



PEPtalks

Summer 2018

Parents Empowering Parents

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

The day it all changed...

— a parent's message

As I sat at my kitchen table shaking and crying waiting for the RCMP to arrive I asked myself for the millionth time, what did we do wrong? I had just called the police to report that my son had breached the no contact order we had put in place 24 hours earlier. In a mere 24 hours we had made the hardest decision, we had our son arrested and had a no contact order put in place.

We didn't know it at the time but this would be a key turning point in our journey, a choice I never thought I would have to make but a choice that started us on the road to recovery.

When the RCMP arrived my son the heroin addict had disappeared, the officer searched the yard and the surrounding area but never found him. The officer was empathetic, he took the time to talk to us after his search was completed and gave us a card with a phone number for victim's services. I glanced at the card and thought, this is silly how can we really be victims of our own child? I left the card on the table.

Unbeknownst to me my husband called the next day. The worker gave him some facts on street drug addictions and the staggering low rates of recovery from these addictions along with the long term effects of these drugs. I was terrified and felt so helpless when he shared this information with me. I decided I had to act and proceeded to spend hours searching the internet for solutions, I was determined to "fix" this.

That evening we talked about what I had found and sat in silence with the shock of it all, we were lost and did not know where to turn. It is at this time that

he mentions the worker on the call also suggested that we look into a service called Parents Empowering Parents.

My husband was heading out of town the next morning on a work trip, I was alone with my thoughts and decided I would look up the service my husband mentioned. There was a meeting the next night, I was so afraid and ashamed that it had come to this. How could I possibly go in public and admit that my child's life was a total mess, he was not only a drug addict but now a criminal as well. I made a decision to give it a try, at this point what did I have to lose.

I cried all the way into the city as I went over in my mind all the chaos of the last few weeks. I sat in the car in the parking lot gaining the courage to walk through that door, I finally made my way in and was instantly welcomed with smiling faces. How could these people be smiling and happy? I recall thinking "clearly their loved ones can't be as bad as mine". I was so ashamed that day, I felt like I was a terrible mother.

On top of everything that had gone on in the past few days with our son we also had a daughter addicted to meth. We had two children whose lives were completely out of control, I felt it had to be our fault. How could we possibly have two children that were addicts without it being something that we had done along the way, how do I tell my story without these people thinking we are terrible parents.

I didn't say much that evening, I couldn't get the words out through the tears. What did happen was I listened, I listened to people that had similar stories

and a realization formed that I wasn't alone. I shed many tears that evening but I also for the first time in this crazy journey realized there was a place that I could go where I could share my fears and story without judgment.

I left the meeting and had so much to share with my husband, we weren't alone in this anymore. The first few months saw many tears but each week we shared more and more, we listened and became educated. We set boundaries and worked hard to enforce them. This was not easy, it felt like the opposite of everything we should be doing as parents.

Two years later we live, laugh, hope and this we owe to PEP. It has not been a journey without many setbacks - we trip and fall, then we get up and dust off to fight another day. PEP has helped us discover that we need to be healthy, we deserve to be happy and our children's addictions are not our fault.

Our son is a heroin addict, words I never in a million years thought I would be saying. He has been beaten by dealers, homeless, and has committed crime to feed his addiction. He spent months in jail and has had multiple failed attempts at treatment. Today he is working his recovery and we are cautiously optimistic that he stays on this path.

Our daughter is a meth addict and sadly still actively using. We have learned to separate our daughter that we know and love from the addict that we despise. With the support of our PEP family we continue in our own recovery; we battle against the addiction and hold on dearly to the hope for recovery.

A changed season; a new season

by Lerena Greig

In Alberta, there is a definite awareness of a changed season.

Winter to spring, spring forward into summer, and summer into fall...

All evident changes in weather, growth and slumber of plants, even changes in the clothes we wear.

At our family PEP meetings, we discuss change on a regular basis; some of these include changed thinking, changed words and responses, even a changed direction. We recognize that change begins here, with each one of us. We celebrate and grieve change of seasons together. Through it all, one of PEP's greatest strengths is our commitment to each other and to our families; walking with each other in the changed season and empowering each other towards a new season.

I'm sure many of you have heard, "to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under Heaven"; a changed season, a new season has purpose. PEP was founded over 14 years ago and its mandate and mission are still going strong: to provide education, innovative programming, support and hope for families dealing with a loved ones' substance use or addiction.

Under the direction of our Board of Directors and team at PEP, we are intentional with our sustainability and

our opportunities to grow upon the foundation that PEP's founders built: to empower families towards health and hope in ALL seasons.

On June 5th, PEP's AGM will bring forth change in our team; Directors staying or stepping down and new Directors stepping up, all committed and passionate about our mission and our families; a changed season... a new season...

As Executive Director of PEP and part of the team, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our 2018-2019 Board of Directors and say thank you for your commitment to empower families in changed seasons, in ALL seasons; being intentional with PEP's foundation and growth.

Together we ARE stronger! Together, we will bring forth a new season with purpose!

If you would like to be a part of a new season for PEP, would you consider planting a seed of growth by supporting a family in your community?

It's as easy as visiting www.pepsociety.ca and hit the DONATE now button... with your help, we can empower more families to find hope in every season.

Lerena Greig
Executive Director

MEDD-X Alumni (Graduate)



His Story!

Hello my name is Mohamed. I started attending PEP through Edmonton Drug Court in November 2017. I am 20 months clean and in recovery from addiction to prescription drugs.

Starting PEP was a major eye opener; to see parents, friends, family come looking for support to deal with their loved ones addiction. I, Mohamed who lived a former life in addiction, having to sit and answer questions of where I was in life, my thoughts on addiction and what I would have done for the next fix... The answers to these difficult questions helped the parents understand the addict (that was me).

Meeting these parents, hearing their stories and me telling my story, filled me with emotional pain. I realized what I put my family, friends and loved ones through. Recently, through PEP's partnerships with the local schools, I had an opportunity to tell my story to all 3 grades of the junior high and the teachers with my wife at my side. This was an amazing accomplishment and experience.

Without speaking weekly to the PEP family at the meetings, I would never have had the confidence to talk about change and choices to the next generation. I am thankful to PEP for the opportunity to meet such amazing people - through PEP.

Sponsorship Spotlight

Connecting others to charity -
from the heart!



Dorothy Briggs, owner of Womanition connects from the heart. She has built two reputable magazines and is the recipient of various awards in the field of publishing. She has supported PEP as a charity for many years in various ways, including donating a full page article in her magazine, having our Executive Director speak at a Womanition luncheon on charity and connecting others to PEP and our innovative program for families. More than a business owner, Dorothy is a connector. From the Heart!



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

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

What about a regular coffee a week?
 $\$2.50 \times 4 \text{ weeks} = \$10 \text{ a month} \times 12 \text{ months} = \$120.00 = \textit{No Small Feat}$

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*.

DONATE NOW

Investment into PEP's MEDD-X program (3 years)

Our new Funded Partner...United Way Alberta Capital Region – Regional Partnership Strathcona County



Tammy Greidanus, Community Investment Specialist with United Way presents cheque to Larena Greig, Executive Director of PEP.

Acknowledgement of MEDD-X Alumni

The Story continues to provide hope in recovery!
Congratulations Gregory Bearegard!



One of our MEDD-X Alumni, Gregory Bearegard, 3rd from the left, receives recognition on winning the BossDesignLtd Scholarship for his high achievement in Residential Construction and Design Course at NAIT.

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

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: \$ _____

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

Sherwood Park
 Strathcona County
 Community Centre
 2001 Sherwood Drive,
 Sherwood Park

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

June 5 AGM 6 pm,
 PEP meeting to follow

June 19

July 3

July 17

July 31

August 14

August 28

June 12

June 26

July 10

July 24

August 7

August 21

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

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



**PARENTS
 EMPOWERING
 PARENTS**

www.pepsociety.ca
pep@strathcona.ca
 New Email for 2018
info@pepsociety.ca

support line: 780-293-0737
 tel: 780-410-8516
 fax: 780-449-1220

2001 Sherwood Drive
 Sherwood Park,
 AB T8A 3W7