

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Child and Youth Data Laboratory (CYDL)

Report for Experiences of Albertan Youth Project

Key findings

This report provides a profile of 7,029 Albertan youth (aged 12 to 17 years) who were the subjects of investigations into possible maltreatment by a parent/guardian in 2008/09. In investigated cases where intervention is not needed, the file is closed (*no intervention needed*). Cases where maltreatment is found to have occurred can lead to interventions that include services within the family home (*out of care services*), or that require the youth to be removed from their home and placed *into care*.

Youth are described in terms of the outcome of the investigation and their Aboriginal status by age, gender, region of residence, socio-economic status, educational achievement, mental health status and health service use. The report also provides an overview of cross-ministry service use for these youth. Comparisons are made to youth of the same ages who were not the subjects of investigations.

- For most investigations, the outcome was *no intervention needed*. 29% of youth investigated were Aboriginal.
- Compared to those not investigated, youth who received a maltreatment-related investigation were more likely to be non-Aboriginal, female, younger than 15 years of age, living in a rural area (*in care* youth only), living in the lowest socio-economic status neighbourhoods, performing below educational expectations, and to have used services for a mental health condition or to have high use of health services.
- Youth who were the subject of an investigation were more likely to be receiving Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) services, to be charged with an offence, or to be involved in corrections, than youth not investigated.
- Aboriginal youth receiving investigations were more likely than non-Aboriginal youth to receive *in care* services, to live in rural areas or the lowest socio-economic status areas, or to be performing below educational expectations. They were less likely to have received services for a mental health condition, and were less likely to have had five or more physician visits.
- Aboriginal youth receiving investigations were more likely than non-Aboriginal youth to have been charged with an offence or involved with corrections, and less likely to be enrolled in the K-12 education system or to be receiving FSCD services.



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Context

In 2008, there were 235,842 child maltreatment investigations in Canada and 85,400 (36%) of these investigations substantiated the maltreatment claim.¹ A 2003 analysis of child intervention service agencies across Canada found the rates of maltreatment investigations resulting in children and youth being taken into care were much higher for Aboriginal children (16%) compared to non-Aboriginal children (7%).²

Maltreatment stems from a complex interplay of individual, relationship, society and community factors.³ Factors associated with maltreatment include recent life stressors, family conflict, substance abuse, low maternal education level, low socio-economic status and maternal mental health problems.⁴ Neglect is the main reason Aboriginal children enter the child protection system and this can be linked to conditions of poverty, inadequate housing and substance abuse.²

The Public Health Agency of Canada reported that outcomes for a child or youth who experiences maltreatment are influenced by the type, severity, frequency and duration of the maltreatment, as well as the age at which maltreatment occurs. Maltreatment can harm physical and psychological well-being, and can affect academic performance.⁴

Factors such as personal resiliency and access to protective adults, health services, education, and social services have been shown to protect children and youth from the negative effects of maltreatment.⁴

The project

The current project, **Experiences of Albertan Youth**, is focused on basic understanding of the experiences of Albertan youth within and across ministries, as they relate to key indicators (age, gender, socio-economic status, educational achievement, and mental health status). It is the first project in a planned series that will link and analyze administrative data on children and youth in Alberta to inform policy, programs, and research.

List of reports for the project

Socio-economic status of Albertan youth

Educational experiences of Albertan youth

Mental health status of Albertan youth

Family Support for Children with Disabilities services received by Albertan youth

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Maltreatment-related intervention services received by Albertan youth

Physician visits by Albertan youth

Emergency room visits by Albertan youth

Hospitalizations of Albertan youth

Offence charges among Albertan youth

Corrections involvement among Albertan youth

Post-secondary students in Alberta

Income support among Albertan youth

Educational experiences of Albertan youth with income support activity

Least advantaged and most advantaged Albertan youth

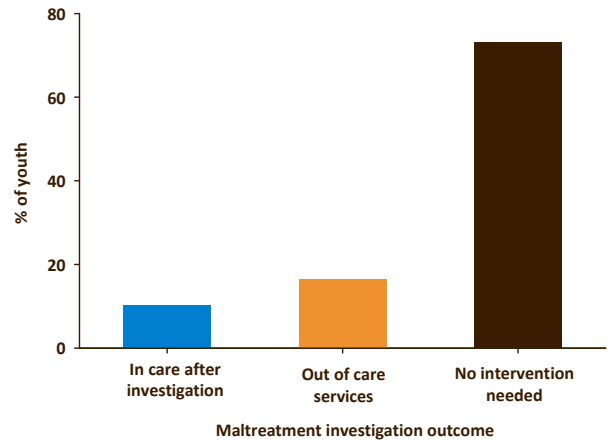
Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Maltreatment related investigation outcome (Table 1)

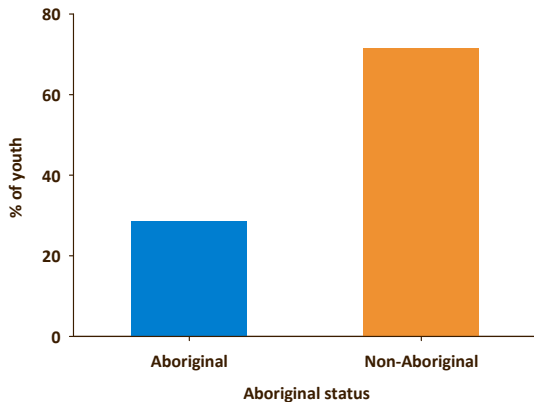
These analyses look at Albertan youth (aged 12 to 17 years) who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation in 2008/09.

- 7,029 youth (2% of 307,703 youth aged 12 to 17 years) were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by child intervention services.
- 73% of maltreatment-related investigations resulted in *no intervention needed*, 17% resulted in youth receiving services in the parental home (*out of care services*) and 10% resulted in youth receiving services outside the parental home (*in care after investigation*).

Maltreatment investigation outcome
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 investigated for maltreatment



Aboriginal status
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 investigated for maltreatment



Aboriginal status of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment investigation (Table 2)

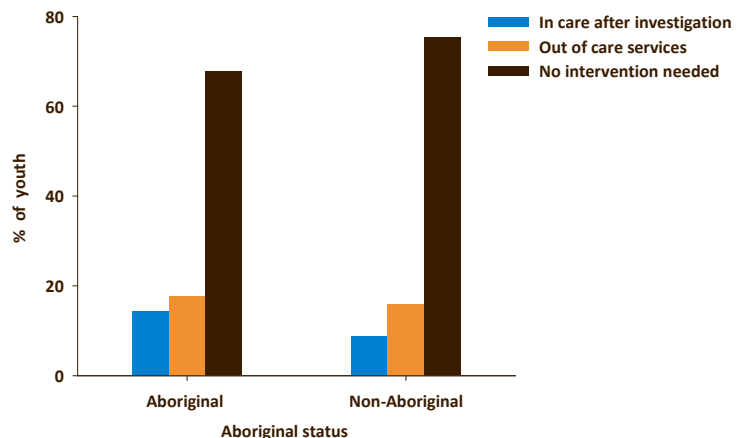
The Aboriginal status of youth who were not the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation in 2008/09 was not available for this project.

- 29% of youth who underwent a maltreatment-related investigation were Aboriginal. The remainder were non-Aboriginal (71%).

Aboriginal status by maltreatment investigation outcome (Table 3)

- The majority of maltreatment-related investigations resulted in *no intervention needed* for both Aboriginal (68%) and non-Aboriginal youth (75%).
- The maltreatment-related investigation outcome was more likely to result in receipt of *in care* services for Aboriginal youth (15%) than for non-Aboriginal youth (9%).
- Percentage of investigations resulting in *out of care* services was similar for Aboriginal (18%) and non-Aboriginal youth (16%).

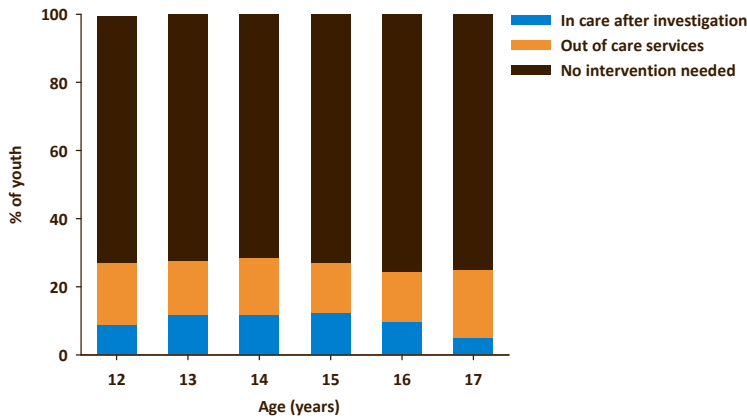
Aboriginal status by maltreatment investigation outcome
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17



Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Maltreatment investigation outcome by age (Tables 4 and 5)

Maltreatment investigation outcome by age
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17

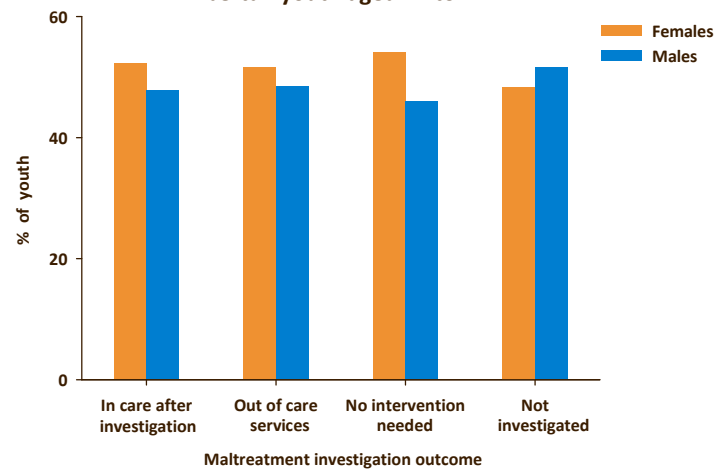


- The percentage of youth who came *into care* as a result of investigation was highest for youth aged 15 years old (13%).
- The percentage of youth who received *out of care services* was highest for youth aged 17 years, compared to any other age.
- There was no difference across age in the percentage of youth who were Aboriginal (graph not shown).

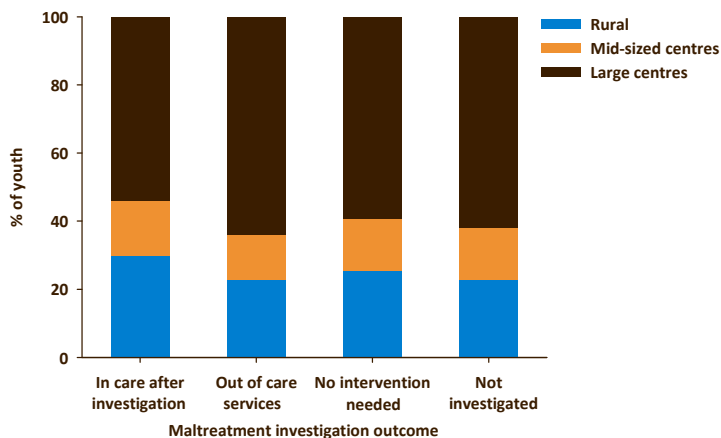
Maltreatment investigation outcome by gender (Tables 6 and 7)

- Females (53%) were more likely than males (47%) to be the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation.
- Female Aboriginal youth were slightly more likely (55%) than male Aboriginal youth (53%) to be the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation (graph not shown).

Maltreatment investigation outcome by gender
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17



Maltreatment investigation outcome by region of residence
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17



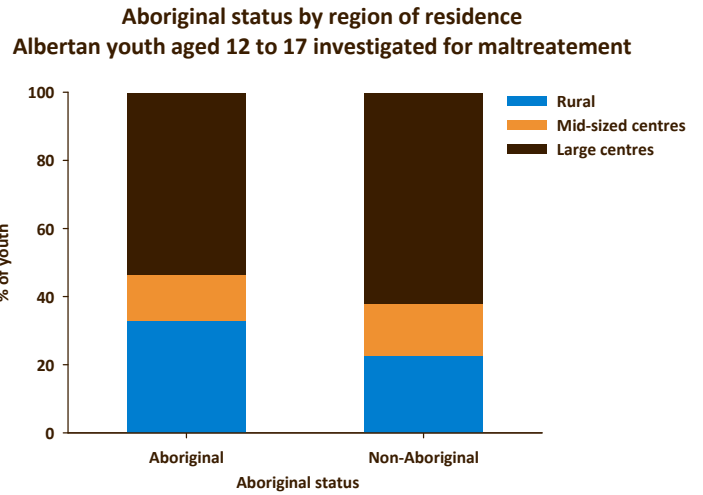
Maltreatment investigation outcome by region of residence (Table 8)

- The majority of maltreatment-related investigations occurred in large centres (Edmonton and Calgary).
- A larger percentage of youth whose investigations led to *in care* services were from rural regions (30%) than *out of care services* (23%), *no intervention needed* (25%), and youth not investigated (23%).
- Youth whose investigation led to *out of care services* were the most likely to be from large centres (64%).

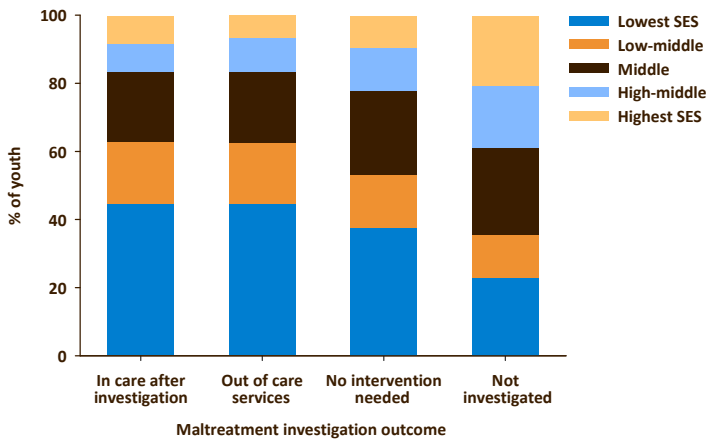
Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Aboriginal status by region of residence (Table 9)

- 32% of Aboriginal youth and 23% of non-Aboriginal youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation were from rural areas.



Maltreatment investigation outcome by socio-economic status (SES) (Table 10)



Maltreatment investigation outcome by socio-economic status (Table 10)

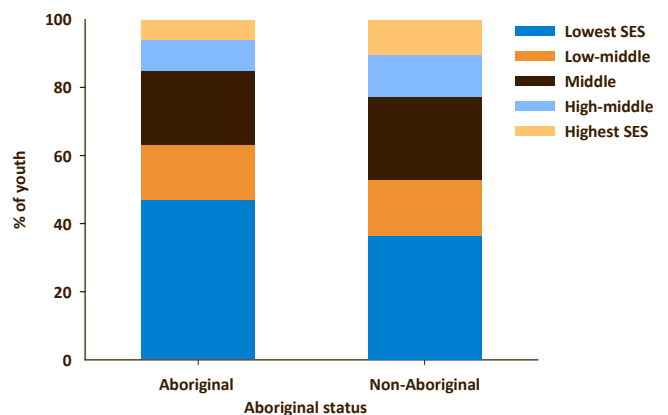
Socio-economic status captures the social and material environments in which youth live. See *Definitions and Notes* (p.22).

- Youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation were more likely to be from the lowest socio-economic status neighbourhoods (39%) than youth who were not investigated (23%).

Aboriginal status by socio-economic status (Table 11)

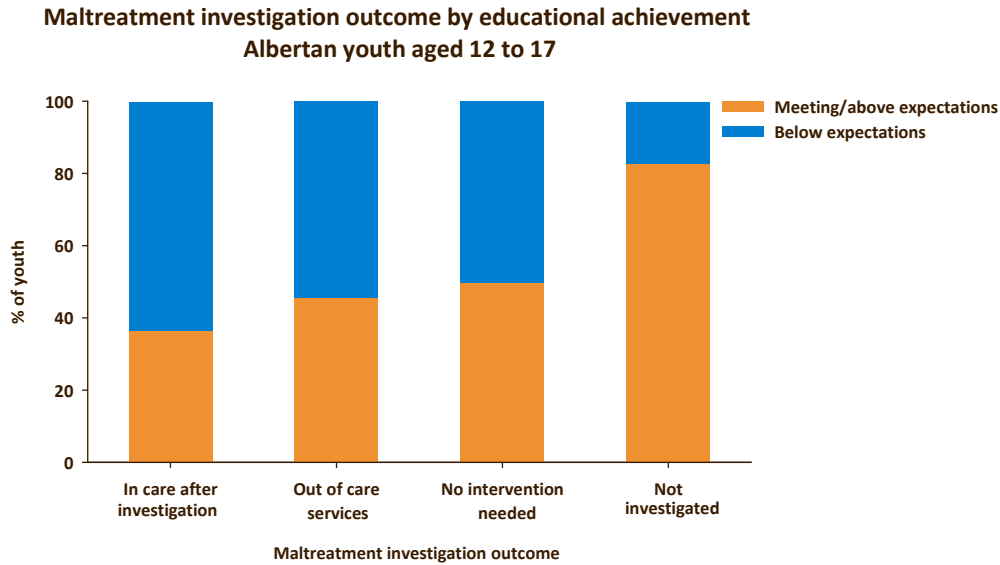
- Among Aboriginal youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation, 47% were from the lowest socio-economic status neighbourhoods, compared to 36% of Non-Aboriginal youth.

Aboriginal status by socio-economic status (SES) (Table 11)



Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Maltreatment investigation outcome by educational achievement (Table 12)



This and the following analysis are limited to youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation and were registered in the K-12 education system in Alberta in 2008/09.

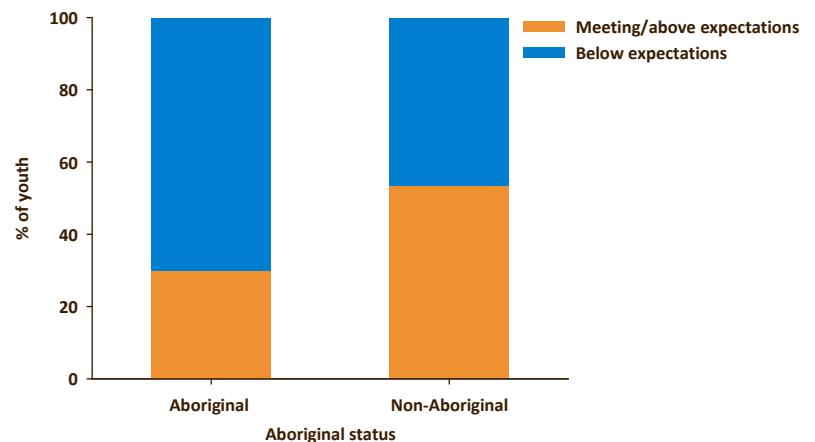
- Youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation were more likely to be performing below educational expectations than youth who had not been investigated, regardless of the investigation outcome.
- Youth whose investigation outcome led to *in care* services were least likely to have met or exceeded educational expectations (36%). In contrast, 45% of youth receiving services *out of care*, 50% of youth *not requiring intervention* and 83% of youth who were not the subject of a maltreatment investigation met or exceeded educational expectations.

Aboriginal status by educational achievement (Table 13)

Aboriginal status was determined by Human Services records only. Comparisons between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students should be interpreted with caution, because no data were available for students who attended schools on First Nations reserves.

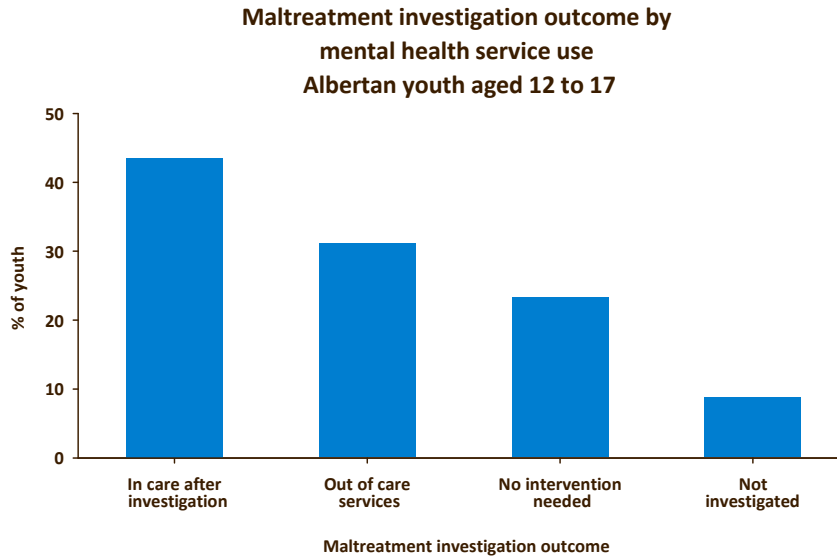
- Among youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation, 30% of Aboriginal youth and 53% of non-Aboriginal youth met or exceeded educational expectations.

**Aboriginal status by educational achievement
Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 investigated for maltreatment**



Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

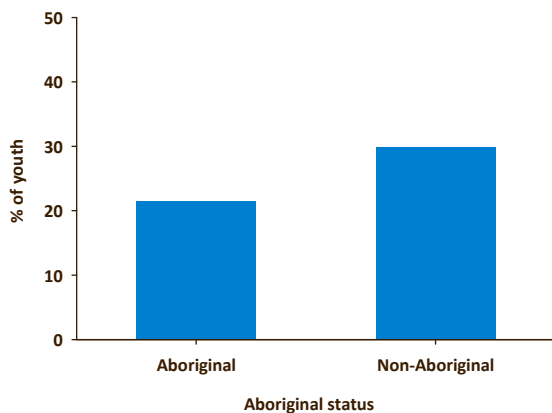
Maltreatment investigation outcome by mental health status (Table 14)



Mental health status refers to presence or absence of a mental health condition. Mental health conditions are defined as receipt of services related to mental health conditions; that is, receipt of services is used here as a proxy for confirmed presence of a mental health condition. See *Definitions and Notes* (p.23).

- Service use for mental health conditions was more than twice as likely among youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation (27% of youth investigated, 1,610 youth) than among youth who were not investigated (9% of youth not investigated, 23,832 youth). This may be partially due to increased access to mental health services for youth who are the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation.
- Youth whose investigation outcome led to *in care* services had the highest rate of service use for mental health conditions (44%), followed by 31% for youth receiving *out of care services* and 23% for the *no intervention needed* group.

Aboriginal status by mental health service use Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 investigated for maltreatment

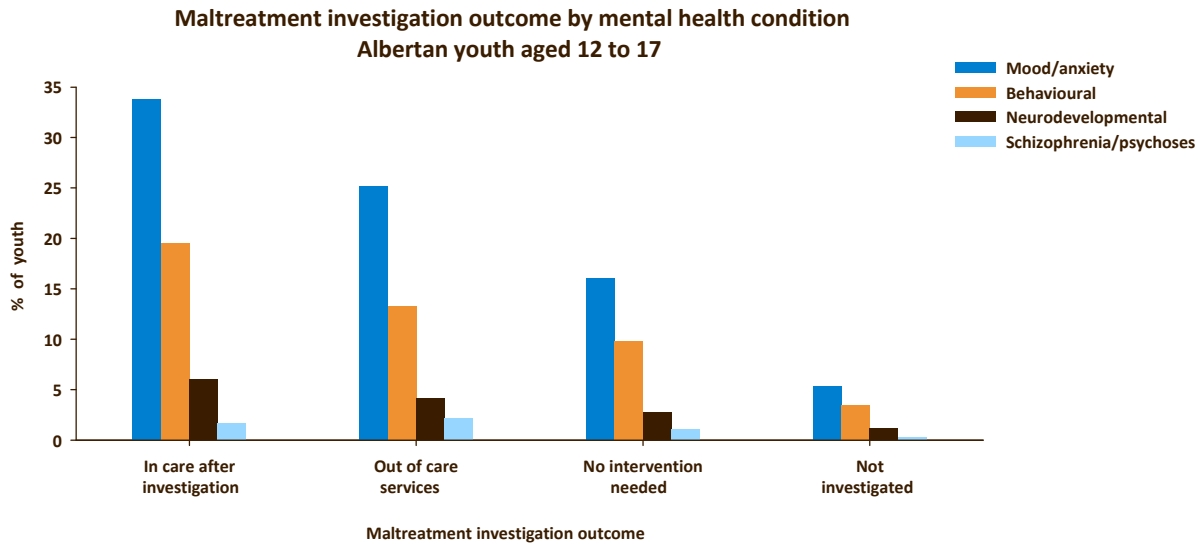


Aboriginal status by mental health status (Table 15)

- Service use for mental health conditions was more common among non-Aboriginal youth (30%) than Aboriginal youth (22%) who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

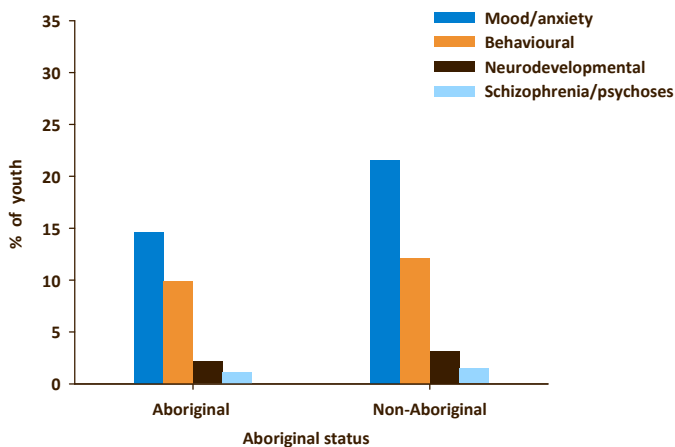
Maltreatment investigation outcome by mental health condition (Table 16)



- *Mood/anxiety, behavioural and neurodevelopmental* mental health conditions were more common among youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation than among youth not investigated, with the highest rates of mental health conditions among youth who entered *in care after investigation*.
- *Schizophrenia/psychoses* conditions were slightly more common among youth whose investigation outcome led to *out of care services* (2.2%) than *in care after intervention* (1.7%) and *no intervention needed* (1.1%).

Aboriginal status by mental health condition

Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 investigated for maltreatment

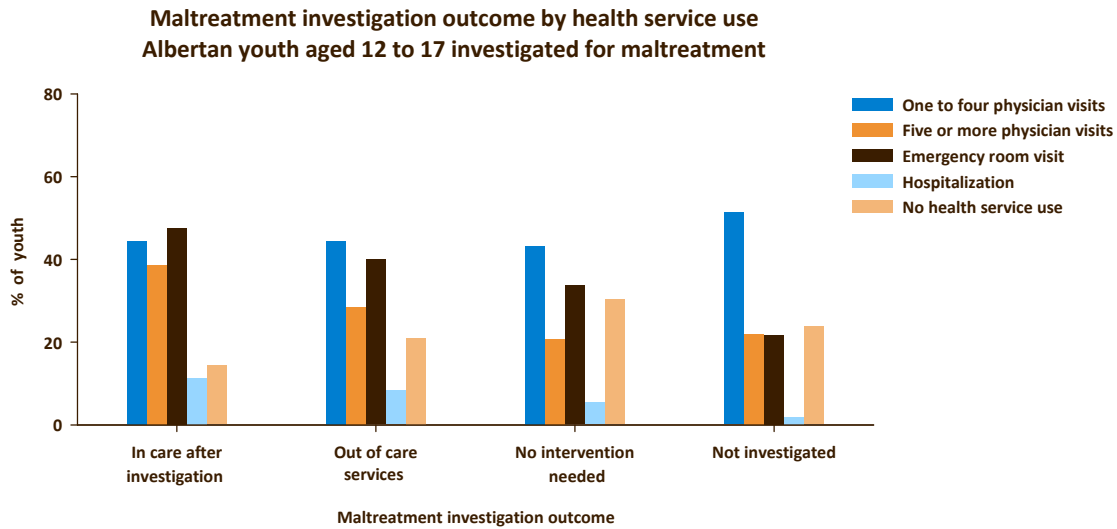


Aboriginal status by mental health condition (Table 17)

- All four types of mental health conditions were more common among non-Aboriginal than Aboriginal youth who were the subject of an investigation.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

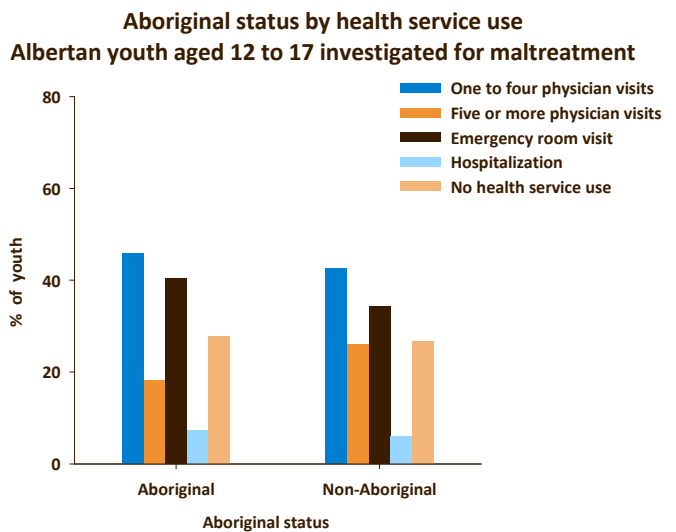
Maltreatment investigation outcome by health service use (Table 18)



- Youth who experienced an investigation which resulted in the receipt of *in care* services were most likely to visit an emergency room, be hospitalized, or visit physicians five or more times, followed by youth who received *out of care* services after an investigation, and youth whose investigation outcome led to *no intervention needed*.
- Youth not investigated were more likely to have one to four physician visits than any other group.
- Youth whose investigation outcome led to *no intervention needed* were more likely to have no health service use compared to the other groups.

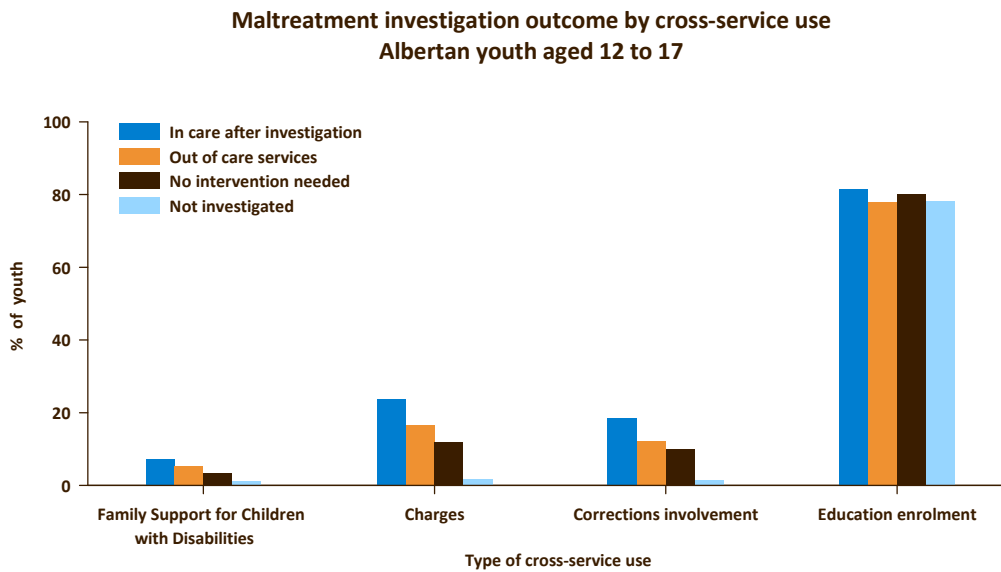
Aboriginal status by health service use (Table 19)

- Aboriginal youth who were the subject of an investigation were slightly more likely to have one to four physician visits, to have an emergency room visit, or to be hospitalized at least once, compared to non-Aboriginal youth who were the subject of an investigation.
- Among youth who were the subject of an investigation, non-Aboriginal youth were more likely to have five or more physician visits (26%) than Aboriginal youth (18%).



Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Maltreatment investigation outcome by cross-service use (Table 20)

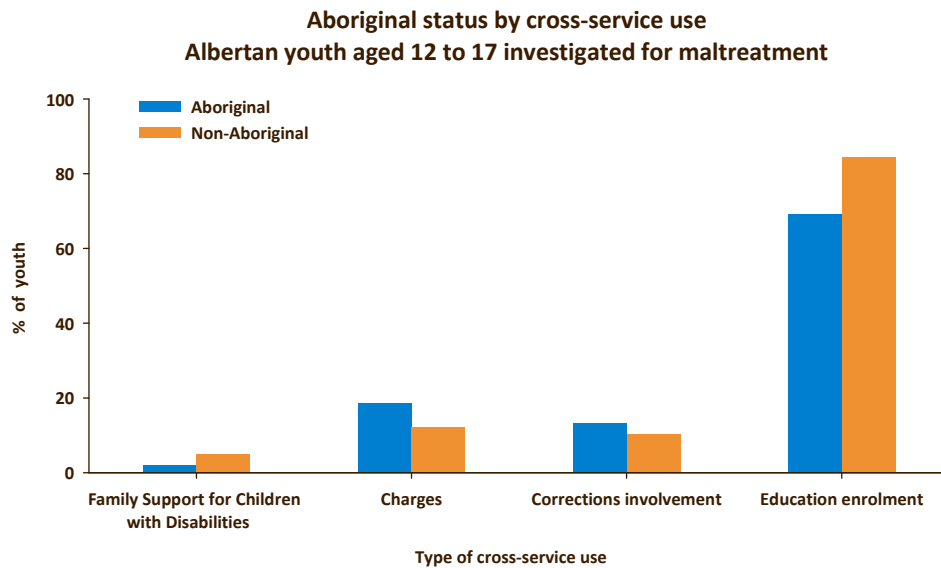


This analysis and the next one look at the cross-ministry service use of youth (aged 12 to 17 years) by maltreatment investigation outcome. Youth were considered in this and the following analysis if they were registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP; see *Definitions and Notes*, p.23). The effects should be interpreted with caution; they cannot be generalized to youth not registered with AHCIP. 14% of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment investigation were not registered with AHCIP.

- Youth who were *in care after investigation* were most likely of the four groups to be enrolled in Alberta's K-12 education system, to receive Family Support for Children with Disability program services, to be charged with an offence, or to be involved with correctional services than all other youth.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Aboriginal status by cross-service use (Table 21)



- Aboriginal youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation were more likely to have been charged with offences and involved with correctional services than non-Aboriginal youth who were investigated.
- Aboriginal youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation were less likely to receive support from the Family Support for Children with Disability (FSCD) program or to be enrolled in Alberta’s off-reserve K-12 education system compared to non-Aboriginal youth.
- These results need to be interpreted with caution as youth enrollment data for on-reserve schools were not available.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables

Table 1. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Maltreatment investigation outcome	Total
Number of youth	In care after investigation	726
	Out of care services	1,157
	No intervention needed	5,146
	Any maltreatment investigation	7,029
	Not investigated	300,674
	Total Albertan youth (aged 12 to 17)	307,703
Percent of youth	In care after investigation	0.2
	Out of care services	0.4
	No intervention needed	1.7
	Any maltreatment investigation	2.3
	Not investigated	97.7
	Total Albertan youth (aged 12 to 17)	100.0
Percentage of youth investigated for maltreatment	In care after investigation	10.3
	Out of care services	16.5
	No intervention needed	73.2
	Any maltreatment investigation	100.0

Table 2. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Aboriginal status	Total investigated
Number of youth	Aboriginal	2,007
	Non-Aboriginal	5,022
	Any maltreatment investigation	7,029
Percent of youth	Aboriginal	28.6
	Non-Aboriginal	71.4
	Any maltreatment investigation	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 3. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and investigation outcome, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Maltreatment investigation outcome	Aboriginal Status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	In care after investigation	290	436	726
	Out of care services	356	801	1,157
	No intervention needed	1,361	3,785	5,146
	Total	2,007	5,022	7,029
Percent of youth	In care after investigation	14.4	8.7	10.3
	Out of care services	17.7	15.9	16.5
	No intervention needed	67.8	75.4	73.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4. Number and percent of youth who the subject of a maltreatment investigation by age, Alberta youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Maltreatment investigation outcome	Age (years)						
		12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Number of youth	In care after investigation	110	150	159	155	109	43	726
	Out of care services	225	198	228	179	161	166	1,157
	No intervention needed	895	916	968	903	838	626	5,146
	Total	1,230	1,264	1,355	1,237	1,108	835	7,029
Percent of youth	In care after investigation	8.9	11.9	11.7	12.5	9.8	5.1	10.3
	Out of care services	18.3	15.7	16.8	14.5	14.5	19.9	16.5
	No intervention needed	72.8	72.5	71.4	73.0	75.6	75.0	73.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 5. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and age, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Aboriginal status	Age (years)						
		12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Number of youth	Aboriginal	357	366	397	357	305	225	2,007
	Non-Aboriginal	873	898	958	880	803	610	5,022
	Total	1,230	1,264	1,355	1,237	1,108	835	7,029
Percent of youth	Aboriginal	29.0	29.0	29.3	28.9	27.5	26.9	28.6
	Non-Aboriginal	71.0	71.0	70.7	71.1	72.5	73.1	71.4
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 6. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by gender, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Gender	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	Female	379	597	2,779	3,755	145,459
	Male	347	560	2,366	3,273	155,215
	Total	726	1,157	5,145	7,028	300,674
Percent of youth	Female	52.2	51.6	54.0	53.4	48.4
	Male	47.8	48.4	46.0	46.6	51.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 7. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and gender, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Gender	Aboriginal Status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Female	1,095	2,660	3,273
	Male	912	2,361	3,755
	Total	2,007	5,021	7,028
Percent of youth	Female	54.6	53.0	48.4
	Male	45.4	47.0	51.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 8. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by region of residence, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Region of residence	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	Rural	216	262	1,284	1,762	68,020
	Mid-sized centres	117	155	765	1,037	45,915
	Large centres	393	739	2,992	4,124	185,686
	Total	726	1,156	5,041	6,923	299,621
Percent of youth	Rural	29.8	22.7	25.5	25.5	22.7
	Mid-sized centres	16.1	13.4	15.2	15.0	15.3
	Large centres	54.1	63.9	59.4	59.6	62.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 9. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and region of residence, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Region of residence	Aboriginal Status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Rural	648	1,114	1,762
	Mid-sized centres	273	764	1,037
	Large centres	1,059	3,065	4,124
	Total	1,980	4,943	6,923
Percent of youth	Rural	32.7	22.5	25.5
	Mid-sized centres	13.8	15.5	15.0
	Large centres	53.5	62.0	59.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 10. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by socio-economic status (SES), Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Socio-economic status	Maltreatment investigation outcome				Total investigated	Not investigated
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed			
Number of youth	Lowest SES	324	514	1,878	2,716	67,348	
	Low middle	131	208	788	1,127	37,470	
	Middle	149	238	1,235	1,622	74,804	
	High middle	59	115	628	802	54,184	
	Highest SES	61	78	480	619	60,617	
	Total	724	1,153	5,009	6,886	294,423	
Percent of youth	Lowest SES	44.8	44.6	37.5	39.4	22.9	
	Low-middle	18.1	18.0	15.7	16.4	12.7	
	Middle	20.6	20.6	24.7	23.6	25.4	
	High-Middle	8.1	10.0	12.5	11.6	18.4	
	Highest SES	8.4	6.8	9.6	9.0	20.6	
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Table 11. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and socio-economic status (SES), Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Socio-economic status	Aboriginal Status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Lowest SES	926	1,790	2,716
	Low middle	312	815	1,127
	Middle	427	1,195	1,622
	High middle	181	621	802
	Highest SES	117	502	619
	Total	1,963	4,923	6,886
Percent of youth	Lowest SES	47.2	36.4	39.4
	Low-middle	15.9	16.6	16.4
	Middle	21.8	24.3	23.6
	High-Middle	9.2	12.6	11.6
	Highest SES	6.0	10.2	9.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 12. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by educational achievement, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17, 2008/09

	Educational achievement	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	Below expectations	346	452	1,800	2,598	40,114
	Meeting/above expectations	198	377	1,776	2,351	191,813
	Total	544	829	3,576	4,949	231,927
Percent of youth	Below expectations	63.6	54.5	50.3	52.5	17.3
	Meeting/above expectations	36.4	45.5	49.7	47.5	82.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 13. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and educational achievement, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Educational achievement	Aboriginal status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Below expectations	860	1,738	2,598
	Meeting/above expectations	367	1,984	2,351
	Total	1,227	3,722	4,949
Percent of youth	Below expectations	70.1	46.7	52.5
	Meeting/above expectations	29.9	53.3	47.5
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 14. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by mental health status, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Mental health status	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	Any mental health condition	278	346	986	1,610	23,832
	No mental health condition	361	667	3,244	4,272	247,136
	Total	639	1,013	4,230	5,882	270,968
Percent of youth	Any mental health condition	43.5	34.2	23.3	27.4	8.8
	No mental health condition	56.5	65.8	76.7	72.6	91.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 15. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and mental health status, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Mental health status	Aboriginal status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Any mental health condition	367	1,243	1,610
	No mental health condition	1,343	2,929	4,272
	Total	1,710	4,172	5,882
Percent of youth	Any mental health condition	21.5	29.8	27.4
	No mental health condition	78.5	70.2	72.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 16. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by mental health condition, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Mental health condition*	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	Mood/anxiety	216	255	679	1,150	14,627
	Behavioural	125	135	416	676	9,291
	Neurodevelopmental	39	42	120	201	3,110
	Schizophrenia/psychoses	11	22	47	80	824
	Total in investigation outcome category	639	1,013	4,230	5,882	270,968
Percent of youth investigated	Mood/anxiety	33.8	25.2	16.1	19.6	5.4
	Behavioural	19.6	13.3	9.8	11.5	3.4
	Neurodevelopmental	6.1	4.1	2.8	3.4	1.1
	Schizophrenia/psychoses	1.7	2.2	1.1	1.4	0.3

* Mental health condition categories were not mutually exclusive

Table 17. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and mental health condition, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Mental health condition*	Aboriginal status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	Mood/anxiety	250	900	1,150
	Behavioural	169	507	676
	Neurodevelopmental	37	164	201
	Schizophrenia/psychoses	19	61	80
	Total in investigation outcome category	1,710	4,172	5,882
Percent of youth investigated	Mood/anxiety	14.6	21.6	19.6
	Behavioural	9.9	12.2	11.5
	Neurodevelopmental	2.2	3.9	3.4
	Schizophrenia/psychoses	1.1	1.5	1.4

* Mental health condition categories were not mutually exclusive

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 18. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by health service use, Albertan youth, aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Health service use*	Maltreatment investigation outcome				
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed	Total investigated	Not investigated
Number of youth	One to four physician visits	322	515	2,227	3,064	154,402
	Five or more physician visits	281	329	1,072	1,682	66,179
	Emergency room visit	345	462	1,735	2,542	65,449
	Hospitalization	82	96	280	458	5,718
	Any health service use	622	915	3,586	5,123	229,154
	No health service use	104	242	1,560	1,906	71,520
	Total	726	1,157	5,146	7,029	300,674
Percent of youth	One to four physician visits	44.4	44.5	43.3	43.6	51.4
	Five or more physician visits	38.7	28.4	20.8	23.9	22.0
	Emergency room visit	47.5	39.9	33.7	36.2	21.8
	Hospitalization	11.3	8.3	5.4	6.5	1.9
	Any health service use	85.7	79.1	69.7	72.9	76.2
	No health service use	14.3	20.9	30.3	27.1	23.8

* Health service use categories were not mutually exclusive

Table 19. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and health service use, Albertan youth, aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09

	Health service use*	Aboriginal status			Not investigated
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated	
Number of youth	One to four physician visits	920	2,144	3,064	154,402
	Five or more physician visits	367	1,315	1,682	66,179
	Emergency room visit	814	1,728	2,542	65,449
	Hospitalization	149	309	458	5,718
	Any health service use	1,449	3,674	5,123	229,154
	No health service use	558	1,348	1,906	71,520
	Total	2,007	5,022	7,029	300,674
Percent of youth	One to four physician visits	45.8	42.7	43.6	51.4
	Five or more physician visits	18.3	26.2	23.9	22.0
	Emergency room visit	40.6	34.4	36.2	21.8
	Hospitalization	7.4	6.2	6.5	1.9
	Any health service use	72.2	73.2	72.9	76.2
	No health service use	27.8	26.8	27.1	23.8

* Health service use categories were not mutually exclusive

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Tables (continued)

Table 20. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by type of cross-service use, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09*

	Type of cross-service use	Maltreatment investigation outcome				Total investigated	Not investigated
		In care after investigation	Out of care services	No intervention needed			
Number of youth	FSCD**	48	55	142	245	2,989	
	Charges	160	173	510	843	4,423	
	Corrections involvement	124	127	424	675	3,766	
	Education enrolment	548	818	3,471	4,837	217,646	
	Health registry	673	1,049	4,332	6,054	279,077	
Percent of youth	FSCD**	7.1	5.2	3.3	4.0	1.1	
	Charges	23.8	16.5	11.8	13.9	1.6	
	Corrections involvement	18.4	12.1	9.8	11.1	1.3	
	Education enrolment	81.4	78.0	80.1	79.9	78.0	
	Health registry	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

* Only youth registered in the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan were included in this analysis

**FSCD = Family Support for Children with Disabilities

Table 21. Number and percent of youth who were the subject of a maltreatment-related investigation by Aboriginal status and type of cross-service use, Albertan youth aged 12 to 17 years, 2008/09*

	Type of cross-service use	Aboriginal status		
		Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total investigated
Number of youth	FSCD**	36	209	245
	Charges	324	519	843
	Corrections involvement	230	445	675
	Education enrolment	1,202	3,635	4,837
	Health registry	1,741	4,313	6,054
Percent of youth	FSCD**	2.1	4.8	4.0
	Charges	18.6	12.0	13.9
	Corrections involvement	13.2	10.3	11.1
	Education enrolment	69.0	84.3	79.9
	Health registry	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Only youth registered in the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan were included in this analysis

**FSCD = Family Support for Children with Disabilities

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Definitions and Notes

- The study population for this project consisted of all Albertan youth who were registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan in 2008/09 or who received selected services from one or more of the participating ministries in 2008/09. “All Albertan youth” refers to this study population.
- The study year was fiscal year 2008/09. With the exception of Education and Enterprise and Advanced Education data, all data were for services provided between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, with age determined on March 31, 2009.
 - Data for Enterprise and Advanced Education were for services provided between September 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009, with age determined on March 31, 2009.
 - Data for Education were for services provided to youth who were 12 to 19 years old on September 30, 2008. As a result, youth turning 12 between October 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 *were not* included in the Education data but were included in other ministries’ data. This resulted in the number of 12 year olds in the Education data being lower (approximately 50% lower) than that of 13 to 17 year olds.
 - Furthermore, although Education only provides services to youth who are under 20, the provision of services is defined by age at September 30. Youth who turned 20 between October 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 *were* included in the Education data, resulting in the inclusion of 20 year olds in some analyses of Education data.
- **Cross-ministry analyses included only youth that were linked across the relevant ministries.** This means that not all youth in the project were represented in every analysis. As well, only youth with a value for a given indicator were included in analyses involving that indicator (i.e., **missing values** were excluded).
- Age, gender, and postal code (translated into Statistics Canada dissemination areas) were provided for each individual by each participating ministry. In the case of discrepancies between ministries, the most common value for an indicator was chosen. In the event of two or more most common values, the value for the indicator was chosen randomly from the most common values.
- Dissemination areas of residence were used by CYDL to determine **region of residence**. Urban areas included large centres with urban core populations greater than 100,000 (i.e., Edmonton and Calgary metropolitan areas) and mid-sized centres with urban cores greater than 10,000; all other areas were categorized as rural.
- **Socio-economic status (SES)** captures the social and material environments in which youth live. A youth was assigned a socio-economic status via an index based on the Statistics Canada dissemination area in which he or she resided⁵. Six indicators were included in the index: percent without a high school diploma, the employment ratio, average income, percent of single families, percent of persons living alone, and percent of persons separated, divorced, or widowed. Socio-economic status values fell into five quintiles.
- **Educational achievement** was computed by Alberta Education using age, grade, school type, special education codes, provincial achievement test scores, home education status, number of high school credits earned, number of higher level courses taken, average grade in higher level courses, possession of an Alberta Education certificate or diploma, and Alexander Rutherford scholarship eligibility. Educational achievement was categorized as *above, meeting, or below expectations* for a student’s age and grade. An educational achievement rating was not available for 12 to 14 year old youth without scores on provincial achievement tests, for youth in ‘other’ schools (accredited post-secondary institutions offering high school courses for credit to adults; most youth in these schools were between 18 and 20 years), and for home-schooled high school youth with no credits.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Definitions and Notes (continued)

Mental health status was defined by the presence or absence of mental health diagnosis codes in Health's databases (Inpatient—Discharge Abstract Database, Ambulatory Care, and Practitioner Payments), or in the Family Support for Children with Disabilities Information System. Only youth who were registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan for the full fiscal year were included in the mental health analyses. **Mental health service use is a proxy for presence of a mental health condition:** Some youth with mental health conditions may not have accessed mental health services in Alberta during the year, and some mental health service use may have occurred for youth who did not in fact have mental health conditions.

- **Mental health conditions** were grouped based on The Johns Hopkins ACG[®] Case-Mix System (version 8.2)⁶. Mental health conditions were *mood/anxiety* (anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, etc.), *behavioural* (attention-deficit disorder, regulatory disorder, mental or behavioural problems due to substance use, etc.), *neurodevelopmental* (autism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, etc.), or *schizophrenia/psychoses* (schizophrenia, psychosis, delusional disorder, etc.). Conditions were not mutually exclusive; a youth could have a diagnosis in more than one category.
- **Maltreatment-related investigations** occur when there is a concern that the safety or well-being of a youth is threatened. Outcomes of investigation include *in care after investigation* (the youth is taken into care, and placed in a foster home, with family, in a group home, etc.), *out of care services* (the youth remains in the home and the family receives support services), and *no intervention needed*. Youth self-identified or were identified by a parent or guardian as Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.
- **Physician visits** reflect fee claims made by physicians when patients visit their offices. In this report, multiple claims by a given physician for a given patient on the same day were counted as a single visit. Reasons for physician visits were not available for this project.
- **Emergency room visits** refer to visits to emergency departments for assessment or treatment.
- **Hospitalizations** refer to admissions to hospital for assessment or treatment.
- **Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD)** is a ministry of Human Services program that provides a range of supports and services to families that strengthen their ability to support and care for their child with a disability based on their needs.
- Youth with **offence charges** include those charged with criminal offences or administrative offences related to criminal offences (e.g., failure to appear in court, breach of probation, etc.).
- Youth with **corrections involvement** have appeared before the Court or a Justice of the Peace for an offence charge and have been remanded in custody or placed under pre-trial supervision in the community awaiting further court dates, or have been found guilty and sentenced to a community disposition (i.e. Fine, Probation, Community Service Work, Deferred Custody) and/or custody (in which the sentence is served in a young offender facility).
- Participation in **education** refers to enrolment in the kindergarten to grade 12 education system in Alberta. No data were available for students who attended schools on First Nations reserves or in Lloydminster.
- New and returning Alberta residents, if they are eligible, must register for **Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan** coverage to receive insured health services. Youth in the "**health registry**" refers to all youth who are insured in Alberta. This includes any eligible youth who is a permanent resident of Alberta, living at least 183 days per year in the province. Members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and federal penitentiary inmates are not eligible (they receive coverage from the federal government), but dependents of these non-eligible residents, who reside in Alberta, are eligible.

Maltreatment-related investigations among Albertan youth

Data sources

Ministry	Database	Use in this report
Education	Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW)	Primary and secondary education achievement data
Health	Inpatient – Discharge Abstract Database (DAD)	Hospitalization data
Health	Ambulatory Care (ACCS)	Emergency room visit data
Health	Practitioner Payments (SESE)	Physician visit data
Health	Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Population Registry (AHCIP registry)	Population registry
Human Services	Child Youth Information Module (CYIM)	Maltreatment and intervention data
Human Services	Family Support for Children with Disabilities Information System (FSCDIS)	Family Supports for Children with Disabilities data
Justice and Solicitor General	Justice Online Information Network (JOIN)	Offence data
Justice and Solicitor General	Alberta Community Offender Management System (ACOM)	Corrections data (community)
Justice and Solicitor General	Correctional Offender Management Information System (CoMIS)	Corrections data (custody)

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The Child and Youth Data Laboratory

The **Child and Youth Data Laboratory** (CYDL) links and analyzes administrative data from child- and youth-serving ministries in the Government of Alberta. The ministries participate in research design and provide data elements that contribute to answering research questions.

The CYDL's research provides groundbreaking opportunities to understand relationships between critical factors in the lives of children and youth in Alberta. The research results can be used to inform policy and program development and evaluation, both within and across ministries, and to inspire further research.

The CYDL is managed by the **Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research** (ACCFRC). The Centre has evolved over its eight year history as a public-sector, innovative resource for evidence. The Centre develops, supports and integrates research across sectors and disciplines to provide a strong, evidence-based foundation for identifying and promoting effective public policy and service delivery to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities in Alberta, Canada, and internationally.

Our partners

This project was carried out on behalf of six ministries of the Government of Alberta. Each ministry collaborated extensively with the CYDL on this project, and their dedication to the project is gratefully acknowledged:

Enterprise and Advanced Education
Education
Health
Human Services
Aboriginal Relations
Justice and Solicitor General

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