

YOUTH ARE NOT SPARED



Youth Overdose Statistics

Between 2019 and 2023, 126 youth under 19 died due to toxic drug overdoses in British Columbia.

Risks and Vulnerabilities

Adolescents face experimentation, risk-taking, and emotional vulnerability, increasing overdose risks especially with trauma and isolation.

Systemic Gaps

Current systems lack youth-specific harm reduction and mental health care, contributing to preventable overdose deaths.

A FRONTLINE PERSPECTIVE



"The majority of my clients over all the years have known someone who died from a drug overdose."

YRC Youth Support Worker

"I've been to more funerals than graduations"
YRC Youth Outreach Worker

I can't think of one youth who hasn't been impacted by the drug crisis. Many have lost family members, parents, friends. Young people are experiencing grief and loss at alarming rates."

YRC Youth Outreach Worker

THE REALITY IN ABBOTSFORD



Impact on Youth and Families

Youth face exposure to toxic drug supplies and limited preventive supports, while families confront rising child losses amid the crisis.

Need for Timely Intervention

Many youth die alone, reducing chances of rescue, highlighting the need for improved crisis response strategies.

Need for Tailored Solutions

Abbotsford's crisis requires community-specific interventions rather than generic system assurances to address its unique challenges.



CHRONIC OVERDOSES: SILENT SUFFERING



Repeated Non-Fatal Overdoses

Youth often experience multiple non-fatal overdoses that cause cumulative brain and mental health damage.

Hidden Trauma and Family Impact

Chronic overdoses create cycles of trauma affecting families and peers with ongoing fear of loss.

Gaps in Post-Overdose Care

Survivors often receive minimal follow-up care, fragmented referrals, and face long wait times for treatment.

Need for Youth-Centered Intervention

Preventing death is not enough; comprehensive, youth-focused care is essential to stop ongoing harm.

WE ARE NOT DOING ENOUGH



Inadequate Crisis Response

Current systems focus on responding after crises rather than preventing youth overdoses beforehand.



Barriers to Support

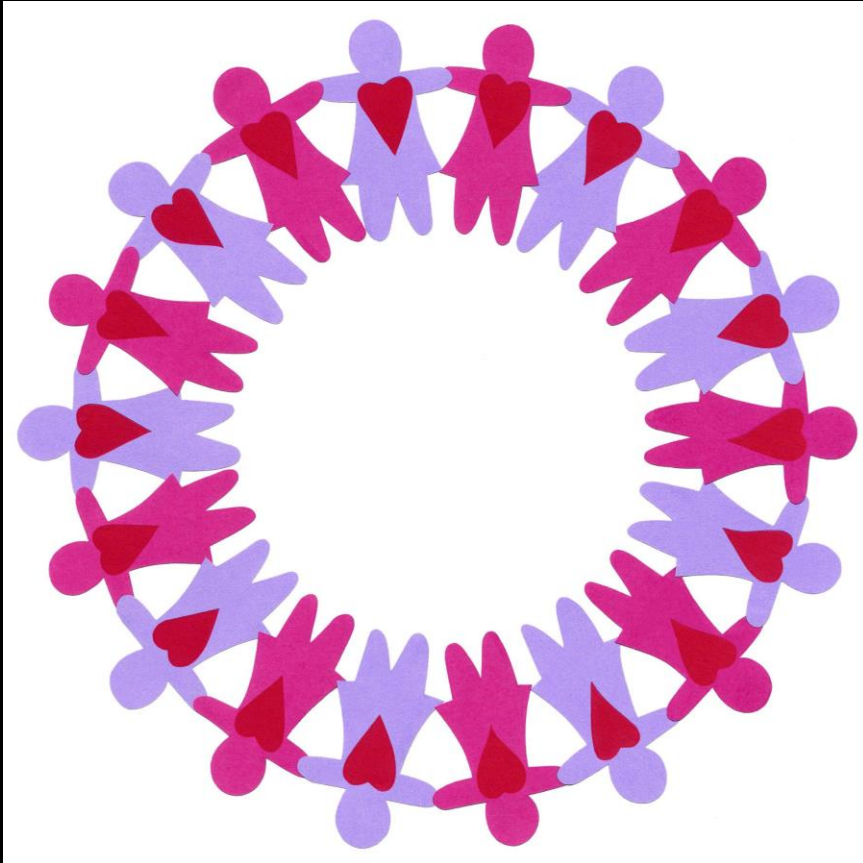
Youth face obstacles like limited service hours, eligibility rules, geographic challenges, and stigma fears.



Urgent Need for Action

Incremental changes are insufficient; bold and urgent measures are needed to save lives daily.

WHAT YOUTH NEED



Immediate and Compassionate Care

Youth require rapid access to detox, stabilization, and treatment tailored for their unique needs without long waits.

Harm Reduction and Integrated Care

Harm reduction services and integrated mental health care must address youth-specific patterns, social contexts, and developmental needs.

Family-Centred and Culturally Safe Support

Supporting families with education and culturally safe services in partnership with Indigenous communities strengthens youth protection.

YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRE RESPONSE

"TO WALK ALONGSIDE YOUTH & FAMILIES DURING CHALLENGING TIMES"



TRAUMA-INFORMED STREET OUTREACH SERVICES

INDIVIDUALIZED CLIENT-CENTERED WRAP AROUND SERVICES

CHAIR AND PARTICIPATE IN HIGH-RISK COMMUNITY MEETINGS

NALOXONE TRAINED & DRUG ALERTS

DEVELOPED RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS SD34, MCFD, XYOLHEMEYLH, FOUNDRY, CYMH, etc.

ONGOING SUBSTANCE USE TRAINING

REFERRALS

A CALL TO ACTION



Urgency for Youth Action

Youth overdose deaths in Abbotsford require immediate and decisive action from all community stakeholders.

Collaborative Solutions Needed

Cross-sector collaboration and sustained funding are essential to effectively address the youth overdose emergency.

Listening to Frontline Voices

It is vital to listen to youth, families, and frontline workers who have been raising awareness for years.

Commitment to Accountability

Systems must prioritize outcomes and accountability to prevent further loss of young lives.





EVERY NUMBER HAS A NAME

Human Impact Behind Statistics

Each overdose death represents a young life lost with lasting effects on family and friends.

Collective Mourning and Memories

Memorials and gatherings reflect the shared grief and remembrance in affected communities.

Commitment to Action

Honoring lives lost requires action that addresses the crisis with compassion and urgency.

