

# FIRST NATIONS AND THE TOXIC DRUG POISONING CRISIS IN BC

VANCOUVER COASTAL | 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 Vancouver Coastal Region.*

Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths Of First Nations People

87



FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE DIED FROM TOXIC DRUG POISONINGS IN 2025.

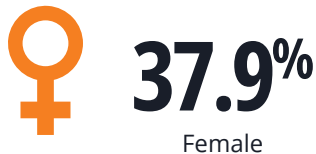
This is a 37.4% decrease from the 139 deaths in 2024.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Deaths Involving First Nations People

10.2x

First Nations people experienced a death rate 10.2x higher than other residents of the region in 2025.

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

2.1%

First Nations people make up 2.1% of the region's population.

18.0%

18.0% 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](http://www.tsowtunlelum.org)



Toxic Drug Poisoning Events Involving First Nations People

821



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

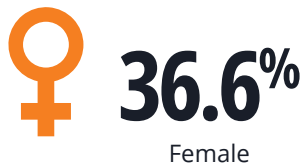
This is an 18.9% decrease from the 1,012 events experienced in 2024.

Rate of Toxic Drug Poisoning Events Involving First Nations People

12.5x

First Nations people experienced an event rate 12.5x higher than other residents of the region in 2025.

Events of First Nations People BY SEX



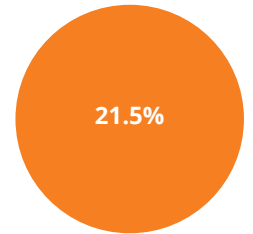
Events of First Nations People BY AGE



First Nations People are Disproportionately Represented in Toxic Drug Poisoning Events



First Nations people make up 2.1% of the region's population.



21.5% 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

**Tsow Tun Le Lum Society** – Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit [www.tsowtunlelum.org](http://www.tsowtunlelum.org)

**Indian Residential School Crisis Line** Call toll-free 1-866-925-4419.

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

**Hope for Wellness Help Line** offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention. Call toll-free 1-855-242-3310 or start a confidential chat at [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca)

**Kids Help Phone** 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868

**KUU-US Youth Crisis Line** 250-723-2040

**Regional FNHA staff**

**Manager, Mental Health and Wellness**  
Jen Smith

**Traditional Wellness Coordinator**  
Eileen Joe

**Indigenous Harm Reduction Educator**  
Keianna James

**Toxic Drug Response Manager**  
Mackenzie Leslie

**Addictions Specialist**  
Damian Clarke

**Mental Health and Wellness Liaison**  
Melanie Vivier

**Regional Community Coordinator, Child and Youth Care**  
Terence Lewis