

FIRST NATIONS AND THE TOXIC DRUG POISONING CRISIS IN BC

JANUARY – JUNE 2024



Harm reduction efforts are saving lives but drug toxicity continues at record high levels affecting First Nations families and communities across BC.

TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths of First Nations People

222



2.2%
Decrease from the same period in 2023

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE DIED FROM TOXIC DRUG POISONINGS BETWEEN JAN-JUNE 2024.

This is a 2.2% decrease from the 227 deaths during the same period in 2023.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Death

6.7 x First Nations people died at 6.7 times the rate of other BC residents in 2024 (Jan-June). **This number was 6.0 in the same period in 2023.**

11.0 x First Nations females died at **11.0 times** the rate of other female BC residents in 2024 (Jan-June).

5.3 x First Nations males died at **5.3 times** the rate of other male BC residents in 2024 (Jan-June).

Deaths of First Nations People BY SEX



130
Males **58.6%**



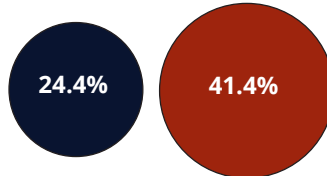
92
Females **41.4%**

Deaths of First Nations People BY AGE

52.3%
40 Years and Older

47.7%
Younger than 40

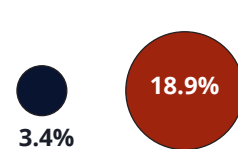
First Nations Females Experience Very High Rates of Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths



24.4% of other BC residents who died between Jan-June 2024 were female.

41.4% of First Nations people who died between Jan-June 2024 were female.

First Nations People are Disproportionately Represented in Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths



First Nations people make up **3.4%** of BC's population.

18.9% of toxic drug poisoning deaths between Jan-June 2024 were First Nations people.



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

This data includes only Status First Nations people and their status-eligible descendants. Additionally, our data is limited to biological sex at birth, which may misidentify two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, intersex, and gender diverse people. Surveillance data is dynamic and subject to change with new information and historical corrections.

The FNHA gratefully acknowledges the health partners that make this data available: BC Centre for Disease Control, BC Coroners Service, BC Emergency Health Services, and the BC Ministry of Health.

You may find this information distressing. Cultural support is available at Tsoow Tun Le Lum Society. Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit www.tsoowtunlelum.org



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

Toxic Drug Poisoning Events Involving First Nations People

1,803 ↓ **3.1%**
Decrease from the same period in 2023

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE EXPERIENCED TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS BETWEEN JAN-JUNE 2024

This is a 3.1% decrease from the 1,861 events in the same period in 2023.

Events of First Nations People BY SEX

62.9%
Male

37.1%
Female

Events of First Nations People BY AGE

35.1%
40 Years and Older

64.9%
Younger than 40

BETWEEN JAN-JUNE 2024 FNHA SUPPORTED



105

HARM REDUCTION GRANTS OF UP TO **\$50,000** DISTRIBUTED



224

PEOPLE WHO COMPLETED THE *NOT JUST NALOXONE* TRAINING COURSE



2,415

NASAL NALOXONE KITS DISTRIBUTED TO **51** FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES



984

VIRTUAL SESSIONS WITH PSYCHIATRISTS AND ADDICTIONS SPECIALISTS



3,566

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ACCESSED OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY