



15 YEARS

PEPtalks

Winter 2019

Parents Empowering Parents

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

Addiction Lives here

— a parent's message

Being the parent of an addict is something nobody expects. We weren't newbies to parenting, with almost 10 years between our older kids and the youngest. At first we just put the behaviour down to the turbulent teens. Son, 17 at the time, was a gifted athlete. He played on provincial and regional teams for one sport, had scouts across Canada begging him to sign for another. Still another coach felt Son could 'shatter' age appropriate provincial records under his tutelage. The future looked bright. A family decision was made to move to Edmonton where Son could train and advance in his chosen sports, and we would be near extended family.

Son's behavior began to change during the last semester of grade 12. He seemed moody, was isolating and no longer his happy, spirited self. At first we equated it to teenage hormones, the stress of moving and leaving the town he grew up in, fear of the unknown. His mood seemed justifiable - until we caught him with a bag of weed; until he started hanging out with different 'friends'; until his personality turned dark. We struggled

to believe Son was telling us the truth (he never lied to us before). Setting boundaries or grounding only made him angrier. His behaviour got worse - he was rude, started swearing, skipping classes, and didn't want to be anywhere near us. We tried talking to friends, parents, teachers and school staff to no avail. Nobody knew anything. We couldn't wait to move, hoping this horrible 'phase' would pass once he was around like-minded athletes.

Summer 2016 - The move to St. Albert saw Son's behaviour escalate - he lied about pretty much everything - going to practise, getting lost (new city), needing money for food, gas, or hanging with new friends from the team. His lies were creative, and really quite believable. By the end of September he quit the football team, quit his job, moved to a different city and lost his car. We brought him home when he was evicted from his apartment (no job or money). We hoped he was going to get back on track. Wrong. He blamed depression and said he needed weed to make him feel better.

By the end of October he was gone again, our rules were too strict and everything our fault. He moved in with another 'new' friend. Kicked out within a month, we took him in as the state of his mental health was concerning. (I took him to appointments with the doctor, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and finally family counselling). Now 18, my son was sick and I needed to fix him.

Things got progressively worse - Son slept all day, went out after 10:00 p.m., couldn't hold down jobs, had questionable

friends, hated us and wished we were dead. It was still all our fault - a monster was living in our basement. At this point we knew more than weed was involved, but didn't know what. We were scared in our home. Not knowing what could set the monster off we tried avoiding him. We couldn't sleep, hid our keys, wallets, medications. We hid our life from the world. Life was exhausting.

On occasion I saw my real son through the demon of addiction. I could see his struggle and anguish, he wanted to escape.

2017 - Anger was turning to violence and the RCMP were called. I don't remember how many times they escorted him off our property. Once the locks were changed we had some peace, but also a new set of fears - he was using crystal meth (and anything else he and his 'buddies' could get their hands on). During this time Son kept trying to stop using. On occasion I saw my real son through the demon of addiction. I could see his struggle and anguish, he wanted to escape. It was torture to watch the suffering. I've never felt so helpless, so torn apart. My husband was

continued on page 2



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

Addiction Lives Here... *continued from page 1*

barely holding it together. He went for counselling; I went on sick leave.

Spring 2018 - We told Son that we loved him and would support him if he ever wanted to go for treatment. He couch surfed, job surfed, had lost over 75 lbs in weight. A former coach reached out and took Son in, gave him a room and a spot on the team. The coach genuinely wanted to help as he remembered who Son used to be. Within the month he was back sleeping in apartment lobbies, clothes in a garbage bag, homeless. He had nothing. Simply heart wrenching.

Finally Son told us he needed help. We had him on a plane and into treatment within 2 days. 56 days post treatment, he moved into a recovery house in Victoria for a year. Now at 16 months Son is back

living with his girlfriend. He's struggling, relapse is evident.

During our story, did you notice there was no mention of PEP? We went to a few meetings back in 2016 and heard similar stories of addiction. We didn't go back as we were looking for a way to save our son, after all, he was the priority. It never crossed our minds that we too needed saving. Had we continued with PEP or called the support line we would have found strength and wisdom from those who survived similar trauma. Now we attend meetings to gain insight, share our story, offer hope and sometimes just to let off steam. It's important that others know they don't need to walk the journey alone. There is strength in numbers, there is strength in PEP.

MEDD-X Alumni

I did 80 hours of PEP/MEDD-X program. In that time, I met some pretty scared and terrified parents. I am a part of drug court program for x drug dealers and I am turning my life around; using my knowledge and tools to help people understand that drug dealing is not a game and by putting this poison on the street people get hurt or die every day.

Through my time at PEP, I came to realize that parents and family members of the addict suffer too and that their children use the drugs that I had put on the streets; the drugs that wreck so many families.

Thank you Parents Empowering Parents. Change begins with me

Year End – Give & Save....



Taxman giveth and taketh.. but YOU can take back!

Support Hope this year with a taxable donation.

Go to www.pepsociety.ca, click on the [donation tab](#) - [DONATE Now button](#)

Secure web-site

Sponsorship Spotlight

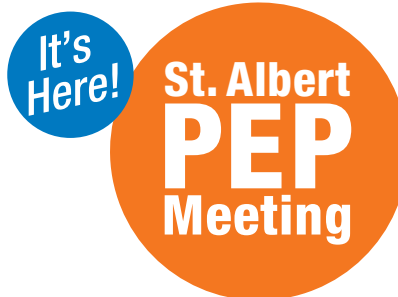


St. Albert supports St. Albert PEP Chapter

Thank you to the local support of our new chapter in St. Albert.

Giving back to the community and empowering families to wellness.

New Chapter Drop-in, no registration required



Bi-Weekly Thursdays 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm St. Albert Food Bank and Community Village

#20, 50 Bellerose Drive, St. Albert
For more information contact
780.410.8516 info@pepsociety.ca
www.pepsociety.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

PEP's Christmas Dessert Potluck

**Tuesday
December 10th**

6:00 pm,
Bring your favorite sweets
and join us for fellowship

Sunrise Community Church
2nd floor 3303 - 37 Street
Edmonton

PEP meeting to follow

Not in My Family PEP Talks METH Thursday March 5, 2020

Drug Education Forum
with MC Ryan Jespersen

Doors open at 6 pm - 8:30 pm
Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church
51 Woodlands Road St. Albert

On behalf of the PEP Board of Directors and our team

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From our family to yours!

Not a Drive-Thru Experience... It's a Journey

by Lereña Greig

When you reflect on life's journey, there are ups and downs based on variable factors such as genetics, environmental, psycho-social, relational and spiritual. Each day we make choices and decisions that may be ingrained in our past, focused on our present, or hopeful for our future.

It's a similar story with addiction and recovery; it is a lifetime journey. Struggling with a drug or alcohol addiction is one of the hardest and most complicated issues to understand and conquer and each person's journey to that addiction is their own as is their journey to recovery.

Just as the loved one with the addiction has their journey, so does the family.

Our PEP families experience the pain and loss created by addiction and become entangled in the chaos and crisis. This is a family illness and it stresses the family to the breaking point, impacting the stability of the home, the family's unity, mental health, physical health, finances and overall dynamics. PEP empowers families and caregivers to step into recovery and move towards a wellness in the midst of the crisis. It is a journey of knowledge, support and hope...it is a journey of healing amidst the brokenness of their dreams and visions for their child.

It is not a drive-thru experience, it's a journey.

LERENA GREIG
Executive Director



Participation in Robin Hood Foundation Staff Wellness Event



Executive Director Lereña Greig was at the Recovery Capital Conference in Calgary when the announcement was made by Premier Kenney of 4000 additional beds for treatment, investing in mental health and addictions.

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

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

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

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| December 3 | December 10 | December 12 |
| December 17 | December 24 | December 26  |
| December 31 | CANCELLED | January 9 |
| CANCELLED | January 7 | January 23 |
| January 14 | January 21 | February 6 |
| January 28 | February 4 | February 20 |
| February 11 | February 18 | |

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 peppeddx@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
 tel: 780-410-8516
 fax: 780-449-1220

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 Sherwood Park,
 AB T8A 3W7