

SUMMARY: FILE REVIEW Of the Death of a Child Known to the Ministry

A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (the ministry) conducted the File Review (FR) to examine the case practice and services provided to the subject child (the child) of the FR, to inform learning and improvement.

For the purposes of the FR, ministry records were reviewed. The focus of the FR was the period of ministry involvement prior to the death of the child.

B. TERM OF REFERENCE

1. Was the ministry's investigation into allegations of a criminal issue, along with the management of the service file, adequate to ensure the safety and well-being of the child?

C. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The ministry had regular and ongoing contact with the child's family over several years due to high risk and criminal issues relating to the child's siblings. The parents had engaged in services to address the concerns and a service file remained open. The child was Indigenous and not in care of the ministry at the time of death.

D. FINDINGS

The ministry's investigation into allegations of a criminal issue, along with the management of the service file, was not adequate to ensure the child's safety and well-being. The required Structure Decision Making tools used for the ongoing assessment and planning of the service file were not completed. Additionally, tools that are 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 issues did not appear to take into consideration the child's vulnerability or an accurate representation of the parent's history. The child could have been left at risk because a thorough assessment of risk using the assessment tools as prescribed by policy was not completed.

E. ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE

N/A

F. ACTION PLAN

1. Implement a strategy of Model Fidelity for the Structured Decision Making tools with the involved ministry staff, which enshrines the practice of completion to support case decision making.
2. Provide a refresher to the involved ministry staff on case documentation expectations (per the Good Recording Guide).
3. Conduct a review of local ministry teams to determine which have multiple, partially-delegated, child protection workers, and implement a plan to ensure additional support and mentoring is offered.

The review was completed in January 2018. The above Action Plan is due for full implementation in April 30, 2018.