



Coroner's jury deems Ashley Smith's cell death a homicide



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The death of New Brunswick teen Ashley Smith at a federal prison in Kitchener, Ont. has been ruled a homicide by a coroner's jury.

The verdict came down Thursday after jury members at the coroner's inquest listened to nearly 11 months of testimony from prison guards, psychiatrists and Smith's own family about Smith's final year of life in prison.

Smith, 19, choked herself to death in her cell at the Grand Valley Institution in Kitchener, Ont., six years ago using a cloth strip. Guards who videotaped Smith's death testified that they did not intervene in time to save her life because they were under strict orders not to enter her cell.

The homicide verdict issued during an inquest is not one of legal responsibility, but rather a finding that another person contributed to the death.