



15 YEARS

PEPtalks

Spring 2020

Parents Empowering Parents

Providing education, innovative programming, support and hope for individuals or families dealing with or concerned about substance abuse/addiction.

Hopelessness to Hope

— a parent's story

When our children are born we envision a life path that we foresee for them. A path that is walked and filled with surmountable experiences and memories that contribute to who they become.

Suddenly a detour presents itself and those dreams you had suddenly seem unattainable. As parents we never give up, instead we focus our energy on guiding them to walk the path from a different road, a different journey, a journey that contributes to who they are! A journey that takes them on a path we might never envision, yet contributing to who they become as adults.

During our daughter's detour our emotional ride can be compared to riding a long, turbulent roller coaster. We were angry, confused and worried. Didn't she know what she was doing? How could she have done this to us, and especially her daughter?

What was she thinking, what was she doing?

I questioned my role as a mother! Did I do or not do something as a mom to cause this? I clearly remember Marilyn Benay,

one of the cofounders of PEP, saying "You didn't cause this. You didn't hold your baby and say that one day you are going to be an addict". My brain heard this but my heart was still hurting! How could this be happening?

The emotional ride continued as other storms brewed and exploded. There were periods of time that we didn't know where our daughter was. We would search for her in Edmonton, reaching out to friends, acquaintances and the police for their help. On the rare occasions we did manage to see her, she looked like our daughter, but in a body that was about 90 pounds. Her behaviour was irrational, fidgety and there was definitely no reasoning with her. She defended and would rationalize her erratic behaviours, stating she was happy with her life.

We would receive calls from her with stories that were beyond reality. As I began to have a greater understanding of addiction, I began to learn it was not her talking but the addict talking. It was her reality. A reality that was fuelled by drugs.

As her entrenchment in her drug use increased, it took away her morals and values. This was not my daughter, this was an addiction that had taken over my daughter.

Not knowing and feeling helpless consumed our lives. I felt alone as our family and friends lives were filled with happiness, ours was filled with loss and grief. The loss of a daughter with great potential. I was grieving, I couldn't stop thinking about her and crying.

To this day I still get emotional thinking about the Christmas that we didn't know

where she was. On Boxing Day, our house was filled with extended family reminiscing and creating new memories. I can still hear my daughter's child, in her sweet little innocent voice asking me "Nana do I have a mommy"? At that moment there was silence in the room. I replied "Of course you do"! I knew my daughter's behaviour was affecting her child, but didn't realize the extent until I heard that innocent question.

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I eventually realized, for my own wellness, that I needed to get off the turbulent roller coaster. I had a weekly appointment with a counsellor and I attended PEP. I didn't always like what I heard from the therapist or at PEP. What I did come to realize was that they would help me get off the roller coaster and be ready to walk with her when she decided to get off.

I was always on edge when the phone rang, not knowing what I would be subjected to on the other end. Would it be another emotionally fueled verbal attack? Or a plea for money or food? PEP's advice, "I love you, but not your behaviour", and end the call. This was extremely hard to

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FAMILY SUPPORT LINE

Did you know that PEP has a professionally managed support line available days, evenings, and weekends?

The number is 780.293.0737

Own Your Story...

continued from page 1

say, especially when I was already feeling vulnerable and emotionally attacked by our daughter.

November 21, a day I will never forget. The day I received a call from my daughter who was incarcerated. Most parents would be horrified at this call. Without PEP, I might have too. Instead, I could get a good night's sleep because I finally knew where my daughter was.

At PEP we supported each other. Although our stories were different we were brought together on a journey of commonality, addiction. As we've all heard, addiction does not discriminate.

As Marilyn use to say "as long as they are breathing there is Hope"!

We never gave up hope and today...

Today, I can honestly say that my dreams for my daughter cannot be described with a single word, sentence or paragraph. I do know that my dreams, did not include a masters or a doctoral.

Obviously her dreams did! Today I am proud to say that my daughter has been accepted into a doctoral program!! She will continue to humbly guide others, through their journey, while walking her next path.

MEDD-X Alumni (Restorative Justice program)

I attended Parents Empowering Parents as part of a court mandated program for ex drug dealers or people in the lifestyle.

As an addict I was a very selfish and self-involved person. I came from a good family, just like the parents I met at PEP. Seeing their struggle and unwavering love and support they had for their own children, it really showed me the damage and heart ache I had caused my own family who suffered alongside me in my own addiction, something I hadn't even really thought about until attending PEP. They teach you that addiction is a family disease, and that the things I thought I had done had only affected my own life, had really affected an entire community.

I used to be ashamed to tell my story, but once seeing the strength of so many parents at PEP I realized that my own story could help them understand some of what their own child might have gone through and it empowered me and made me feel helpful rather than shameful.

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I truly believe that every community could benefit from having a program like PEP so parents of people struggling with addiction can go to share and be part of a group that support each other and are able to see that they are not alone.

Thank you to the facilitators of Parents Empowering Parents, as well as all the parents! Don't give up!

Rochelle

Edmonton Drug Treatment Court Client

Drop-in, no registration required



March 5 **April 2** **May 14**
March 19 **April 16** **May 28**
 April 30

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
St. Albert Food Bank
and Community Village
#20, 50 Bellerose Drive, St. Albert, AB

For more information contact
780.410.8516
info@pepsociety.ca
www.pepsociety.ca

Sponsorship Spotlight



Non-Profits helping Non-Profits

Volunteer Strathcona is a local non-profit organization that connects volunteers with opportunities and enables the development of local organizations to meet social needs in our community.

With a strong focus on sector support and capacity building, Volunteer Strathcona offers low-cost workshops and training, and one-on-one assistance in areas like social media, volunteer recruitment, and governance. They also offer free equipment lending of items such as popcorn machines, cotton candy machines, and projectors through their We Care We Share program.

For more information on any of the above mentioned, please call 780.464.4242.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday June 2, 6-7 pm

Alberta Room, 2nd Floor, 501 Festival Ave.
Sherwood Park

PEP meeting to follow

Director/Board Positions

Are you passionate about making a difference in the families in your community?

For over 15 years, PEP has supported, informed, and educated families in crisis of addiction. With your commitment, expertise and skills, you can make a difference.

For more information, contact Lerena Greig
Executive Director 780.410.8516 or
info@pepsociety.ca

*Join a diversified team...
Together we ARE stronger.*

Knowledge is Power!

by Lereña Greig

There is a place where you can go that no one judges you, no one shames you, and no one blames you. Safe, supportive, and empowering are just a few of the words that our families have used to describe our family recovery group. You can learn and adapt and change your thinking, behavior and words. There is power in knowledge and strength in numbers.

Knowledge liberates us, sets us free. Knowledge commands respect. If we have knowledge, we can direct our decisions to enhance our lives. This can give us a sense of self fulfillment and confidence. Knowledge is something that, no matter what trials we may face in life, knowledge can enable us to find a solution. The process of seeking and finding knowledge teaches us to have a more positive outlook. It teaches us to be motivated, determined, engaged and self-reliant. It can also fill us with joy and enthusiasm.

Having a loved one in the chaos of addiction can steal our joy and enthusiasm; can kill our confidence and overwhelm us to make the wrong decisions and then holds us captive.

At PEP's family recovery groups, we educate and learn together. The truth does set us free and provides an opportunity for families to move back into

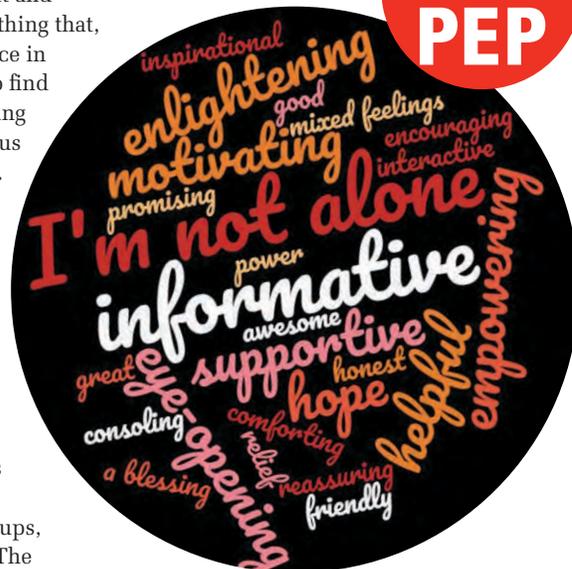
health; into a place of strength, power, growth and change.

Knowledge is power and there is strength in numbers.. You are NOT alone!

For our scheduled meetings visit our calendar at www.pepsociety.ca. Sherwood Park, South Edmonton and St. Albert - drop in and no registration required.

Come and be supported, empowered and educated.

Lereña Greig
Executive Director



Family Feedback about PEP

NOT IN MY FAMILY

PEP TALKS METH

Drug Education Forum with a panel of experts and lived experience followed by a question and answer period.

Thursday, March 5
6:30pm-8:30pm / Doors open 6:00pm

Venue sponsored by Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church, 51 Woodlands Road, St. Albert



MODERATOR:
Ryan Jespersen
630 CHED

Come be informed, educated and empowered in your community

780.410.8516 info@pepsociety.ca
www.pepsociety.ca

Thank You To Our Supporters

Working together to empower families in crisis towards health and wellness.



Felix and Pat Kuefler Fund
Roger & Reit Bland Family Fund

Also, thank you to our regular monthly donors.

With a one-time gift

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 \$500 \$1000 Other: \$ _____

With a monthly gift

- \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250
 \$500 \$1000 Other: \$ _____

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Mail form to: Parents Empowering Parents, 2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 3W7 or Fax 780-449-1220

PEP Programs

Parent Support Meetings

PEP convenes weekly to provide support, education, strength, and hope to parents and families of youth, young adults, and/or adult children. Professionally facilitated discussion provides insight and direction for parents and families dealing with their child's substance abuse issues. No registration is required to attend these drop-in meetings, which are held:

WEEKLY

Tuesdays alternate locations (Sherwood Park/Millwoods) from 7pm to 9pm

Bi-WEEKLY

Thursdays (St. Albert) from 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Sherwood Park

Alberta Room
#200, 501 Festival Ave (FCS),
Sherwood Park

- March 10**
- March 24**
- April 7**
- April 21**
- May 5**
- May 19**

South Edmonton

Sunrise
Community
Church,
3303-37 St NW
(upstairs),
Edmonton

- March 3**
- March 17**
- March 31**
- April 14**
- April 28**
- May 12**
- May 26**

St. Albert

St. Albert
Food Bank and
Community
Village
#20, 50 Bellerose
Drive, St. Albert

- March 5**
(Not In My Family)
Sturgeon Valley
Baptist Church
- March 19**
- April 2**
- April 16**
- April 30**
- May 14**
- May 28**

For more information visit our website at www.pepsociety.ca

Parent Mentorship Program

This program connects parents with parents. Mentors selected to listen, relate, share hope, share ideas, and provide additional support to parents new to PEP. Request for this service can be made with the meeting facilitator.

U-Turn for Youth/ Young Adults (15-24)

U-Turn supports youth & young adults involved in substance use to explore their situations through casual discussion and education in a no-pressure environment. Runs concurrently to the Sherwood Park PEP meetings. See website for schedule. Drop in Meeting. No registration required.

MEDD-X

The Motivational Education for Ex-Drug Dealers (MEDD-X) is a recognized program that provides convicted drug dealers an opportunity to gain an understanding of their impact on individuals, families, and the community, while supporting parents/families with insight into the drug/street world. Participants for this program must be referred and approved by staff via phone 780.410.8516 or email pepmeddx@gmail.ca

Rebuilding Hope Through Giving

PEP Society relies on individual donations, grants, corporate and community group support.

This equips us to support more families dealing with the effects of substance abuse and allows growth in the professionally facilitated programs that we offer.

There are many ways to provide hope:

1. Monthly giving visit www.pepsociety.ca and go to donations tab and click on Donate Now button (secure web-site through Canada Helps)
 2. Donations via cheque or newsletter – can also be mailed directly to 2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 3W7
 3. Year-end donation for tax reasons.
 4. Directed by your request through the United Way (Alberta Capital Region)
 5. Corporate Sponsorship
 6. Third Party Fundraisers
 7. Legacy Gifts
- Thank you for supporting your community and rebuilding hope for families. PEP Society is a registered charity

Visit www.pepsociety.ca for upcoming events and collaborations with community partners



www.pepsociety.ca
info@pepsociety.ca

support line: 780-293-0737
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fax: 780-449-1220

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