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**Press Release**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LaunchNW and Our Kids: Our Business (OKOB) Merge Organizations to Support Children Prenatal Through Third Grade**

**Spokane, Wash.** – Effective February 1, 2026, LaunchNW, an initiative of Innovia Foundation, and Our Kids: Our Business (OKOB), a 501 (c)3 nonprofit agency, are entering a partnership to merge organizations. With closely aligned missions, this joining of resources will strengthen support for children and families across the region.

OKOB has a long-standing history in Spokane County, with early connections to the Spokane Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (SPO-CAN) Council, a collaboration of local nonprofits and community members committed to preventing abuse.

In 2008, following the horrific death of 4-year-old Summer Phelps, *The Spokesman-Review* launched a month-long, daily front-page series focused on child abuse and neglect in the community. This effort galvanized local business and community leaders to partner with SPO-CAN. Under the leadership of Mary Ann Murphy, former director of Partners with Families and Children, the groups merged and rebranded as Our Kids: Our Business in 2007.

OKOB approaches child abuse as a symptom of complex societal challenges, including generational trauma and poverty, and addresses them through financial and educational resources. Over the past five years, the organization has redirected member dues into a flexible funding pool for member agencies to meet families' unique needs. OKOB also hosts annual educational events on the lifelong impact of early childhood experiences and monthly public meetings, with additional benefits for dues-paying members.

While many of LaunchNW's current programs focus on secondary students, the organization is committed to ensuring children thrive throughout each stage of their

lives. Partnering with OKOB will expand LaunchNW's ability to support early child development, specifically during the prenatal to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade years.

"LaunchNW is honored to partner with Our Kids: Our Business, allowing us to reach children at the most critical stages of development," says Ben Small, Executive Director of LaunchNW. "Together, we can provide families with the resources necessary to help their children build a strong foundation for lifelong success. Systems change is accomplished through strong relationships, and throughout this process, I gained a deep appreciation for the OKOB Board and their commitment to serving children and families, no matter what it takes."

"OKOB leadership is thrilled with this merger, as it provides the depth of resources and staff that have challenged our all-volunteer group," says Katie Tolley, Board President of OKOB. "After a successful strategic planning session, we knew we needed to align more closely with others to ensure the impact for children and families can scale to meet community needs. We are confident the new partnership will accomplish this, and our community will benefit significantly."

### **About Our Kids: Our Business**

Our Kids: Our Business is a volunteer-led 501 (c)3 organization with a mission to end child abuse through awareness, education, resources and collaboration. We envision a community where all children are valued, nurtured, and protected. The goal of Our Kids: Our Business is to ensure that ALL children are successful at EVERY stage of development from birth to high school graduation to productive adulthood.

### **About LaunchNW**

LaunchNW, a regional community initiative of Innova Foundation, is based on a bold promise: Imagine the impact of our community coming together to create opportunities and support for children to pursue their post-high school education and career of choice. LaunchNW convenes leaders in business, education, nonprofits, government, and communities to support young people on their journey, in addition to removing financial barriers for the students who need it most. A disruption to business as usual, LaunchNW is a transformational investment in the future of our region.

### **About Innova Foundation**

As the community foundation for Eastern Washington and North Idaho, we partner with people who want to improve their communities and make the world better. We work together to identify and respond to our region's greatest opportunities, help those in need, and leave a lasting impact. Our mission is to ignite generosity that transforms lives and communities. We envision vibrant and sustainable communities where every person has the opportunity to thrive. Each year, Innova Foundation invests \$14 million into our communities through grants and scholarships.

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