programs for CYACs.

We are dedicated to generating diverse, multidisciplinary evidence to inform policy and practice.

We are working towards:

Generating rigorous, context-specific evidence across the five national research priority areas.

CYACs and partners increasingly view research as relevant and usable, fostering a research culture grounded in inclusion and reciprocity while actively applying evidence to inform learning, planning, and advocacy.

Evidence strengthens practice relevance nationally while shifting research norms toward inclusive knowledge production and actively informing policy and broader system-level discourse.

Generate evidence

Goals	Actvities
Generate rigorous, context-specific evidence across the five national research priority areas— Effectiveness of the CYAC Model, Trauma-Informed Justice Systems, Emerging Topics in Child Sexual Abuse, System Integration and Coordination, and Therapeutic Approaches in Child Abuse— to strengthen CYAC practices, inform policy, and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.	
By the end of **2026–27,** Kindex will align its research agenda with national guidelines, CYAC-identified priorities, and partner input to ensure that research questions are relevant, timely, and meaningful to practice and policy. Intentional mechanisms will be strengthened to ask CYACs what evidence they need and how they want to engage, with particular focus on recruiting smaller and under-represented sites across regions.	• Engage CYACs to define priorities • Recruit under-represented CYACs • Establish research tracking systems
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will maintain an agile and collaborative research agenda that responds to emerging challenges, trends, and gaps identified by CYACs. Individual studies will be synthesized into accessible, practice- and policy-relevant insights to support advocacy and real-world application. Intentional efforts will be made to spotlight partner-led and external research that advances CYAC knowledge, while tracking collaboration patterns and geographic representation to ensure broad, equitable inclusion across Canada.	• Respond to emerging issues • Synthesize findings across studies • Spotlight partner-led research
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will embed systems for continuous learning and accountability by using research tracking data to assess impact, identify gaps, and guide future investment. Evidence generated and synthesized will be actively mobilized to inform CYAC practice, cross-sector policy conversations, and system integration efforts. A sustained commitment to responsible, responsive research will be demonstrated through transparent reporting, inclusive representation, and ongoing engagement with CYACs as co-producers of knowledge.	• Use data to guide investment and gaps • Mobilize evidence for policy and practice

Advance practice.

We co-develop and mobilize practice supports that are accessible and directly applicable to CYAC work, with a focus on learning, implementation, and sustained practice change.

Our goal is to build on leading practices and mobilize knowledge that is accessible, practical, and directly applicable to the work of CYACs.

We are working towards:

Integrating knowledge mobilization, implementation support, and communications

Partners actively engage with tools, adapt them to their local contexts, and sustain resulting changes in practice over time.

Practice quality improves as consistent, trauma-informed approaches expand, strengthening overall system stability and quality.

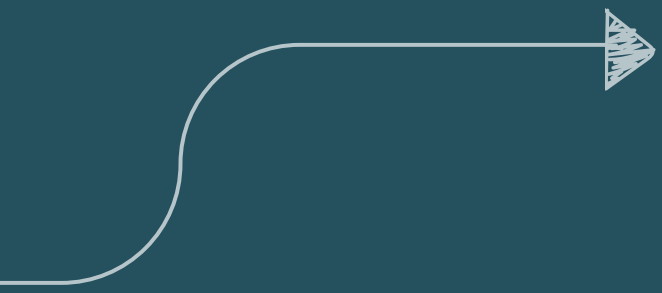
Advancing policy advocacy

Policymakers and policy partners actively engage with and consider integrated evidence, using it to inform and strengthen decision-making.

Evidence credibility is strengthened nationally, driving policy dialogue toward more child-centred, coordinated responses and contributing to system improvements that benefit children, youth, and families.

Advance practice

Goals	Actvities
Develop and maintain high-quality, accessible communication platforms and practice supports that serve as foundational infrastructure for advancing excellence across CYACs. This work will intentionally integrate knowledge mobilization, implementation support, and communications strategies to ensure evidence is visible, usable, and impactful in practice.	
By the end of **2026–27**, Kindex will formalize advocacy processes by identifying priority policy areas, establishing environmental monitoring mechanisms (e.g., Senate and House of Commons activities), and developing templates and workflows for practice- and evidence-informed policy briefs and commentary. One-off projects and research outputs will be intentionally synthesized to identify key advocacy-relevant insights.	• Define KM, comms, and implementation roles • Strengthen platforms and workflows
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will maintain an agile and collaborative research agenda that responds to emerging challenges, trends, and gaps identified by CYACs. Individual studies will be synthesized into accessible, practice- and policy-relevant insights to support advocacy and real-world application. Intentional efforts will be made to spotlight partner-led and external research that advances CYAC knowledge, while tracking collaboration patterns and geographic representation to ensure broad, equitable inclusion across Canada.	• Produce briefs, toolkits, webinars, CoPs • Provide implementation support
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will embed systems for continuous learning and accountability by using research tracking data to assess impact, identify gaps, and guide future investment. Evidence generated and synthesized will be actively mobilized to inform CYAC practice, cross-sector policy conversations, and system integration efforts. A sustained commitment to responsible, responsive research will be demonstrated through transparent reporting, inclusive representation, and ongoing engagement with CYACs as co-producers of knowledge.	• Use feedback loops • Refine based on CoPs and Community Jury



Build data capacity.

We are committed to establishing robust data collection and evaluation processes to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of CYACs. These practices enable us to conduct rigorous research, demonstrate impact, advocate for systems change, and strengthen evidence-informed practices.

Establishing robust data collection processes enables us to conduct rigorous research, demonstrate impact, advocate for systems change, and strengthen evidence-informed practices.

We are working towards:

Shared CYAC dataset

CYACs increasingly recognize the value and feasibility of data collection, strengthening confidence and consistency in practice while using data to inform decision-making.

Foundations are established for comparable national data, enabling evidence to inform learning and advocacy while supporting the measurement and communication of system-level impact.

Evidence strengthens practice relevance nationally while shifting research norms toward inclusive knowledge production and actively informing policy and broader system-level discourse.

Build data capacity

Goals	Actvities
Lead the development, implementation, and ongoing refinement of a shared CYAC dataset, alongside clear guidance, tools, and capacity-building supports. This work will prioritize relevance, feasibility, trauma-informed practice, and data usefulness—ensuring CYACs can confidently use data to inform practice, evaluate outcomes, report impact, and contribute to collective learning and advocacy.	
By the end of **2026–27**, Kindex will establish a shared foundation for data collection by defining a common CYAC dataset and clarifying expectations for ethical, trauma-informed, and meaningful data practice. The dataset will reflect CYAC service pathways and outcomes and will be grounded in feasibility, consistency, and relevance to practice. CYACs will be engaged as partners in shaping what data is collected and why, ensuring the dataset supports both accountability and learning.	• Co-develop and pilot a shared minimum dataset with common indicators and definitions • Establish guidance that articulates data capacity expectations and ethical data practices
By the end of **2027–28**, Kindex will support CYACs to actively use the shared dataset by providing clear roadmaps, tools, and guidance for analysis, evaluation, and reporting. Data use will move beyond collection toward interpretation and application, supporting program improvement, evaluation, and consistent communication of impact to funders, partners, and communities.	• Develop roadmaps for data use, analysis, and reporting across CYAC contexts • Create practical tools, templates, and examples to support implementation and interpretation
By the end of **2028–29**, Kindex will embed consistent data use and reporting practices across the CYAC network, enabling continuous learning, accountability, and systems-level insight. Evidence generated through the shared dataset will be mobilized to inform practice improvement, cross-sector policy dialogue, and advocacy for child- and youth-centred system integration. CYACs will be recognized as co-producers of knowledge, with transparent reporting and sustained engagement reinforcing trust, relevance, and impact.	• Use aggregated data to identify impact, gaps, and priorities for systems change • Mobilize evidence to inform CYAC practice, policy conversations, and public reporting