



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Toxic Drug Poisoning Trends among First Nations Youth (aged 15-29) in British Columbia

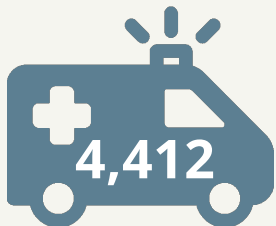


Colonization and intergenerational trauma have negatively impacted First Nations' health, including increased harms caused by toxic drug poisoning. Note that the data presented here is sensitive in nature and represents individuals, their families, and loved ones.

Toxic Drug Poisoning Events

Provincial overview

Between 2018 and 2022:



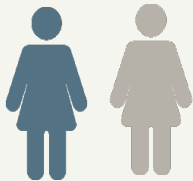
BC First Nations youth experienced a total of 4,412 paramedic-attended toxic drug events

33.3%

BC First Nations youth experienced one third (33.3 per cent) of toxic drug events among all First Nations people in BC

Comparison to other residents in BC

In 2022:



10x

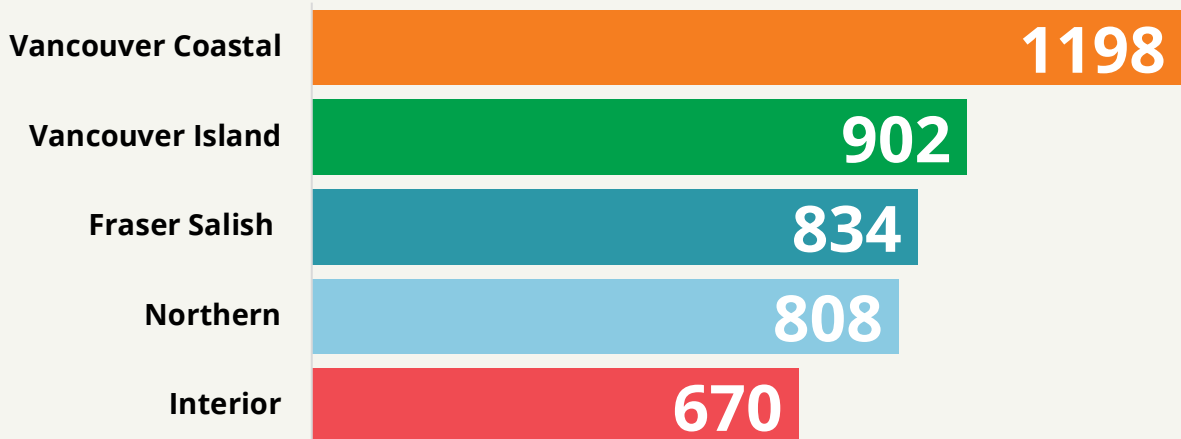
The rate of toxic drug events among First Nations female youth was 10 times higher than other resident female youth

The rate of toxic drug events among First Nations male youth was 7.5 times higher than other resident male youth



Geography

Between 2018 and 2022, the regional breakdown of the 4,412 First Nations youth toxic drug events was:





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Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths

Provincial overview

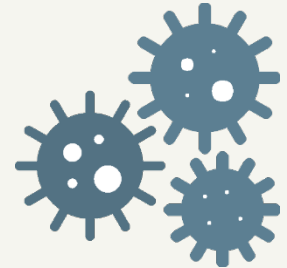
Between 2017 and 2022:



BC First Nations youth experienced a total of 318 toxic drug deaths

17.4%

BC First Nations youth made up 17.4 per cent of the province's total youth deaths, even though they only make up 4.1 per cent of the BC youth population



BC First Nations youth experienced increased rates of drug poisoning deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic

BC First Nations female youth

Between 2017 and 2022:



43.7%

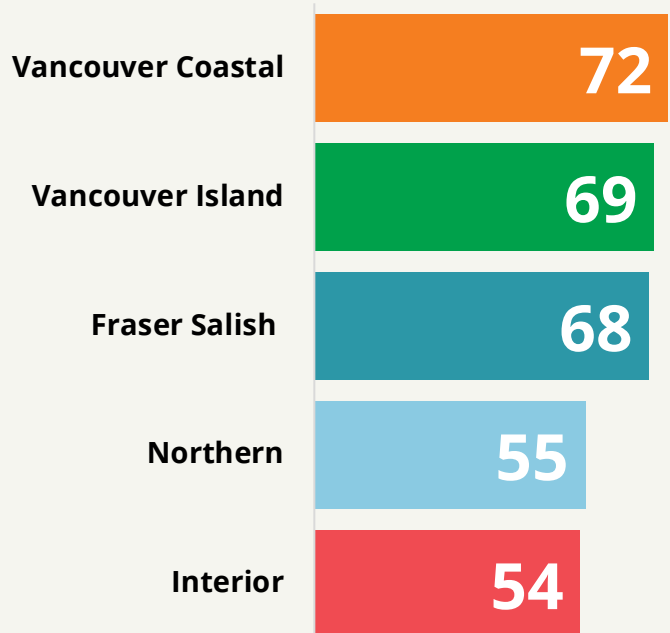
First Nations female youth made up 43.7 per cent of First Nations youth toxic drug deaths in BC



First Nations female youth experienced 139 toxic drug deaths in BC (102 per 100,000 First Nations female youth)

Geography

Between 2017 and 2022, the regional breakdown of the 318 First Nations youth toxic drug deaths was:



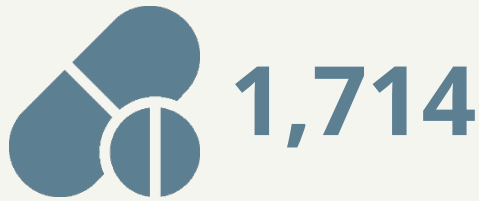


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Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)

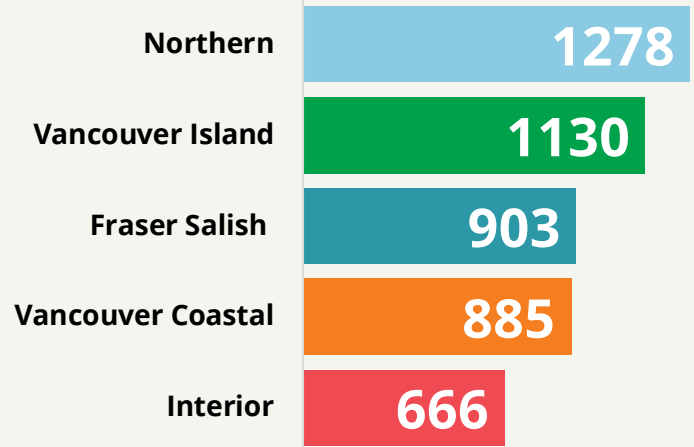
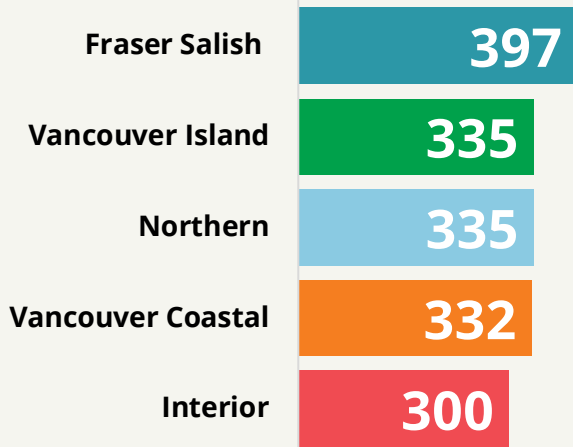


There were an estimated 1,714[‡] First Nations youth who had healthcare interactions* coded as being related to OUD in 2021

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)



There were an estimated 4,866[‡] First Nations youth who had healthcare interactions* coded as being related to AUD in 2021



The per cent of 25 to 29-year-olds who may have OUD based on related health care interactions increased to 7 per cent in 2021 from 5.1 per cent in 2017



The health care interactions of 20 to 24-year-olds who may have AUD based on related health care interactions slightly decreased to 11.6 per cent in 2021 from 12.7 per cent in 2017

[‡] Regional sub-totals do not sum to the provincial total, since regional information is unknown for some individuals
*The health care interactions were coded for AUD or OUD, but don't necessarily indicate a confirmed diagnosis



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Mental Health and Hospital Service use

Depression, Mood and Anxiety disorders, and health services use are examined due to their relationship with substance use.

Depression



12 per cent of First Nations youth were treated for depression across BC in 2020/21



Between 2017 and 2020/2021, the number of First Nations youth dealing with depression increased by 20%

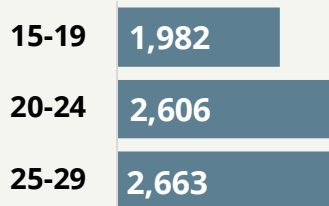


First Nations female youth were treated for depression 2.3 times more than First Nations male youth in 2020/21

Mood and Anxiety Disorder



17 per cent of First Nations youth were treated for Mood and Anxiety disorder in 2020/2021



Total cases of Mood and Anxiety Disorder among First Nations youth in BC were 7,251 in 2020/2021 (age breakdown shown above), an increase from 6,028 in 2017



First Nations female youth were treated for Mood and Anxiety Disorder 2.2 times more than First Nations male youth in 2020/21

Emergency departments (ED) and hospitalization use for Mental Health

For BC First Nations youth in 2020/2021:



2,709 First Nations youth used EDs for mental health-related reasons



There were more First Nations female youth that were treated in the ED for mental health-related reasons than First Nations male youth



There were 209 self-harm related hospitalizations