

SUMMARY: FILE REVIEW

Of the Death of a Child Known to the Director

A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (the ministry) conducted the File Review (FR) to examine case practice regarding the subject child (the child).

For the purpose of the FR, case records were reviewed. The FR focused on a specific period of the director's involvement prior to the death of the child.

B. TERM OF REFERENCE

1. Was the director's assessment of risk to the child's safety and well-being consistent with relevant policy and legislation?

C. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

There was minimal director involvement with one of child's parents, but significant involvement with the other as a parent/step-parent due to high-risk issues. The director concluded a child protection report days prior to the child's death. The child was Aboriginal, and was not in care at the time of death.

D. FINDINGS

1. The assessment of the child's safety and well-being was not fully consistent with relevant legislation and policy. Tools used to assess both immediate and future risk of harm to the child were not completed in accordance with policy guidelines; this resulted in an inaccurate assessment of risk. The response to the child welfare concerns did not appear to take into consideration the child's vulnerability or an accurate representation of the parent's history, which impacted safety planning.

E. ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE

1. A practice consultant facilitated four, full day, refresher sessions on the Structured Decision Making Tools in the involved Service Delivery Area.

F. ACTION PLAN

1. Provide training regarding a specific issue to the involved team, ensuring the following documents specific to this issue are reviewed as they pertain to safety planning.
2. Provide a refresher for the involved staff on the use of infant/child developmental milestones in their work with vulnerable families (to promote greater collaboration with community and ministry/agency partners, as well as appropriate safety planning with parents).

The review was completed in August 2017. The above action plan is due for full implementation in March 2018.