

SUMMARY: FILE REVIEW

Of the Death & Critical Injury of Children Known to the Director in 2018

Circumstances of the Fatality and Critical Injury

The review examined the case files of two Indigenous children, one who died under suspicious circumstances and their sibling who was impacted as a result of the death. The Delegated Aboriginal Agency (DAA) was providing services to the children and their family at the time of the death and critical injury in relation to family reunification.

Findings

The DAA supported a reunification plan for the children and the parents, gradually increasing their time together until, shortly before the child's death, the children returned to their parents' care. During this period of reunification, the DAA received multiple reports concerning neglect and abuse of the children while in their parents' care; none of the reports were assessed or addressed according to policy, and the plan for reunification continued, leaving the children at risk of future harm.

Prior to the review being finalized the DAA had already taken several actions: community partners were educated about their duty to report child protection concerns; formal communication processes were implemented within the DAA to review cases of concern; training was provided to family care workers; and, strategies were implemented to address gaps in clinical supervision and consultation, case documentation, and staffing levels.

Actions

The involved DAA leadership and the Quality Assurance team developed an action plan for the DAA to self-audit their adherence to policy, create tools to support case documentation and clinical supervision, ensure care plans are current, and review with their staff specific policies and procedures related to children in care, out of care options, and conducting a child protection response.

The review was completed in March 2020. The above action plan is due for full implementation in December 2020.