

THE MEPECER



MEPEC's Spring Fever

By Karoll-Ann Carrier

Spring fever is a popular term used to describe the feeling of restlessness, impulsiveness and excitement people feel at the onset of spring. But spring fever is real, and it can manifest itself in different ways. Starting in mid-March, the days grow longer, the sun is more present and this gives us energy to take action and make changes. Although we can't see it yet, the sun's energy is already hard at work in nature preparing the spring growth.

Here at MEPEC, we're not immune to spring fever! March is the ideal time to start planning our new projects and activities. MEPEC team is hard at work, for several months now, creating and organizing a place that the English-speaking community can call its own. MEPEC will soon open its Community Space, a space where we can hold activities in-house and where the community can come together.

MEPEC's Community Space will be located on the ground floor, in the same building of the Library and MEPEC's office. There, we will have room to offer more services and hold information sessions for our community. We still have a lot of work to do to get it ready, but we look forward to being able to welcome you into our new space. Keep your eyes on our social media accounts for developments.

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Did You Know...?

VITAMIN D

By Melissa Hynes

By now we're used to the seemingly endless, cold, dark days of Canadian winters, but with multiple restrictions and weather factors in the mix it feels like we are inside now more than ever and this can impact our intake of a crucial nutrient: vitamin D.

What is vitamin D, and why do we need it?

Vitamin D is the only nutrient your body produces when exposed to sunlight, so a lack of sunlight can contribute to vitamin D deficiency and, subsequently, may lead to various problems like irregular sleep cycles, low energy, and depression. Often called the "sunshine vitamin", vitamin D can help combat seasonal affective disorder (SAD), boost immune system function, and increase concentration.



If all this leaves you asking "but how do I increase my vitamin D levels?," this fat-soluble vitamin can be found in many of your favourite foods for . Here are some delicious sources of vitamin D to consider.

- **Oily Fish**, such as wild-caught salmon, tuna, sardines, and mackerel.
- **Cod Liver Oil**
- **Mushrooms**
- **Sunflower Sprouts**
- **Vitamin D-fortified Orange Juice**
- **Spinach**
- **Oysters**
- **Cheese** (Different types of cheeses contain varying amounts of vitamin D)

IT IS NATIONAL TICK AWARENESS MONTH

By Melissa Hynes



Tick Bite Prevention Week takes place in March each year. Did you know that ticks are small bloodsucking parasites that can carry a whole host of dangerous diseases that can be transmitted to pets and humans, such as Lyme Disease. If not treated in time, it can lead to serious consequences, such as heart problems, arthritis, or nerve damage. The tell-tale sign is a bullseye-shaped rash. Symptoms of Lyme disease, which generally appear between three and 30 days after a bite from an infected tick, include fever, chills, fatigue, and muscle pain.

Ticks are active and looking for something to feed on (you and your pet) as soon as the temperature hits 4 °C . Ticks can be tiny (too small to see), and can look like a skin lump on your pet's body. They live in wooded areas, tall grass, bushes, or leaves.

Prevention is the best way to protect your pets and yourself against tick-borne diseases. To know more [click here](#).

A tick bite is not painful. You may have been bitten without even knowing it! Since the risk of developing Lyme disease increases once a tick has been attached for more than 24 hours, you must remove it as quickly as possible. Here are some recommendations:

- Carefully examine your entire body, your children's bodies and your pets
- Change your clothes and wash or put them in the dryer or in the sun
- Even if you didn't find a tick, watch for redness, fever or other unusual symptoms in the month following the at-risk
- Consult a doctor if you develop any symptoms



MEPEC's Activities and Services



STAR PROGRAM - NEW

Do you know an employee or a volunteer at a community or public organisation who stands out for having made a special effort to improve the health and well-being of Montréal's English-speaking community members?

We invite you to nominate this person for the Special Thanks and Recognition Program (Star Program)! The Star Program is a program that highlights individuals who demonstrate support for the Montréal English-speaking community.

Selected candidates will receive a certificate of congratulations and a gift card as a token of appreciation, and they will be featured in the newsletters and Facebook pages of various health organizations across the Montréal. To submit a nomination before March 15th, [click here](#).



LAUGHTER WELLNESS

Join us on March 22nd at 12 pm for Laughter Wellness. This 90-minute online workshop is suitable for most and no sense of humor is required!

We will laugh together, on purpose, and tap into our childlike playfulness. We will also learn about the many benefits of laughter from Aileen Borruel, certified laughter yoga coach and owner of Joyful Connections.

To register, [click here](#).



BOOK CLUB

If you are looking for an activity to keep you warm and entertained during this chilly season, why not join us for an enriching exchange of perspectives?

MEPEC'S Book Club is currently reading "[The Madness of the Crowds](#)" by Louise Penny and will be meeting on March 23rd from 7 pm-8:30 pm. The next book on the list for the month of April is "[Save Me the Plums: My Gourmet Memoir](#)" by Ruth Reichl.

If you would like to register to join the Book Club, please [click here](#).



INTERGENERATIONAL PEN PALS

MEPEC helping to facilitate meaningful exchanges between school-aged children and seniors of our region to encourage literacy and social connections.

MEPEC still needs a few more senior participants. If you are interested, please [contact us](#).





TRIVIA NIGHT

Every third Tuesday of the month, MEPEC hosts an online Trivia Night. We invite you to put your thinking caps on and join us to test your knowledge. Team up with your family, in the comfort of your home, and answer a series of questions. The next Trivia Night will be held on March 15th at 7 pm.

To register [click here](#).

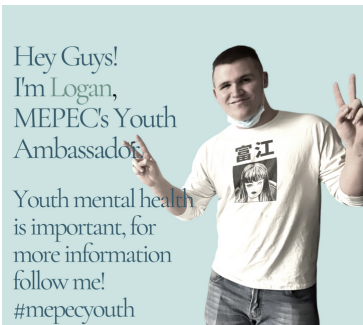


SENIORS SNEAKERS

The Seniors Sneakers Program is for people 55 or older that want to keep active during the winter. The program started on February 21st until April 25th, from 10:30 to 11:30 at the Legion in Otterburn Park, but **we still have some places available**.

Registration fee is \$10,00 for MEPEC or Legion members and \$100,00 for non-members.

To register, [click here](#).



YOUTH AMBASSADOR

Hey! I'm Logan and I'm from Beloeil! I am an English-speaking Champlain College student in the Media and Communications Program. I'll be reaching out to Youth ages 15 to 21, and addressing topics on everything from mental health to diversity and everything in between. I will be letting you know what Social Services are available to help the Youth in our community.

Follow me on my Ambassador journey via [Tik Tok](#) and [Instagram](#)! #mepecyouth



MCGILL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BURSARY PROGRAM

With funding from [McGill University](#), MEPEC offers the Health and Social Services Community Leadership Bursary Program.

The bursary provides a financial incentive for students from the Montréal East region pursuing full-time studies in health and social services at a Quebec government-recognized educational institution to return to (or stay in) their region to work and serve their communities after completing their studies.

For more information and to apply, [contact us](#).



Senior's Wellness Centre

Self-Awareness Part 2

By Danica Logan

Last month's article focused on resilience and 7 elements to building resiliency. Over the next few months, we will dive a little deeper into each of these elements and provide tips to help you build your resilience.

Before we get started with that, there is one important thing to consider: self-awareness.

There are several definitions of self-awareness, but for our purposes think of it as the conscious knowledge of your own character, feelings, motives, and desires. You may be thinking, "why is this important?".

Being self-aware has many benefits:

- As you become more aware of your beliefs, you gain the ability to question and evaluate if they are reflective of who you truly are or desire to be.
- It increases your ability to control and adapt your behaviours in shifting conditions.
- It gives you the ability to better understand your own needs and limitations so that you can better address them.
- It can help you to cope with life's challenges.
- It helps to develop empathy or the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. This is important to having fulfilling relationships.
- It can lead to better decision making and perceiving greater meaning in life.

If you would like to grow in self-awareness you could try to purposely set aside a little time each day to reflect on getting to know yourself better. You can use the elements from the exercises above to ask yourself questions about your strengths, weaknesses, values, and core beliefs.

Self-awareness is an integral component in each of the 7 elements to building resiliency. Now that you have seen some of the benefits you should also be aware that there are some barriers to self-awareness:

- Being unwilling to hear feedback
- Confirmation bias, which simply put is selectively finding evidence that our beliefs are true.
- The stories we tell ourselves about past experiences will have an influence on our future actions.
- The real or perceived expectations of others may also impede our ability to home in on our own feelings, motives, and desires.
- Some internal factors include feeling lost, negative self-judgment, a lack of motivation, avoidance, and prioritizing.
- Some external factors include time, work, ability to meet basic needs, and a sense of powerlessness.

Here are a few exercises that you can do to get an idea of how well you know yourself: [Character Strengths Inventory](#), [Core Beliefs and Values List](#).

The 7 C's of Resiliency

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from adversity and adapting well to change.

- **Competence:** Knowing you can handle a situation by recognizing your strengths
- **Confidence:** Believing in your abilities (derived from competence)
- **Connection:** Developing close ties to family and community creates a solid sense of security
- **Character:** A composite of traits that demonstrates a caring attitude toward others and self. Behaviour guided by morals and values
- **Contribution:** Understanding the value of personal contribution can serve as a source of purpose and motivation
- **Coping:** Learning how to cope with stress in healthy ways
- **Control:** Understanding what is within one's control and what is not.

Sources:

Senior Action Quebec, [Resilience Training](#) 2019-2021.
CBT Professionals, [The 7 C's of resilience](#), 12/14/2013.

International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology, [What's Stopping Us from Connecting with Ourselves? A Qualitative Examination of Barriers to Self-Connection](#), October 2020



Family and Youth Corner

Getting Involved in Your Community Makes a Difference!

By Kareen Massé



When you get involved in your community, it encourages you to identify your interests and activities where you can make positive change. You give back to your community, and there is no better reward than the feeling of doing something that makes an impact on another person's life.

Opportunities for leadership are necessary to develop young people and prepares them to be contributing adults in their community. As schools and other social institutions consider how to integrate youth into the process of community development. Your opinions matter and your community wants to hear what is important to you and what you stand for.

Young people have a unique potential, energy, enthusiasm, optimism, and creativity to collaboratively seek solutions to new ideas and challenges.

Being involved in community organizations provides an important sense of validation and empowerment regarding your own life and your community surroundings.

Involved youth can help organizations become more aware of issues that concern younger populations, which can increase the organizations impact. Your voice and your ideas are important!

At MEPEC, we are always welcoming youth who want to get involved and give back to the community. Here are some opportunities to kickstart your community involvement:

- Host creative youth activity
- Get involved in our Community Space
- Become a Board member and represent the youth
- Help Seniors with technology (email, iPad, Facebook)
- Help MEPEC in hosting events and activities

To know more about community involvement at MEPEC, contact us by [email](#) or phone at 450-281-3732.



MEPEC's Community Library

Canada's Own Margaret Atwood

By Melissa Hynes

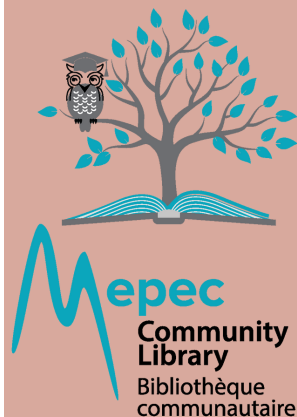
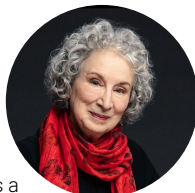
In honour of International Women's Day on March 8, we are highlighting one of Canada's most prolific and respected female authors: Margaret Atwood and her novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Margaret Eleanor Atwood (born November 18, 1939) is a Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist, teacher, environmental activist, and inventor. Atwood has won numerous awards and honors for her writing, including two Booker Prizes, the Arthur C. Clarke Award, the Governor General's Award, the Franz Kafka Prize, and the National Book Critics and PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Atwood's works encompass a variety of themes including gender and identity, religion and myth, the power of language, climate change, and "power politics". Atwood is a founder of the Griffin Poetry Prize and the Writers' Trust of Canada.

The Handmaid's Tale is a futuristic dystopian novel published in 1985. The narrator, known only as Offred, tells of her life in a strongly patriarchal, totalitarian theonomic state in the Republic of Gilead, in what used to be the United States, sometime in the near future. She is a handmaid, kept to breed with the Commander and provide an heir at a time when the human birthrate is dangerously low.

Details matter to Margaret Atwood, and Offred's tale is related with precision and deep compassion. *The Handmaid's Tale* is one of the most acclaimed dystopian novels of the 20th century. An uncompromising portrait of a totalitarianism and institutional misogyny, it critiques fundamentalism in all its forms.



**THE LIBRARY HAS
REOPENED!**

OPENING HOURS

TUESDAY

1:30 PM TO 3:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

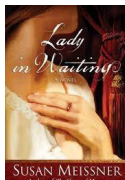
1:30 PM TO 3:30 PM

THURSDAY

1:30 PM TO 3:30 PM



New Arrivals at the Library



Lady in Waiting by Susan Meissner

Content in her marriage, Jane never expected to watch her husband pack his belongings and walk out of their home. Following this event, Jane finds an old ring and discovers a Latin inscription with a recognizable word: Jane. She begins a journey to learn more about the ring and herself.



The Kitchen Front by Jennifer Ryan

In a new World War II-set story, four women compete for a spot hosting a wartime cookery program called The Kitchen Front - based on the actual BBC program of the same name - as well as a chance to better their lives.



Partners' Activities and Services



YOUTH FORUM 2022 BY Y4Y

On March 19th, Y4Y will hold its 5th Annual Forum engaging English-speaking youth across the province in activities and conversations about issues that have been identified over the past year.

Gift-cards or vouchers (Chapters, Indigo or UberEats) will be given to ALL youth participants who attend the whole event.

To register, [click here](#).



HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS BY SOUTH SHORE LITERACY COUNCIL

On March 14th, at 6:45 pm, join the South Shore Literacy Council in their Elementary School Homework Workshop for Parents.

Tips and tricks for making elementary school homework-time happier from a mom and educator in the trenches.

To register, [click here](#).



ST. PATRICK'S DAY BY THE LEGION

Come celebrate St. Patrick's Day at the Otterburn Park Legion on March 11th, from 5 pm to midnight. It's \$25 per person including dinner and music, featuring The Salty Dog Band.

There will be also a raffle tickets are \$5 each. The winner will be announced on March 9th.

Get your tickets soon as there is limited quantities are limited! Contact Laura, by [clicking here](#).



BINGO AT THE OTTERBURN PARK LEGION

On Friday March 25th, from 7 to 10 pm, the Otterburn Park Legion will hold a Bingo Night. There will be great prizes to win and lots of fun for all!

For more information, contact the Legion by email: rc1121pr@gmail.com or call 450 467-0881.





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BY MWCN

Join MWCN on March 8th at 1 pm for a very special event celebrating Women Empowering Women. Many speakers and some special guests Singers will take part in this online event. Exciting prizes and surprises will be given away.

To register, [click here](#).

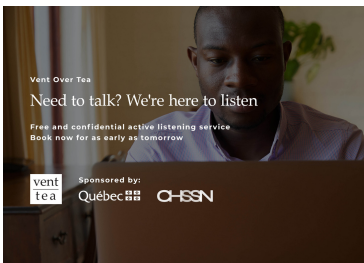


ACCEPTANCE AND LETTING GO BY AMI QUÉBEC

On March 24th, from 6 to 8 pm, join this free online workshop about loss, grieving, acceptance and healing.

Loss is an inevitable and painful part of life. In the relationship between a family and their loved one with mental illness, experiencing loss can be complicated. In this workshop, we will identify and name losses, situate participants within their own grieving processes, and learn about acceptance which leads to healing opportunities.

To register, [click here](#).



VENT FROM HOME BY VENT OVER TEA

Need to get something off your chest? Vent Over Tea is there to help you! Vent Over Tea is a free active listening service that provides you with undivided attention without any judgment or reaction. They are there simply to listen to you.

To book a free Vent From Home skype session with one of their trained active listeners today, by [click here](#).



PREPARATION FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP BY MAISON INTERNATIONALE DE LA RIVE-SUD

The Maison Internationale de la Rive-Sud is organizing a Canadian citizenship preparation workshop on Friday, March 4th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, in person.

You will learn everything you need to know about the Canadian citizenship process and how to complete your application. Please note that the workshop will be given in French.

To register, [click here](#) or call at 450 445-8777.



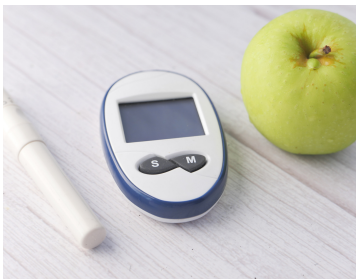


ONLINE WEBINAR BY SENIORS ACTION QUEBEC

Identifying elder abuse - What are your rights if you suspect you are a victim of elder abuse? Is mediation an option?

On March 16th, from 10 am to 12 pm, participate in the discussion on the different types of senior abuse and how to prevent it, and get information on legal recourses.

To register [click here](#). Please include in your email your name and contact information.



DIABETES 101 - EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW BY ECO-02

On March 16th, from 10 to 11:30 am, attend the online conference and learn about the basics of diabetes, with key-speaker Jennifer Hobbs-Robert, Senior Advisor, JHCP.

More specifically, you will learn how common it is, what is the difference between Types 1 and 2, how do you become diabetic, the symptoms, prevention and treatment options and the red flags.

To register [click here](#).



"SHARE AND SHINE WITH ARTHRITIS" BY ARTHRITIS SOUTH SHORE

On March 25th, from 1:30 to 3 pm, attend an online informal gathering entitled "Share and Shine with Arthritis: Living with Arthritis, Proactivity and Mental Health".

To register, [click here](#)



ADAPTED FITNESS EXERCISES BY ARTHRITIS SOUTH SHORE

Every Monday from 10 to 11 am, participate in the free in-person or online Adapted Fitness Exercises organized by Arthritis South Shore. Take note that the teacher only speaks French, but the exercises are easy to follow

To register or for more information, [click here](#).





Monteregie East Partnership for the English-Speaking Community

Partenariat de l'est de la Montérégie pour
la communauté d'expression anglaise

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