

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

INDICATOR #35 Rate of Children in Care

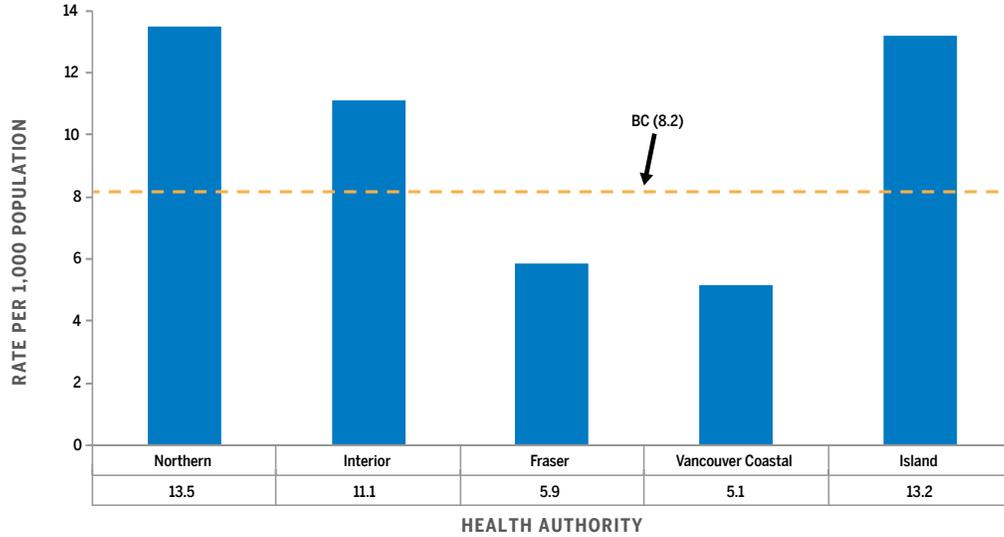
DEFINITION

INDICATOR #35 — Rate of children in care at year end, expressed as a rate per 1,000 children.

KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Children and youth in care (typically referred to as **children in care**) are children or youth who are under the care of the Government of British Columbia and live in a foster or group home.¹ These children and youth are considered a vulnerable sub-population.
- ▶ As **child abuse** and **child neglect** are the overwhelming reasons why children and youth are in care, they are more likely than the general population to have suffered from trauma, to experience a mental health condition such as anxiety, or to suffer from developmental delay and/or a disability. They are also more likely to be suspended or expelled, and to have poor educational outcomes such as failing or repeating a grade.²⁻⁵
- ▶ Figures 35.1 and 35.2 present the rate of children and youth in care per 1,000 population age 0–18. They show that there are geographic differences in rates of children and youth in care; for example, the rates in Central Vancouver Island and Thompson Cariboo Shuswap Health Service Delivery Areas (HSDAs) are more than eight times the rate in Richmond HSDA (Figure 35.2).

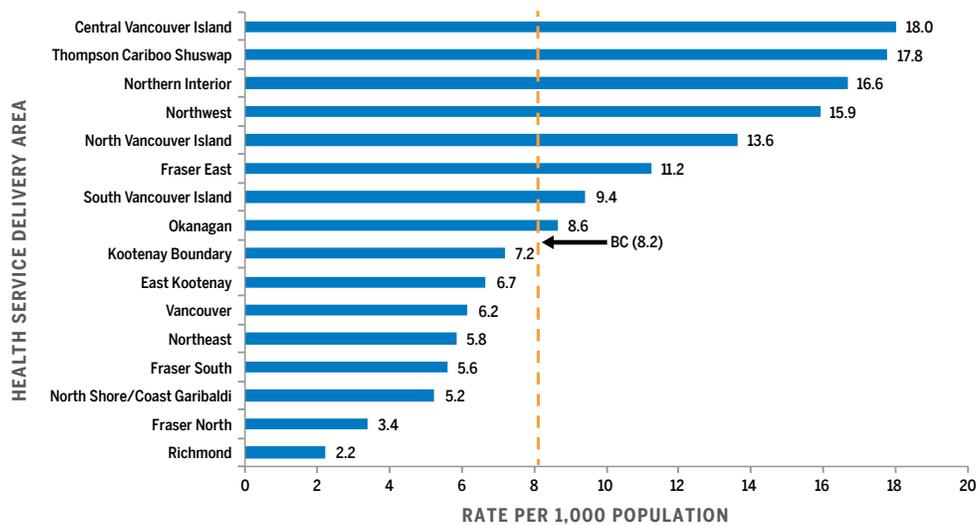
FIG 35.1 Children and Youth in Care Age 0-18, Rate per 1,000 Population, by Health Authority, BC, 2015



Notes: Health authority is based on the location of the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development office where the initial report is received. Data are current up to July 31, 2015. See Appendix B for more information about this data source.

Source: BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, Corporate Data Warehouse, 2015. Prepared by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2016.

FIG 35.2 Children and Youth in Care Age 0-18, Rate per 1,000 Population, by Health Service Delivery Area, BC, 2015



Notes: Health service delivery area is based on the location of the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development office where the initial report is received. Data are current up to July 31, 2015. See Appendix B for more information about this data source.

Source: BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, Corporate Data Warehouse, 2015. Prepared by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2016.

REFERENCES

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- ² Fernandez E. Children's well-being in care: evidence from a longitudinal study of outcomes. *Child Youth Serv Rev.* 2009;31:1092-1100.
- ³ BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. Performance management report. Vol. 6. Victoria, BC: BC Ministry of Children and Family Development; 2015 Mar.
- ⁴ Scherr T. Educational experiences of children in foster care: meta-analyses of special education, retention and discipline rates. *Sch Psychol Int.* 2007, Oct;28(4):419-36.
- ⁵ Vandivere S, Chalk R, Moore KA. Children in foster homes: how are they faring? [Publication 2003-23]. Washington, DC: Child Trends; 2003 Dec.