

# Social services 'failed miserably,' Virk family says

**Social workers failed Reena Virk by putting her in foster care without confirming whether her allegations of family abuse were true, says a report done for the B.C. Coroners Service.**

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**Reena, 14, was beaten to death in 1997 by two teens she met through the foster care system. Her family says she might never have met her killers if she had been left in her home.**

The fatality review stops short of pointing fingers, but notes multiple omissions occurred once social workers became involved with Reena and her family in 1996.

Investigations were closed prematurely, stories were not corroborated with sources outside the family, and social workers failed to work with the Virk family as a unit, says the report by John Greschner, a former chief investigator with the now-defunct B.C. Children's Commission.

Suman and Manjit Virk said Reena's allegations against them tore the family apart.

"These people are trained professionals and they couldn't clue in that this child was a total storyteller," Suman said in a story published Tuesday in the "Victoria Times-Colonist".

Reena told social workers she was physically, mentally, and sexually abused at home. She told horrific tales of being hit with a hammer, tied to a chair and threatened with a hot barbecue tool.

Without investigating whether those allegations were true, provincial social workers simply removed Reena and put her in foster care.

Manjit Virk was arrested on charges of sexual abuse, but the charges were dropped, the report noted.

The family even asked social workers to conduct a thorough investigation into their daughter's allegations but nothing was done.

"They failed miserably. There is no excuse for how they failed," said Suman Virk.