

The Presiding Coroner, Mara Pollock,
has issued a publication ban
on the names of all children under the age of 19
mentioned in the inquest
with the exception of the deceased,
Kaiya Sandra Faith Stone-Kirk.



Yukon Coroner's Service

INQUEST REPORT

AN INQUEST was held at 4220 4th Avenue in the City of Whitehorse, Yukon, from the 12th to the ^{17th} 16th of June, 2023 before Presiding Coroner Mara Pollock, who was appointed by Chief Coroner Heather Jones under Section 11 of the Coroners Act and who acted under Section 48 of that Act.

The undersigned Presiding Coroner and:

1. [REDACTED] Foreperson
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]

being charged to inquire when, where, how and by what means the deceased came to his/her/their death, do find that the deceased

KAIYA SANDRA FAITH STONE-KIRK died at UPPER LIARD

in the Yukon Territory, on the 1 day of AUGUST, 2021 at approximately

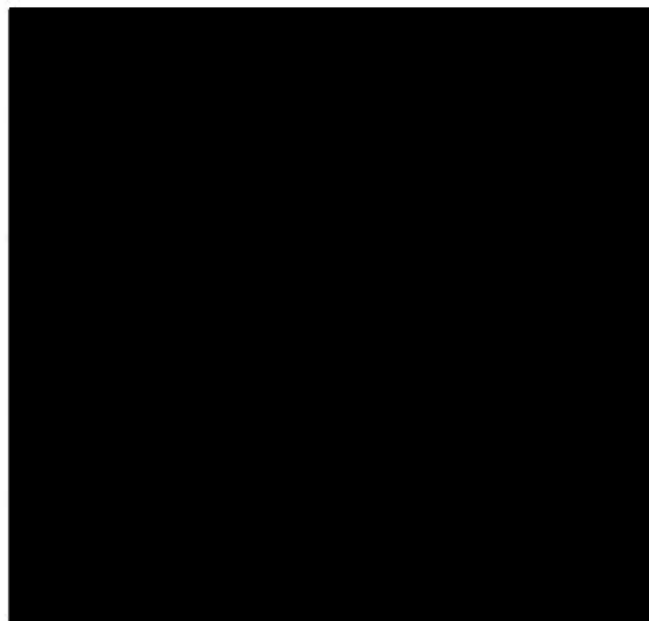
08:15 o'clock in the morning/afternoon, as a result of

POSITIONAL ASPHYXIA. We, the Jury, classify this death as

ACCIDENTAL DEATH.

We, the Jury, also make the recommendations attached in Appendix "A".

Signed on this 17 day of JUNE, 2023 by



Mara Pollock
Presiding Coroner

Appendix A:

To Government of Yukon:

1. Develop an Infant Mortality Review Committee (IMRC) for the Yukon. The IMRC membership should consist of representation from health care providers with an expertise in infant and perinatal health, public health and epidemiology, representation from First Nations community health care providers, the Yukon Coroner's Service, First Nations Child and Family Services if such a program exists, and Government of Yukon Family and Children's Services. While the details of scope, goals and objectives would be determined by the IMRC a specific focus of the committee would be to monitor and review all infant deaths within the territory with a focus on deaths that have a preventable component. The IMRC's finding and recommendations should be made public in order to reduce the likelihood of future deaths with modifiable risk factors.

This is based on the high rate of infant mortality in the Yukon.

2. Review the Child and Family Services Act in consultation with First Nations and community partners in order to clarify roles and responsibilities under Extended Family Care Agreements.

This is based on the evidence of expert witness Dr. Enns.

3. Develop legislation to regulate the practice of social work and social workers in Yukon.

This is based on the evidence of expert witness Dr. Enns.

4. Provide financial support to FCS to implement recommendations #5-13.

This is based on the evidence of Leeann Kayseas.

To Family and Children's Services:

5. Develop a safe sleep practice policy that:

a) Includes up to date information;

b) Explains the reasoning behind various safe sleep practices;

c) Mandates that safe sleep practices information is provided each and every time Family and Children's Services is involved in facilitating the provision of resources, support or financial payment to people who provide short-term or overnight care for infants;

d) Mandates that regional offices maintain a sufficient stock of Health Canada approved safe sleep equipment for use when required;

e) Informs Family and Children's Services employees of the importance of communicating in a manner that takes into account the principles of harm reduction and trauma-informed communication.

This is based on the evidence of expert witnesses Dr. Enns and Lucy Barney.

6. Develop and incorporate policies respecting the stock of safe sleep equipment including:

a) staff review and understanding of owner's manuals;

b) staff understanding of the appropriate use of equipment in consideration of the infant's age, size, and weight;

c) owners manuals is provided to the caregiver when equipment is loaned;

d) copies of owners manuals are maintained at the regional office.

This is based on the evidence of Mimi Deacon, Health Canada Safe Sleep for your Baby, Laura Johnston.

7. Provide mandatory in-person training on the safe sleep policy every two years for Family and Children's Services employees. This training must be developed using the principles of cultural safety, harm reduction, and trauma-informed communication and should include demonstrations on how to set up safe sleep spaces.

This is based on the evidence of expert witness Lucy Barney.

8. Create clear policies that apply to Extended Family Care Agreements. These policies should ensure that Extended Family Care Agreement families have a safety plan in place for short-term urgent situations. These policies must outline the roles and responsibilities of Family and Children's Services, extended family caregivers, and people who provide short-term or overnight care for infants.

This is based on the evidence of expert witness Dr. Enns.

9. Develop a course in collaboration with First Nations that must be completed by every person who is paid by Family and Children's Services to provide short-term or overnight care for infants. This course must include education on safe sleep practices and must be developed using the principles of cultural safety, harm reduction, and trauma-informed communication.

This is based on the evidence of Dr. Enns, Lucy Barney, and Leeann Kayseas.

10. With a priority for Liard First Nations and Watson Lake, in collaboration with First Nations develop a roster of people in each community that can be relied upon to provide short term or overnight care for infants and children, when a caregiver is in urgent need of such services.

This is based on the evidence of witnesses Dr. Enns, Lucy Barney, May Stewart, and Leeann Kayseas.

11. With a priority for Liard First Nation, support First Nations in the establishment of resources in their communities for the temporary care, including overnight stays, of infants and children in emergency situations.

This is based on the evidence of witnesses Dr. Enns, Lucy Barney, May Stewart, and Leeann Kayseas.

To the Government of Yukon:

12. Consider a public inquiry into the timing and notification of family and caregivers upon Kaiya Stone-Kirk's death, and any appropriate recommendations for improvements for policies and procedures.

This is based on the evidence of witnesses Frances Woodcock, Brian Bendell, Laura Johnston, Leeann Kayseas, and Margaret Stone.

To Family and Children's Services:

13. When Family and Children's Services requires the services of the RCMP that community safety officers be considered where appropriate.

This is based on the evidence of Lucy Barney and May Stewart.

Presiding Coroner's comments: