

FIRST NATIONS AND THE TOXIC DRUG POISONING CRISIS IN BC

INTERIOR | JANUARY – DECEMBER 2024



Harm reduction efforts are helping to lower toxic drug poisoning events and deaths, but drug toxicity continues to disproportionately impact First Nations families and communities across BC.

The data presented here is specific to the Interior Region.

Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths
Of First Nations People

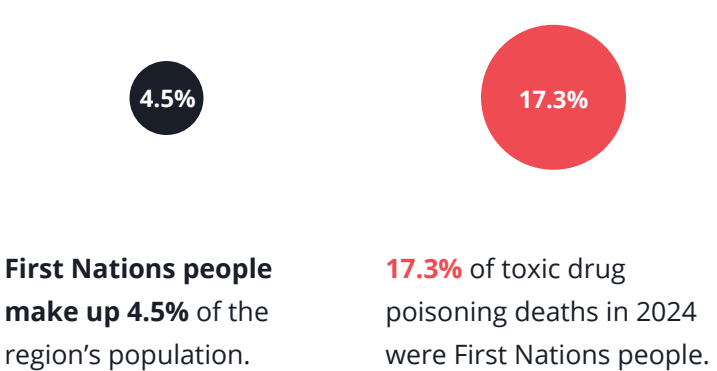
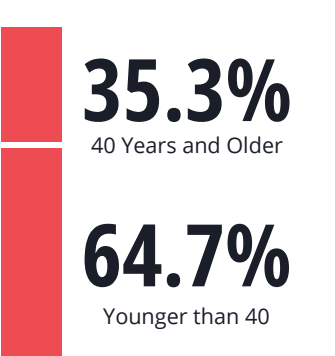
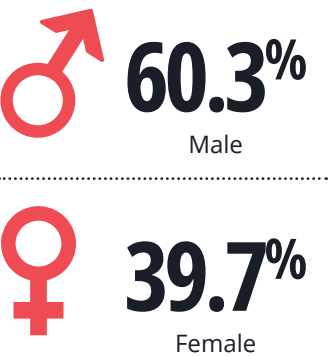
Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths
Involving First Nations People



Deaths of
First Nations People
BY SEX

Deaths of
First Nations People
BY AGE

First Nations People are Disproportionately Represented in
Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths



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

569



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS EXPERIENCED
BY FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE IN 2024.

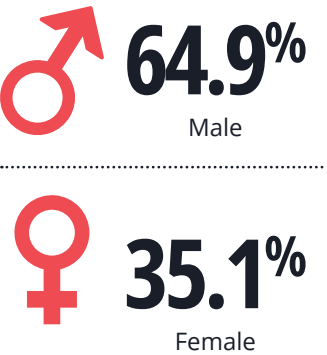
This is a 0.2% increase from the 568 events experienced in 2023.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Events
Involving First Nations People

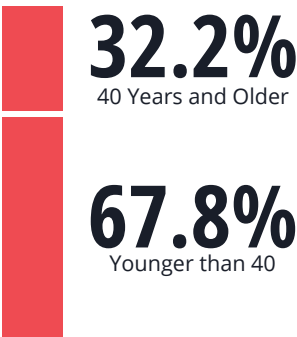
6.2 x

First Nations people experienced an event rate 6.2x higher than other residents of the region in 2024.

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



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

Interior Region Community-Based Crisis Support – Call 1833-751-2525 (M-F 8am-4pm) or visit IRSupport@fnha.ca

Tsow Tun Le Lum Society – Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit www.tsowtunlelum.org

Indian Residential School Crisis Line is a national service for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their residential school experience. Call toll-free 1-866-925-4419.

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

Hope for Wellness Help Line offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention by phone or online chat. Call toll-free 1-855-242-3310 or start a confidential chat with a counsellor at www.hopeforwellness.ca

Drug Alerts - Text JOIN to ALERTS (253787)

Regional contact email
IRSupports@fnha.ca

Regional FNHA staff

Manager, Interior Region Mental Health and Wellness
Debra Robbins

Regional Addictions Specialists
Shae-Lynn Boyko
Angela Aspinall

Regional Crisis Response Lead
Storme Sandy

Mental Health and Wellness Liaison
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Cathy Balatti