



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# Toxic Drug Poisoning Trends among First Nations Youth (aged 15-29) Vancouver Coastal Region

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 comparison and regional overview

Between 2021 and 2024:

Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth experienced the following number of events in each year:

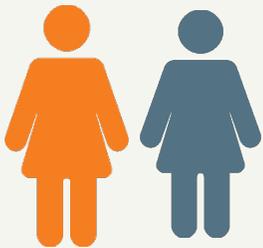


# 22.3%

Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth made up 22.3 per cent of all toxic drug events among First Nations people in the region in 2021-2024.

### Comparison to other residents in the Vancouver Coastal Region

In 2024:

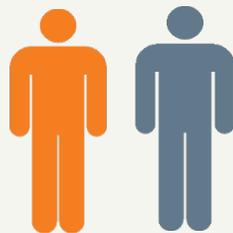


23x

The rate of toxic drug events among First Nations female youth was 23 times higher than other resident female youth.

The rate of toxic drug events among First Nations male youth was 17 times higher than other resident male youth.

17x



### Geography

Between 2023 and 2024:

The highest number of toxic drug events among First Nations youth in the Vancouver Coastal Region was reported in:

- Vancouver - Centre North = 264
- Vancouver - City Centre = 70
- Vancouver - Midtown = 27
- Vancouver - Northeast = 22





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## Toxic drug poisoning deaths

### Provincial comparison and regional overview

Between 2023 and 2024:



Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth experienced 37 toxic drug deaths, out of a total 182 deaths among BC First Nations youth.

# 29.6%

Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth made up 29.6 per cent of the region's total youth deaths in 2023/24, even though they only make up 2.3 per cent of the Vancouver Coastal youth population.

### Female youth in the Vancouver Coastal Region

Between 2021\* and 2024:



# 44.3%

First Nation female youth made up 44.3 per cent of First Nations youth toxic drug deaths in the Vancouver Coastal Region.



# 31

First Nations female youth experienced 31 toxic drug deaths in the Vancouver Coastal Region (247 deaths per 100,000 First Nations female youth).

### Time trend

2023-  
2024



Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth experienced 37 toxic drug deaths, in 2023/24 compared to 33 toxic drug deaths in 2021/22.

2021-  
2022



\*A longer time frame is required to protect the anonymity of individuals represented in the data.



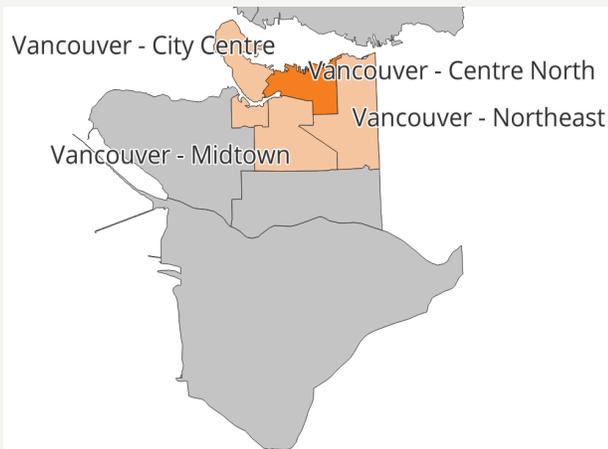
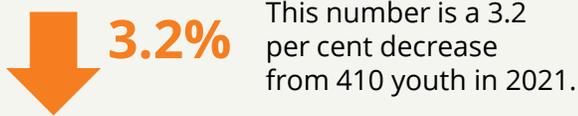
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## Opioid use disorder (OUD)



There were an estimated 397 First Nations youth who had health care interactions\* coded as being related to OUD in 2022.



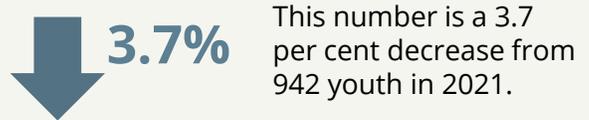
The number of First Nations youth who might have OUD in 2022, based on related health care interactions, was highest in:

- Vancouver – Centre North = 176
- Vancouver – City Centre = 63
- Vancouver – Northeast = 39
- Vancouver – Midtown = 30

## Alcohol use disorder (AUD)



There were an estimated 907 First Nations youth who had health care interactions coded as being related to AUD in 2022.

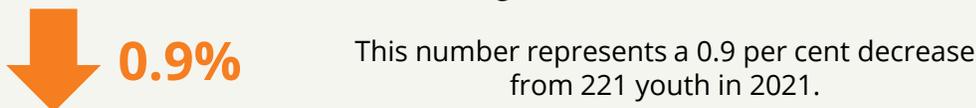


The number of First Nations youth who might have AUD in 2022, based on related health care interactions, was highest in:

- Vancouver – Centre North = 244
- Vancouver – Northeast = 94
- North Vancouver = 93
- Vancouver – Midtown = 69
- Vancouver – City Centre = 65

## OUD and AUD related health care interactions

There were an estimated 219 First Nations youth who had health care interactions\* coded as being related to both OUD and AUD in 2022.



\*The health care interactions were coded for AUD or OUD, but don't necessarily indicate a confirmed diagnosis.



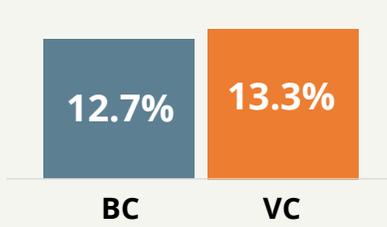
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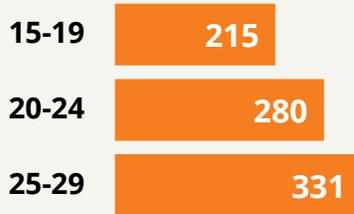
## Mental health and hospital service use

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

### Depression



13.3 per cent of First Nations youth in the Vancouver Coastal Region were treated for depression, compared to 12.7 per cent of First Nations youth in BC in 2022/23.

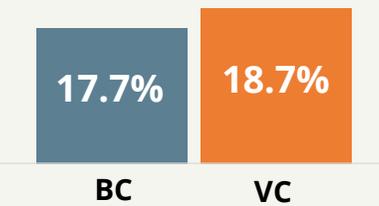


There were a total of 826 cases of depression among First Nations youth in 2022/23 (age breakdown above), remaining relatively stable from 875 cases in 2021/22.



First Nations female youth were treated for depression at 2.4 times the rate of First Nations male youth in 2022/23.

### Mood and anxiety disorders



18.7 per cent of First Nations youth in the Vancouver Coastal Region were treated for mood and anxiety disorders, compared to 17.7 per cent of First Nations youth in BC in 2022/23.



There were a total of 1,161 cases of mood and anxiety disorders among First Nations youth in 2022/23 (age breakdown above), remaining relatively stable from 1,233 cases in 2021/22.



First Nations female youth were treated for mood and anxiety disorders at 2.4 times the rate of First Nations male youth in 2022/23.

## Emergency departments (ED) and hospitalization use for mental health

For Vancouver Coastal First Nations youth:

21

There were 21 self-harm related hospitalizations in 2021/22.

382

382 First Nations youth used EDs for mental health-related reasons in 2022/23.



There were more First Nations female youth who were treated in the ED for mental health-related reasons than First Nations male youth in 2022/23.

Note: The mental health data in this iteration of this report is sourced from a different dataset than the previous iteration of this report with data up to 2020/21, therefore the numbers will not be directly comparable.