



15 YEARS

PEPtalks

Spring 2019

Parents Empowering Parents

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

How PEP Changed My Life — a parent's story

My life changed forever on the afternoon of January 22, 2015. I received a call telling me that my child had passed away probably from an overdose.

There are no words to express how it feels to have your world instantly change into chaos that seems to have no end. The hardest thing for me to do was remember

I found PEP by google and discovered a whole community of people just like me - people who love someone who suffers from SUD (Substance Use Disorder).

to breathe. This was a child I knew since before he was born – his mom and I lived together when we were both pregnant 21 years before this. This was a child that became my son when he was 7 due to addiction issues and lifestyle choices that his mom made. This was my child that called me 'Auntie Mom' because we had a parent – child relationship; but my sister was his birth mother and I would not allow him to forget how much she loved him. This was my son who gave me my first grandchild 6 months earlier on my 40th birthday. THIS WAS NOT REAL!

I thought I was a pretty 'smart' and an 'aware' person since I had been dealing with substance use disorder for about 30 years at that point. I thought I knew and understood all that I needed to when it came to the addiction lifestyle – BOY WAS I WRONG! I had book/academic knowledge, I had medical/doctor knowledge, I had caseworker/addiction therapist knowledge, but I really had no knowledge at all.

The truth was that my child was a drug dealer who overdosed on fentanyl. A few days after his funeral I find out that the mother of my grandchild would test positive for over a dozen different illicit drugs if a hair test was done that day. My grandchild was only 6 months old!!! She was just learning how to sit and roll over. I thought this was a nightmare that I just could not wake up from. I had no idea how to manage this situation and because I was not biologically connected to my grandchild (no shared DNA), I had to figure out a way to be in a relationship with an active addict, in order to ensure the safety of my son's only daughter. I began the search ... in October of 2015, I found PEP.

I found PEP by google and discovered a whole community of people just like me - people who love someone who suffers from SUD (Substance Use Disorder). The power of the weekly support meetings along with the tools and education provided, have allowed me to find a way to be a constant support for my grandchild the last 4 years. I am no longer overwhelmed at all the chaos that

happens with my situation and yes there has been a lot of chaos.

I have been the primary caregiver to this beautiful little person more than half of her 4 ½ years. The mother and I have built a relationship that allows for me to be a part of their lives but not involved with the mother's lifestyle choices. PEP gave me the strength and the tools to put in the boundaries needed to have this relationship. PEP provides me with a safe place to express my feelings about this situation and how utterly broken our current system is when it comes to treatment and the protection of children.

I am so grateful to have found the PEP family and I am honored to serve as a Director on the Board to ensure this program is available for all the other families out there who find themselves in this insane situation that has no rule book. I embrace the PEP phrase CHANGE BEGINS WITH ME because we can only control our own actions and reactions to this type of devastating life altering event. PEP changed my life and helped me move forward with a knowledge that doesn't come from out there, but comes from within..



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

PEP—A Part of My Family

By MEDD-X Aumni

When I found out that PEP was on my list of programs in Drug Court, I was not happy. I had thought I was done all my programs, and was going to be graduating soon. I was not looking forward, or excited to start the PEP program. My first night attending I was very nervous and didn't really know what to expect. The format was what scared me most; I didn't want to tell a bunch of strangers about my life in addiction. I figured I would be judged and in turn shame myself for the horrible things I had done. What I didn't know was that PEP would turn into a part of my family; somewhere I could share not only my hope and strength but also my trials and tribulations.

After my first couple of groups I really began to enjoy and look forward to going

to PEP. Not only did the parents become a part of my family, they became one of my biggest support groups. PEP taught me the role I played in my family's lives and the hurt I put them through. The parents have shared with me how inspiring I can be and that I am a sign of hope for a lot of them; that their children may also find a path of recovery.

At PEP I have seen many parents come full circle. From being broken and unable to live their daily lives, being so stuck in the addiction with their children; to living their lives and loving their children from a distance, learning how to take care of themselves again. PEP has been a huge part of my recovery and I will continue to share my experience with the parents and will continue learning from them as well.

Highlights of PEP Talks Opioids Forum on November 20th, 2018 at Heartland Alliance Church



Thank you to our panel guests and MC Ryan Jespersen of 630 CHED



Partners Strathcona Library and Family and Community Services Strathcona County and PEP Together we ARE Stronger!

Thank You to Our Wonderful Supporters!



Cheque presentation to Executive Director, Lerena Greig from County Clothes-line Foundation



Executive Director presenting PEP to Donna Worthington's Ladies Day Out event. Thank you for the large donations made by those who attended and matched by Donna Worthington.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday June 4, 6 pm

Alberta Room, #200, 501 Festival Avenue, Sherwood Park



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.

For more information about upcoming events, call 780.410.8516 or visit www.pepsociety.ca

Sponsorship Spotlight

Style Lounge
Apparel Etc.

In 2012, after retiring from the ATCO group of companies Lynne Taylor- Ryan opened Style Lounge Apparel in Sherwood Park. The retail location sold travel wear – swimwear and Canadian made clothing lines – Sympli, Miik. In the spring 2017 the retail location was closed and Lynne continued on with a mobile store selling the clothing lines thru POP-UP locations, Sympli Spring & Fall Trunk Shows and events. By holding POP-Ups, Style Lounge Apparel and the host retail location share customers creating a Win Win for both businesses. The most popular clothing line is Sympli which is made in Vancouver. Sympli clothing is known for "creating effortless fashion as versatile and authentic as the women who wear it." "Our dedicated approach to fit results in impeccable flattering, and comfortable fashion" Lynne has a heart to give back to her community and makes that commitment monthly..

Please support those who support the families in your community

*Dressed up in Style
for Giving Back*



Displaced to Embraced

by Lerena Greig

On November 6th at the location of PEP's office and home to our PEP meetings, a tragedy occurred which displaced approximately 600 Strathcona County employees along with other host agencies. This was a place that brought our residents' services, safety, health, knowledge and so forth and so forth..... most of all – a place of community and that community was seriously damaged.

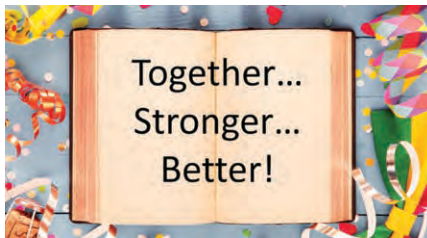
Displaced... and with no immediate answers as to what now, where now, how now??? Tragedy of a young life lost, a family grieving, the trauma for many who live and serve in this community can become testimonies of hope, support, and safety. As Executive Director of PEP, which is supported by this same community, I personally and professionally experienced the safety, connectedness and inclusion... displaced to embraced. Thank you to those who supported re-location services such as

Heartland Alliance, Volunteer Strathcona (previously IVC Strathcona), Sherwood Park Chamber of Commerce, Strathcona County and the many other offers we received for re-location.

As I reflect now on the displacement, the consequences and changes required due to that displacement, I couldn't help but make a comparison to the impact of substance use and addiction (substance and behavioural). How many of those struggling feel displaced and disconnected? It made me think about our families that PEP supports and has helped in the 15 years since our inception. I realize that our services provide a place of safety, connectedness and inclusion... a non-judgemental support that breaks stigma in the area of substance use and addiction (substance and behavioural). I believe that what I experienced in the displacement of PEP's office and our programs on November 6th, 2018 also is a reflection of what PEP, as a grassroots registered charity, offers back to the community... displaced, no... EMBRACED....

Would you consider embracing the families that we serve and supporting PEP .. secure and easy steps..

www.pepsociety.ca and hit the donate now button...



What can you do in our current economy to support your community?



Parents Empowering Parents continues to offer free innovative programs to families in this community and surrounding areas. Last year PEP averaged 30 parents a meeting x 52 weeks = 1560 with support, education and resources = *No Small Feat*.

There are small ways you can help. Would you give up just one specialty coffee a week for one year?

$\$5 \times 4 \text{ weeks} = \$20 \text{ a month} \times 12 \text{ months} = \$240.00 = \text{No Small Feat}$

What about a regular coffee a week?

$\$2.50 \times 4 \text{ weeks} = \$10 \text{ a month} \times 12 \text{ months} = \$120.00 = \text{No Small Feat}$

Thank you for your consideration in regular monthly support.

Go to www.pepsociety.ca donations tab and click on Donate Now button...



Together we are stronger and there is No Small Feat.

Thank You To Our Supporters

With your help, we are working together to empower families in crisis towards health and wellness.



Felix and Pat Kuefler Fund
Roger and Riet Bland Family Fund

Also, thank you to our regular monthly donors.

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

Email _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Gifts by: Cheque VISA Mastercard

Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Amount _____

Security Code _____

Signature _____

Charity Number 8432300270RR0001

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 on Tuesdays from 7pm to 9pm alternating locations each week

New Location

Sherwood Park Millwoods

Alberta Room Sunrise Community Church,
 #200, 501 Festival Ave 3303-37 Street NW
 (FCS) Sherwood Park (upstairs), Edmonton

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| March 12 | March 5 |
| March 26 | March 19 |
| April 9 | April 2 |
| April 23 | April 16 |
| May 7 | April 30 |
| May 21 | 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

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 pepmedd@gmail.com

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



www.pepsociety.ca
pep@strathcona.ca
info@pepsociety.ca

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

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