



KUJENGA WELLNESS PROJECT REPORT 2024





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

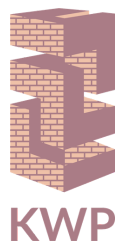
Executive Summary

In its fourth year, the Kujenga Family Wellness Project remains a vital service provider for the Black community. Over the past year, Kujenga hosted its second Wellness Fair on May 26, 2024, designed to foster community connection, and continues to offer monthly educational workshops. The project's outreach efforts have engaged over 450 participants. Additionally, Kujenga has expanded its Advisory Council with new members. However, there has been a change in the core team, as Tasia Richards has stepped down to pursue other opportunities

Kujenga's Purpose: Building Community

The Kujenga Family Wellness Project is an initiative started in 2019 aimed to support, enhance, and advocate for the lives of Black parents, caregivers, and guardians.

The project is grounded in the principles of the social determinants of health, community building and holistic wellness. Kujenga focuses on addressing the impact of community and interpersonal violence, addressing disconnection and isolation amongst parents, mental health concerns, financial stressors, and navigating systemic issues such as health, education, child-welfare, and the criminal justice system.





VISION *and* MISSION STATEMENT



Vision Statement: Building community, holistic teaching, and promoting healthy families.

Mission Statement: Creating access to culturally informed resources, identifying strategies to address conflict within the family, generating access points to mental health and other resources to support the family and enhance participation in the community.

During this period, the team focused on refining its goals and strategic plans, enhancing community engagement, and deepening its impact. Collaboration with partners and new program facilitators helped Kujenga to achieve both short- and long-term objectives.

A highlight of the year was the increased attendance at workshops, support groups, and the wellness fair. Feedback from participants emphasized the importance of these events and the ongoing need for programming that addresses parenting, socio-emotional challenges, and caregiver support. Kujenga also created opportunities for university and college students to earn practicum hours by involving them in outreach activities.





Our Community



Core Team

The Kujenga team consists of core members, who help to manage the project activities, provide outreach, and deliver services within the community.

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee is a group of individuals, many parents who provide guidance and support to the initiatives for Kujenga.

Special Events Committee

The special events committee are community members who work with Kujenga to deliver special events, such as the wellness fair.

Interns and Volunteers

Our interns assist with workshops and responding to calls on the Kujali Line. Volunteers support initiatives such as the wellness fair, and other initiatives.

Project Activities

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

KUJALI LINE

Connecting parents with skilled counsellors

WORKSHOPS

Educating and informing parents.

SUPPORT CIRCLES

Centering parents healing in community.



"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." – Coretta Scott King

Throughout the year, 2024-2025, Kujenga hosted 17 workshops, a co-parenting/mediation series, and a women's group for a total of 19 events. Kujenga held its second annual Wellness Fair (May 26, 2024) which hosted workshop facilitators, Black-owned vendors, community organizations, and arts, and cultural performers. Overall, Kujenga reached 500 participants throughout the year, marking an increase in workshop attendance.



Educational Workshops, Panel Series, and Support Circles

Black Mental Health Week Launch (March 4, 2024)- The panel launch featured community professionals who discussed the key themes in Black Mental Health and hosted by Nicole Perryman.

Ancestral Workshop (March 6, 2024) hosted by Melissa Taylor, focused on exploring intergenerational experiences within the Black community, and healing.

Black Men's Health Panel (March 7, 2024)- in this panel discussion, panelists shared valuable insights, tips, and personal experiences to empower you to prioritize your well-being.

Grieving and Loss (March 8, 2024)- hosted by Nicole Perryman, and Curtis Sheppard explored effective strategies for managing the challenges of grieving and loss.

Navigating Co-Parenting Relationships in the Family (April 4, 2024)- hosted by Nicole Perryman examined healthy co-parenting strategies, as well as identified how children are impacted by the changes in the family.



Kujenga hosts monthly workshops, support circles, and panel discussions centering on a range of topics on *parenting, intergenerational trauma, wellness, multiple identities, attachment, and more*. Our aim is to **empower, educate and enrich the lives of our community** and center the perspectives of diverse facilitators and speakers.





Emotional Regulation for Parents and Children: Strengthening Attachment Bonds (April 25, 2024)- hosted by Kesha Christie explored vital role of emotional regulation in parent-child relationships and how storytelling can serve as a powerful tool in fostering attachment bonds.

Empowering Black Teens: Family Strategies for Mental Wellness (June 11, 2024)- hosted by Rochelle Ramathe aimed to de-stigmatize the challenges faced by Black teens and practical ways to support them.

Navigating the Education Systems: Assisting Racialized Families (September 26, 2024)- hosted by Melissa Perryman the workshop addressed key themes such as tips for successful parenting for raising Black children, enhancing your parenting wellness, supporting your child returning to school, and navigating online classrooms.

Infusing Wellness and Healing into Parenting (October 30, 2024)- hosted by Nicole Perryman aimed at enriching the family system with wellness plan, understanding family difficulties, adjusting to changing parenting roles, and strengthening the family unit.



Exploring Sexual Health

(November 28, 2024) hosted by Zainab Soje, who explored tips and information for parents and youth on sexual health.

Navigating the Systems as a Newcomer

(November 21, 2024) hosted in collaboration with Children's Aid Society, Melissa Perryman, and Ayesha Javed the workshop aimed to educate newcomers on the education and child welfare system, and strengthen their knowledge on services available to support their families.

Black Men's Health Panel II: Visible Invisible the Importance of Black Men Mentoring Youth

hosted by guest panellists, Curtis Sheppard and John Jack aimed at addressing key topics in men's health such as mental health and trauma, Black men in community healing, and embarking on the steps of change.

Aya Parenting Workshops

[June 2024 and November 14, 2024] held by guest facilitators and professionals centered on specific topics in parenting such as grief and loss, attachment, wellness, mental health, and family resilience.



QUEEN'S UNITE

Developed in 2020, the Queen's Unite is Kujenga's longest women's circle aimed at cultivating connection amongst women, and guiding women through healing and inner growth.

"If you prioritize yourself, you are going to save yourself"
Gabrielle Union.

Through interactive discussions and activities, Queen's Unite instills a sense of self-value as a catalyst for continuous personal growth, encouraging participants to cherish their "crown of jewels" and enrich it with invaluable life experiences. Moreover, the program emphasizes community engagement, fostering a network of empowered women who uplift and support each other across all facets of life.

Topics: Uniting sets the tone for fostering unity and community among participants. Mindfulness and Well-being, self-care and mindfulness practices for overall well-being. Transformation and Growth: Session Three: Reignite Your Crown focused on personal growth and resilience-building strategies. Coping and Conquering Stress Management offers practical techniques for managing stress effectively. Interconnection and Support highlight the importance of community support and embracing diversity. Financial Stability and Growth Embracing the Journey of Financial Stability, Life Lessons, and Growth focused on achieving financial stability and personal growth. Assertiveness and Confidence, centering on assertive communication. Resilience and Growth Journey: Painting Resilience in Our Growth Journey focused on resilience-building and personal development.



QUEEN'S UNITE

Throughout the 27 open sessions, sixteen women attended the sessions. The women lived in Durham Region, but the group also welcomed women from across the world.

"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." — Angela Davis

"This program has facilitated the self-development needed to become a stronger, more defined me. I am appreciative of how, as group members, we were able to support and encourage each other in this safe space. I went from self-doubt to self-belief with the support of this group. The facilitator was an excellent and inspirational leader who honoured and demonstrated value to each member of the group each and every meet. Thank you for providing a growth promoting environment that is free from judgment."
Participant

Topics: Empowerment and Support: Breaking Chains: Empowering Escapes and Supporting Survivors addressed empowerment and support for overcoming challenges. Balancing Responsibilities: Balancing Motherhood - Navigating Graceful Departures and Serene Composure, provided insights into managing multiple responsibilities. Self-Esteem and Body Positivity: Queens' Radiance: Empowering Reflections on Self-Esteem and Body Positivity promoted self-esteem and body positivity. Holistic Harmony: Queens' Essence: Nurturing Holistic Harmony in Mind, Body, and Spirit emphasizes holistic well-being. Self-Care and Nurturing: Nurturing and Embracing Self-Care encouraged participants to prioritize self-care practices. Self-Compassion and Empathy: Session Fourteen: Mastery of Self-Compassion encouraged participants to cultivate self-compassion and empathy, and Celebration and Growth to close the topic discussions.



Strategic Goals and Highlights

The Kujenga team entered their second year of the scale grant with a full agenda. The first few months centered on completing the Black Mental Health Week activities, and planning for the Kujenga Wellness Fair at the Audley Recreation Centre. At the same time, the team noted decreasing numbers in attendance at workshops, and the team aimed to build new relationships and partners.

✦ Increase Workshop Attendance

Kujenga reached 438 participants at webinars with an average of 20 participants attending each webinar. Kujenga also introduced new speakers such as Melissa Taylor and Rochelle Ramathe.

✦ Increase Social Media Attendance

Kujenga has 1080 followers on Facebook and Instagram. In addition, Kujenga has 500 followers on Eventbrite. The increase in followers has helped improve engagement across all events.

✦ Deepening Impact

During the year, Kujenga addressed critical topics such as **grief and loss, intergenerational trauma, men's health, and women's health** which addressed the core of family's trauma and life altering experiences.

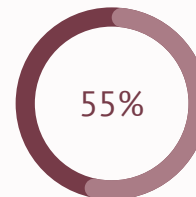
✦ Kujali Crisis Line

The Kujali Crisis Line received over 120 calls over the past year, which averages 2-3 calls per week. During this time, over 10 volunteers supported the Kujali Line. The volunteers worked with families seeking support for the children and grandchildren, accessing therapeutic programs, fleeing domestic violence relationships, and seeking community resources.



2500 Newsletter Subscribers

Outreach consists of monthly newsletters informing subscribers on new webinars, parenting tips and wellness strategies.



Engagement on Newsletter

On average, 55% of subscribers open the newsletter, and 2-6% access the Eventbrite link to register for a webinar.





2025-2026 Goals

Over the next year, the Kujenga Team will focus on the following main objectives to enhance their service delivery.

Curating Team & Volunteers

Kujenga Team is curating a new team by adding **two** core leads to join the team, and reinforcing the Parent Advisory Group. Kujenga will work with a contractor to develop a **strategic plan** designed to support Kujenga as it transitions into a scale.

Programs & Services

The Kujenga Team strives to develop programs [i.e., webinars] and services [i.e., Kujali Line] that meets the needs of the community. In addition, the team welcomes new presenters and facilitators, innovative topics and subject areas, and meaningful sessions. The team is hoping to increase the reach to 800 new members, and over 1000 new followers.

Wellness Fair Planning

The Kujenga team will collaborate with an event planner to support the development of the Kujenga Family Wellness Fair. The fair is booked for May 9, 2026 and will feature vendors, speakers, and meal options.

Community Engagement

In the fifth year of operation, the Kujenga team will strive to continue to build connections and relationships with community partners, stakeholders, and participants. The team will create opportunities to learn more about what the participants need through focus groups, surveys and evaluations.



If you are seeking support in your life or in your family, we are here to help!

Connect with us!

Phone: **437-500-3496**

Email: **info@kujengafamily.org**

Crisis Line: **info@blackfamilysupport.org**

Website: **www.kujengafamily.org**