

FIRST NATIONS AND THE TOXIC DRUG POISONING CRISIS IN BC

FRASER SALISH | JANUARY - DECEMBER 2025



The unregulated drug supply in BC remains highly potent, unpredictable, and dangerous. First Nations individuals, families, and communities continue to be disproportionately affected by the toxic drug crisis. Harm reduction is saving lives by offering compassionate, accessible health services to people who use substances, wherever they are on their healing journey. A First Nations approach strengthens conventional harm reduction by weaving in culture, teachings, community, and connections to the land and one another.

The data presented here is specific to the Fraser Salish Region.

Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths Of First Nations People

40

↓ 25.9%
Decrease from 2024

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE DIED FROM TOXIC DRUG POISONINGS IN 2025.

This is a 25.9% decrease from the 54 deaths in 2024.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths Involving First Nations People

5.6x

First Nations people experienced a death rate 5.6x higher than other residents of the region in 2025.

Deaths of First Nations People BY SEX

♂ 65.0%
Male

♀ 35.0%
Female

Deaths of First Nations People BY AGE

50.0%
40 Years and Older

50.0%
Younger than 40

First Nations People are Disproportionately Represented in Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths

1.5%

First Nations people make up 1.5% of the region's population.

7.5%

7.5% of toxic drug poisoning deaths in 2025 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 Tsow Tun Le Lum Society. Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit www.tsowtunlelum.org



Toxic Drug Poisoning Events Involving First Nations People

520



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS EXPERIENCED BY FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE IN 2025.

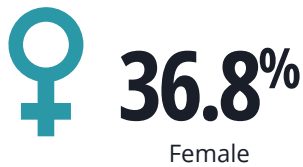
This is a 6.8% increase from the 487 events experienced in 2024.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Events Involving First Nations People

8.6x

First Nations people experienced an event rate 8.6x higher than other residents of the region in 2025.

Events of First Nations People BY SEX



Events of First Nations People BY AGE



First Nations People are Disproportionately Represented in Toxic Drug Poisoning Events

1.5%

First Nations people make up 1.5% of the region's population.

11.3%

11.3% of toxic drug poisoning events in 2025 were First Nations people.

NOTES

- Most toxic drug poisoning events are non-fatal and represent instances where paramedics were called and responded to a poisoning. Events that were treated successfully in community and events where 9-1-1 was not called are not captured in this data
- Event data is only collected for people with documented BC Personal Health Numbers (PHNs), and is therefore likely an underestimate, due to missing PHNs for some events

REGIONAL WELLNESS AND CULTURAL SUPPORTS

Drug Alerts - Text JOIN to ALERTS (253787)

Harm Reduction Marketplace
Online access to harm reduction supplies.
www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/mental-health-and-substance-use/harm-reduction

KUU-US Crisis Service - Call 1-800-KUU-US17 (588-8717) for an immediate response. 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

FNHA Systems Support
Systems.Support@fnha.ca
(604) 743-0635

Regional FNHA staff
Our team can help you navigate services including access to treatment, harm reduction, mental health and wellness counselling and/or traditional wellness.

Harm Reduction Educators
Tracey Jirak
Mehrdad Ghafouri

Manager, Health Emergency Management
Leah Brody

Manager, Maternal, Child and Family Wellness
Tara Mclaughlin

Manager, Mental Health and Wellness
Misty Cockerill

Manager, Regional Operations
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Helena Visona

Traditional Wellness Coordinators
Jody Jones
Elizabeth Julian