



Representative's Report

Feb. 26, 2008
Update #2

Critical Injuries and Deaths: Reviews and Investigations

Reporting Period: October 1 – January 31, 2008

During this period, 46 critical injuries and 31 deaths of BC children and youth who were in care or receiving reviewable services within the previous year were reported to the office of the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY). These have all undergone an initial screening by the Representative and her staff to determine whether further follow-up was necessary.

This report does not reflect the overall number of child deaths in BC within the same time period. According to the BC Coroner's Service, a total of 68 child deaths were reported in the province from October to January, 2008.

Generally, rates of fatalities for children in care have declined over the past ten years.

Observations on Critical Injuries and Deaths:

Of the critical injuries and deaths reported to our office to date, the most common critical injuries appear to fall into categories by age group and by cause. Children below the age of 1 are most often injured as a result of non-accidental causes. For youths between the ages of 13 and 18, the most common injuries relate to suicide attempts or as a result of an assault (most commonly by another youth). With respect to child deaths, only a small percentage of children die following non-accidental injuries.

Since our last report was released, efforts have been made to simplify our reporting format in order to more accurately reflect our legislative mandate.

Critical Injuries:

It was determined that of the 46 critical injuries reported, 18 involved only minor injuries and did not meet criteria for review under our legislative mandate.

The remaining 27 critical injury cases will be reviewed:

Critical Injuries	Total Number Reviewed	Further Review
Under 1 year old	2	2
Age 1 – 5 years	3	2
Age 6 – 12 years	3	3
Age 13 – 18 years	38	20
Total	46	27



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Of the 27 being reviewed:

Critical Injuries To Be Reviewed	Child In Care	Receiving Reviewable Services
Under 1 year old	0	2
Age 1 – 5 years	0	2
Age 6 – 12 years	0	3
Age 13 – 18 years	15	5
Total	15	12

Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
2	0
0	2
1	2
15	5
18	9

Deaths:

Of the 31 fatalities screened, 16 were natural deaths of children with serious medical conditions and 3 deaths resulted from accidental causes. While there are some circumstances where accidental deaths might warrant further examination, no review is planned in regard to these particular deaths. All of the remaining 12 deaths meet the criteria for further review based on our legislative mandate:

Deaths	Total Number Reviewed	Natural/Accidental Deaths	Further Review
Under 1 year old	13	11	4
Age 1 – 5 years	4	1	0
Age 6 – 12 years	6	4	2
Age 13 – 18 years	8	3	6
Total	31	19	12

Of the 12 requiring further review:

Deaths	Child in Care	Receiving Reviewable Services
Under 1 year old	0	4
Age 1 – 5 years	0	0
Age 6 – 12 years	1	1
Age 13 – 18 years	3	3
Total	4	8

Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
3	1
0	0
1	1
3	3
7	5



Update Re: June 1- September 30, 2007 Critical Injuries and Deaths

During this period, 69 critical injuries and 26 deaths of BC children and youth who were in care or receiving reviewable services within the previous year were reported to the office of the Representative. All have received an initial screening. At the time of our last update decisions on three critical injuries were described as 'pending'.

Critical Injuries:

Of the 69 critical injury cases, 28 involved only minor injuries and did not require further review. The remaining 41 will be reviewed.

Deaths:

Of the 26 deaths reviewed, 16 were 'natural deaths' of children with serious medical conditions. All of the remaining 10 deaths will be reviewed.

Summary of Total Critical Injuries: June 1, 2007 – January 31, 2008

Critical Injuries	Total Number Reviewed	Further Review	Investigation
Under 1 year old	3	2	0
Age 1 – 5 years	9	6	0
Age 6 – 12 years	13	8	0
Age 13 – 18 years	89	52	0
Total	114	68	Total

Summary of Total Critical Injuries to be Reviewed: June 1, 2007 – January 31, 2008

Critical Injuries To Be Reviewed	Child In Care		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	Receiving Reviewable Services					
Under 1 year old	0	2	2	0		
Age 1 – 5 years	3	4	4	2		
Age 6 – 12 years	3	5	2	6		
Age 13 – 18 years	42	9	33	19		
Total	48	20	41	27		

Summary of Total Deaths: June 1, 2007 – January 31, 2008

Deaths	Total Number Reviewed	Natural/Accidental Deaths	Further Review
Under 1 year old	25	15	10
Age 1 – 5 years	6	7	0
Age 6 – 12 years	11	8	3
Age 13 – 18 years	15	7	7
Total	57	37	20



Summary of Total Deaths to be Reviewed: June 1, 2007 – January 31, 2008

Deaths	Child in Care	Receiving Reviewable Services
Under 1 year old	0	10
Age 1 – 5 years	0	0
Age 6 – 12 years	1	3
Age 13 – 18 years	4	4
Total	5	17

Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
6	4
0	0
1	3
3	5
10	12

Referrals from the Select Standing Committee:

In addition to the critical injuries and deaths described above, the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth has referred 12 additional deaths and one critical injury to our office that occurred prior to June 1, 2007 when the legislation was passed supporting our work in this area.

- Investigations into four of the deaths are near completion and will be reported to the committee in March 2008.
- Investigations into three of the deaths are underway.
- The remaining five are in the review stage.
- The review of the critical injury case is awaiting completion of criminal proceedings relating to the matter.