



17 YEARS

# PEPtalks

Fall 2021

## Parents Empowering Parents

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

## Addiction is a marathon and I hate running

— a sibling's message

**M**uch like a marathon it's nothing that I ever intended to be a part of my life, but life is funny that way.

There is no training for this race; one day you just wake up and there you are at the starting line. The starting gun goes off and you sprint as fast as you can (never a good strategy but when it's your first time you typically underestimate the length of the race). You finally make it to the finish line: rehab. Ah, we've made it!! The race is over, you're out of breath but relatively unscathed. Just as you're about to catch your breath you find out this wasn't in fact the finish line, just the first checkpoint.

*Just as you're about to catch your breath you find out this wasn't in fact the finish line, just the first checkpoint.*

Hold on, rehab isn't the answer? It was at this time I realized I might be the one running the race, but I certainly was not in control of it.

My brother's addiction escalated about three years ago. I can still vividly recall my parents the moment they got the call from him saying "I have a problem and can no longer live like this". It was heartbreaking. He said he was going to go to rehab and do what it takes to get better. This was the first time he'd ever said out loud to us that he had a problem. My parents, like many others before them,

were willing to do whatever it took to help him get better, but the process and navigating the system was not easy. So, I stepped in trying to remove as much of the burden as I could. I will spare you all the details as many of them are still hard to relive but rehab was just the introduction page in our story and we had a few dark years still ahead of us.

From the beginning we knew as a family we needed help. If my brother was going to get better, we knew we had a role to play but we had no idea what that role was let alone how to be successful at it. We searched high and low for family support but with very little success. We tried one group and it wasn't for us as it was one dimensional; we knew we needed support, but we also needed education, information, and resources for dealing with addiction.

About a year later I stumbled upon Parents empowering Parents ("PEP"). Coincidentally, my mom found it at almost the exact same time as if it were serendipity. It was at this moment things for my family began to change.

The addiction was getting worse. We feared every phone call and every decision we made felt like it was life or death. My parents attended their first meeting and PEP turned out to be everything we were looking for – a balance of support, education, and first-hand experience from the MEDD-X. After attending a few meetings, my parents invited me to join them. Again, I thought I'd do it to help my parents, but it turns out it was the other way around; PEP helped me tremendously. In the midst of the chaos that is addiction I

went into survival mode without even knowing it.

PEP has been there for my family in some of our darkest days and helped us navigate through that darkness. We have grown as individuals and as a family and the tools we acquired helped save my brother's life. My brother has now been in recovery for over a year and I could not be more grateful to have my brother back. So, for now my marathon has ended. There are still some lingering scrapes and bruises from the race that I continue to work through, but they will heal in time and if ever I find my-self back in the race I know I will have the tools to get myself through it.



# NEW

## A Toll Free Family Support Line

Days/evening/weekends  
Professionally managed  
Added to our local Family Support Line

**Toll Free 1.877.991.2737**

**Local 780.293.0737**

## We have news!

Coming this fall: in-person family recovery group meetings are back.

Tues,  
Sept. 14

South Edmonton  
3307-37 Street

Tues,  
Sept. 21

Sherwood Park  
401 Festival Lane  
(max 12 until further notice)

Thurs,  
Sept. 30

St. Albert  
30-50 Bellerose Drive

Virtual Wednesdays will continue.  
Bi-weekly on Zoom

@pepsociety.ca

All meetings are 7-9 pm.



FREE WEBINAR

Watch web-site for  
**NEW Educational Webinars**  
last Monday of the month

#### Free Registration

Pre-registration required at  
[pepsociety.ca/free-webinars/](https://pepsociety.ca/free-webinars/) or  
by email: [info@pepsociety.ca](mailto:info@pepsociety.ca)



Previous webinars available for viewing



Informative meeting with Minister Nate Glubish (MLA Strathcona-Sherwood Park). (left to right): PEP Chair Carol Zukiwski, PEP ED Lerena Greig, Minister Nate Glubish (MLA Strathcona-Sherwood Park).

## MEDD-X Alumni My PEP Story

One year ago, I was accepted into the Edmonton Drug Treatment Program. Having been an alcoholic and drug addict for 20 years and having tried recovery numerous times before, to say I was skeptical of finding recovery in the justice system would be a gross understatement. Truthfully, it just seemed like a more comfortable alternative to jail. Like most of my thinking at the time, I couldn't have been more wrong. I simply did what was asked of me and tried to keep an open mind. Slowly, but surely, the world began to look different. Perhaps I was not solely at the center of the universe? Maybe I really didn't know as much as I thought? It was around the time of these revelations that I was introduced to PEP. Being a convicted drug dealer, I expected the worst – to be the lightning rod for all the hurt and anger that addiction leaves in its wake. Instead, I found a group of people that were warm, welcoming, and who genuinely cared about helping and supporting each other. Hearing the stories of other families and seeing their strength allowed me to truly see, for the first time, all the damage and hurt I'd caused my own family and others through my behavior and actions in active addiction. In the groups, I was able to perhaps share insight into how addicts think and the drug world; but I'd never felt further away from it, and through sharing the experiences of the families in PEP, I know I will never go back to it.

*I found a group of people that were warm, welcoming, and who genuinely cared about helping and supporting each other.*

Since first joining PEP, my life now is better than I could ever imagine. My relationship with my own family is stronger than ever. I've reconnected with my children and my parents. Though they both live in different provinces, we talk on the phone weekly and have a genuine relationship again. My relationship with my girlfriend, Karen, has changed from one filled with hurt, mistrust, and dishonesty to one based on healthy communication, love, and respect. We've recently moved into a new condo with our dog, Tommi. I'm in the final phase of my drug court journey, and I couldn't be more grateful for all the support and direction they have given me. I'm currently working towards a bachelor's degree in psychology part-time through online courses at Athabasca University, and working to pursue a career in peer support work; helping others to find this new life that I've been blessed with. My experience with PEP was one of the most important building blocks of my own recovery and one for which I will be forever thankful.

## Sponsorship Spotlight



BRISBIN FAMILY  
CHIROPRACTIC

Thank you Brisbin Family Chiropractic for your office fundraiser. Working in the health and wellness field and aiming to support a mission you believe in.

Your support does connect the healing power of family helping families.

*Local supports local*

### PEP is Alberta-wide

Parents Empowering Parents Society is now a provincial organization.

PEP reaches Alberta-wide, removing barriers of location to support all municipalities across Alberta and their families. Supported by the Alberta Government, Alberta Health COVID-19 Community Grant.

### Permanent Virtual Wednesdays Group

These meetings continue bi-weekly. See website for details

### UPCOMING EVENTS

## PEP AGM

**Tuesday, Sept. 21, 6pm**

Virtual and In-Person  
(max 12 in-person with registration)

For registration contact  
[info@pepsociety.ca](mailto:info@pepsociety.ca)

For all updates visit [pepsociety.ca](http://pepsociety.ca)  
or contact [info@pepsociety.ca](mailto:info@pepsociety.ca)

## 'Til We Meet Again

by Lerena Greig

There is still a remnant of the pandemic and we continue to be mindful and respectful of our health guidelines. Our Family Recovery Groups have been adapted during the last 18 months or so to a virtual platform. We are thankful for the opportunity that the virtual platform has provided and will continue to provide a virtual meeting bi-weekly Wednesdays as a permanent addition to our program, removing location and other barriers for families across Alberta.

However, we hear from many of our families that they are hopeful and excited to return to the in-person meetings...

GOOD NEWS .. In response to vaccinations available and health guidelines, we will be resuming our in-person meetings starting in

South Edmonton Sunrise Community Church  
Tuesday September 14.

**Please note:** our Sherwood Park meeting location (open September 21 following AGM) can only accommodate 12 persons at this time until further notice so it will be a first come, first serve basis for the in-person. We will offer virtual if required in addition to Sherwood Park only to accommodate all who want to attend. St. Albert will be resuming Thursday September 30 in-person.

We are looking forward to seeing you.  
'Til we meet again!

**Lerena Greig**  
Executive Director  
Facilitator Family Recovery Group

## Thank you to our supporters

Abrasive Blast & Paint Inc.  
Apex Contracting inc.  
Roger & Reit Bland Family Fund  
BMO Wealth Management,  
BMO Nesbitt Burns  
Brisbin Family Chiropractic  
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The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy, Sherwood Park  
Minerva Foundation  
Realtors Community Foundation, Edmonton & Area  
St. Albert Alliance Church  
SITE a Centurion Company  
The Strathcona Bugle  
Strathcona County  
Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church  
Style Lounge Apparel Etc.  
Sunrise Community Church  
TELUS Edmonton Community Board  
Volunteer Strathcona Womanition  
Also, thank you to our regular monthly donors.

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

THANK YOU

# YES

# I Want to Help Rebuild Hope for Families

## With a one-time gift

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

## With a monthly gift

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

Yes, I would like to subscribe to your email notifications

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Gifts by:  Cheque  VISA  Mastercard

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Charity Number: 8432300270R0001

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

## PEP Programs

PEP meets 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.

### In-Person Virtual

#### Family Recovery Group Meeting

In-person meetings resume as follows:

##### SOUTH EDMONTON

Starting Sept 14  
Every Second Tuesdays 7-9pm

Sept 14, 28 | Oct 12, 26 | Nov 9, 23

Sunrise Community Church, 2nd floor, 3303-37 St.

##### SHERWOOD PARK

Starting Sept 21  
Every Second Tuesdays 7-9pm

Sept 21 | Oct 5, 19 | Nov 2, 16, 30

Alberta Room, 2nd floor, 401 Festival Lane  
Family and Community Services. Maximum attendance 12 persons due to social distancing

##### ST. ALBERT

Starting Sept 30  
Every Second Thursdays 7-9pm

Sept 30 | Oct 14, 28 | Nov 11, 25

2nd Floor, St. Albert Food Bank, 30-50 Bellerose Dr.  
Masks required.

\* Check the PEP website for any Covid updates.

#### Family Recovery Group Meeting

##### ZOOM MEETINGS

Every Second Wednesdays 7-9pm

Sept 8, 22 | Oct 6, 20 | Nov 3, 17 | Dec 1

Permanent Virtual Wednesdays continue bi-weekly. (See website for details)

#### U-TURN (youth/young adults at risk) 16-24

Every Second Mondays 7-9pm

Sept 6, 20 | Oct 4, 18 | Nov 1, 15, 29

#### Webinar

Last Monday of the Month 7-9pm

Sept 25 | Oct 29 | Nov 27

Pre-registration required:  
[pepsociety.ca/free-webinars/](https://pepsociety.ca/free-webinars/)

#### 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 [info@pepsociety.ca](mailto:info@pepsociety.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.

##### The many ways to provide hope:

**MONTHLY GIVING** Visit [pepsociety.ca](https://pepsociety.ca) and go to donations tab and click on Donate Now button (secure web-site through Canada Helps)

**DONATIONS VIA CHEQUE** Mail to: 2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, AB, T8A 3W7

**YEAR-END DONATION** for tax reasons. Directed by your request through the United Way (Alberta Capital Region)

##### CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

##### THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISERS

##### LEGACY GIFTS

Thank you for supporting your community and rebuilding hope for families. PEP Society is a registered charity

**Here is the Zoom Link** for all Family Recovery Group and U-turn meetings <https://pepsociety.ca/covid-19-notice/>

For dates confirmed, you can also visit <https://pepsociety.ca/calendar/pep-family-recovery-meeting/>  
Make sure you have calendar set to "month" view.



[www.pepsociety.ca](https://www.pepsociety.ca)  
[info@pepsociety.ca](mailto:info@pepsociety.ca)

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

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