

MEPEC Monthly News



MEPEC Staff Retreat: Reflecting, Strategizing, and Strengthening Our Mission

The MEPEC team recently gathered in Eastman for a rejuvenating staff retreat focused on reflection, collaboration, and strategic planning. Over the course of the retreat, we revisited our core values and set clear priorities for the year ahead, all with the goal of enhancing how we serve and support our community.

This time together allowed us to align our vision, strengthen our teamwork, and reaffirm our commitment to making a meaningful impact in our community.



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Health and Social Services

FINDING A FAMILY DOCTOR IN QUEBEC

Looking for a family doctor in Quebec can feel overwhelming, but there are resources available to help make the process easier. Whether you're new to the province or have recently lost your family physician, here's what you need to know:

REGISTER WITH THE WAITING LIST (GAMF)

Sign up for the provincial Family Doctor Finder known as GAMF (Guichet d'accès à un médecin de famille). This is a centralized system managed by RAMQ.

You can register online [here!](#)



USE THE QUÉBEC HEALTH BOOKLET (CARNET SANTÉ QUÉBEC)

After registering for a family doctor, create an account on [Carnet santé Québec](#), where you can:

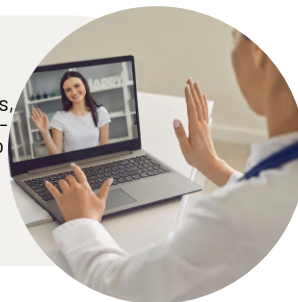
- Track your request status
- View test results and prescriptions
- Access health records and appointments



CHECK LOCAL CLINICS

While you wait, you can receive care from walk-in clinics, GMF clinics (Groupes de médecine de famille), or super-clinics (super-cliniques) in your area. Many allow you to book appointments online the same day or 24 hours in advance.

Use [Clic Santé](#) to find local services and book visits.



Helpful Tip: Be Persistent

Availability can vary depending on your region, so it's helpful to check in with local clinics or re-confirm your GAMF registration from time to time.

MEPEC's Summer Activities

As summer approaches, MEPEC will be shifting to a reduced schedule for July and August. While many of our regular programs will pause for the season, we'll still be offering select services and activities throughout the summer months.



YOUNG VOICES OF QUEBEC PODCAST

Brought to you by MEPEC & sponsored by CHSSN, the Young Voices of Quebec Podcast is a space for English-speaking youth across the province to speak up, share their stories, and explore the issues that matter most to them.

From mental health to identity, education to employment, we're amplifying real voices and real experiences—one episode at a time.

Listen [HERE](#)



ECO KIDS

In summer, join our Eco-Kids planned outings! Take a break from your routine and build connections with other families while exploring local parks.

Beginning July 8th - September 9th.

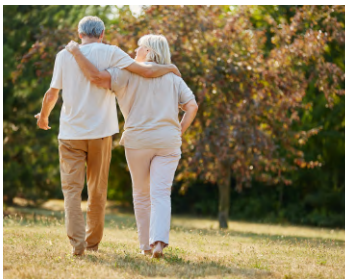
Register [HERE](#).



COMMUNITY GARDEN

The MEPEC Community Garden is a friendly green space where people grow fresh produce, connect with nature, and build friendships. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a beginner, volunteers are always welcome to help our garden grow.

To Volunteer, Register [HERE!](#)



SENIOR WALKING GROUP!

Every week the Senior's Walking Group walk in different locations throughout the Vallée-du-Richelieu area. The group meets at a set meeting point and walk for about an hour. This activity is free and open to every one.

Begins every Tuesday, July 1st, 10:00-11:00am

Register [HERE!](#)

MEPEC's Information Hub

NEW

INTRODUCING OUR NEW REGISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM: AMILIA

We're excited to share an important update with our community!

Starting this summer, MEPEC will be using Amilia for all program registrations and memberships. This new platform will make it easier than ever to sign up for activities, manage your account, memberships and stay connected with MEPEC.

Why Amilia?

Amilia is a secure, user-friendly online system that allows you to:

- Register for programs and events at your convenience
- Manage your family's profiles in one place
- Renew memberships quickly and easily
- Receive instant confirmations and reminders

What You Need to Do:

As of **July 23rd**, Visit www.mepec-pemca.org to:

1. Create your Amilia account
2. Register for a MEPEC membership*
3. Manage your membership details

Registration for fall activities opens on Monday, August 18th. You will only be able to register for MEPEC activities on or after this date.

***As part of this transition, all current members will need to resubscribe to their memberships through Amilia. This will ensure your information is up to date and you don't miss out on any upcoming programs, events, or communications.**

Our staff will be offering FREE workshops in our community space to members to assist you with the transition. **[Register Here!](#)**

Workshop 1 - Wednesday, July 23rd, 11:30 - 12:30pm

MEPEC SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

As part of our summer schedule, MEPEC will be implementing remote work on Fridays during the months of July and August.

While our physical offices will be closed on Fridays, our team will remain fully operational and available online during regular business hours.

From Monday to Thursday, our office hours remain the same, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM, with staff available both in person and online.



Family & Early Childhood

SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT EVERY STAGE: MEPEC'S COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

At MEPEC, we believe that every student deserves the right support at the right time—from their very first day in school to the pivotal moments of growing independence. Through dynamic partnerships and community collaboration, we've had the privilege of launching several meaningful initiatives to help students in the Montérégie Est region start strong, feel supported, and thrive.

Inclusive Tools for Every Learner

In partnership with the Riverside School Board, we recently provided special needs support materials to all Riverside elementary schools and their Special Education Technicians. These tailored resources help students with diverse learning needs navigate daily routines, stay focused, and engage with learning in ways that suit them best.

This initiative is grounded in a shared belief: inclusive education benefits everyone. We're grateful for our continued collaboration with educators who are committed to building supportive, accessible environments for all learners.

A Confident Start to Kindergarten

Starting school is a big milestone, and we want every child to begin this journey feeling prepared and excited. That's why we joined forces with ARC, MWCN, and the Riverside School Board to deliver Transition Bags to young children entering Kindergarten (K4 and K5).

These thoughtfully assembled bags are filled with comforting resources and engaging tools to ease the move from home or daycare into the classroom. It's one more way we're helping families and educators give little learners a joyful, confident start to school life.

Supporting the Leap to High School

The move from elementary to high school can be both exciting and overwhelming. To help students in Grade 6 manage this major transition, we partnered with Heritage High School to provide Transition Bags filled with resources to support mental health, organization, and emotional resilience.

Our goal is to ease anxiety and build confidence—so students step into their next chapter ready to succeed, both academically and personally.

Community Collaboration in Action

These three initiatives reflect MEPEC's broader mission: to build bridges between families, schools, and community partners—ensuring that students are supported at every stage of their educational journey. Whether it's the first day of Kindergarten or the first steps into high school, we're proud to play a part in helping every student feel seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Together, we are making a lasting impact—one student, one classroom, one community at a time.



Family & Early Childhood

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SUMMER BERRY PICKING

Written By [Maranatha W](#)



With baby number four on the way, and the days getting longer and warmer, our family thought it would be a good idea to get berry bushes and plant them around the house. While worth the joy of little fingers plucking them off their branches and delighting in the sweet juice dripping off their chins, time for plant maintenance has been sparse and left us looking towards berry farms to have a few more than two berries each. Thankfully, our region is not lacking...

Quebec, with its lush landscapes and abundant farmlands, transforms into a berry lover's paradise during the summer months. From plump strawberries to juicy blueberries and tart raspberries, farms across the province offer a memorable experience for families, foodies, and nature enthusiasts alike!



A Calendar of Sweetness

Our berry picking season typically begins in late June and extends into October, with different berries ripening at various times.

Strawberries: The queens of early summer, strawberries usually make their appearance from late June to mid-July.

Raspberries: Summer raspberries follow closely, from early July to mid-August. Fall raspberries then take over from mid-August to October, offering a prolonged picking season.

Blueberries: Known for their ease of picking (often on bushes that don't require much bending!), blueberries are ripe from mid-July to late August.

Blackcurrants & Sour Cherries: These often have a shorter season, generally from early to mid-July.

Depending on the farm and region, you might also find gooseberries, chokeberries, and even cranberries later in the season.

Berry Beneficial

Not only is berry picking a wonderful and engaging activity, but [berries are nutritional powerhouses](#), packed with a wide array of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and beneficial plant compounds. While the exact amounts can vary slightly between different types of berries, they contain high amounts of antioxidants, fibers, vitamins and minerals. Only one cup of strawberries is needed for [100% of your daily Vitamin C](#) dose!

Tips for a Successful Berry Picking

Before heading out the door to your local berry patch, keep some of these tips in mind:

Dress Appropriately: Wear comfortable clothes that you don't mind getting a little dirty. Long sleeves and pants can protect you from sun and insects.

Go Early: Arriving in the morning often means cooler temperatures and a wider selection of ripe berries.

Stay Hydrated: Bring plenty of water, especially on warm days.

Supervise Children: Berry picking is a fantastic family activity, but keep an eye on little ones to ensure they're picking safely and not eating unripe berries.

Most of all...have fun! Berry picking in Quebec is more than just an errand; it's an immersive experience that connects you with nature, supports local agriculture, and provides you with the powerhouse nutrients to fuel your day. So, grab your baskets, gather your loved ones, and embark on your own sweet summer adventure!



Maranatha Weeks is a Mom, Nurse and Writer living in Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Quebec. Graduating from John Abbott College in 2013, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in 2014, and Aspen University in 2016, she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a Diploma in Tropical Nursing. Maranatha has spent her career pursuing overseas missions, aiding the aftermath of disasters in Ecuador, Haiti, and Bangladesh, and during the 2017 war for Mosul, Iraq. In 2018, she wrote her first novel, "On the Plains of Nineveh: A Nurse on the Front Lines of Mosul," following her experience nursing in Iraq. Married and with five children, she currently resides closer to home as a full-time Mama and part-time Nurse Writer.

Youth & Education

BRIDGING GENERATIONS: FINDING MEANINGFUL FAMILY MOMENTS THIS SUMMER

As summer begins, many families look forward to a slower pace, warmer weather, and more opportunities to spend time together. Yet, for some, especially parents of teenagers, creating those meaningful family moments can feel more difficult than expected. Teenagers often crave independence, while parents, grandparents, and caregivers may be unsure how to connect in a way that feels natural, enjoyable, and engaging for everyone.

In [Episode 3 of Season 2 of Young Voices of Quebec](#), local youth explore this very topic with openness, humor, and insight. The conversation focuses on how young people perceive family time, what motivates them to take part, and how families, regardless of structure or age, can find ways to grow closer during the summer months.

The episode is a thoughtful reminder that spending time together matters. Whether it's a grandparent hoping to share a story over dinner, a parent trying to organize a weekend outing, or a teen simply looking for balance between personal space and family connection, the foundation is the same: making space to listen, understand, and share.

From the voices of youth themselves, here are a few ideas shared in the episode:

Involve everyone in the planning:

Teens express more interest in family time when they feel heard. Choosing activities together, like a barbecue, a visit to the beach, or a nature walk can make a big difference.

Create routines with flexibility:

Having a weekly "family day" or planned activity helps everyone prepare and sets expectations. It gives structure without pressure.

Acknowledge different perspectives:

Teens are navigating important transitions, just as parents are often learning in real-time how to support them. Grandparents and elders bring valuable wisdom that can offer comfort and guidance. By recognizing these different stages of life, we can build deeper mutual respect.

Open the door for connection:

Whether it's through a conversation, a shared meal, or simply being present, what matters most is creating an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome and valued.



This summer, we invite all members of our community, young and old, to make time for one another. Take a walk together, cook a meal as a family, share stories, or simply enjoy a quiet moment on a sunny afternoon. These small, shared experiences have a lasting impact.

To hear more reflections from youth on how families can better connect, we encourage you to listen to [Episode 3 of Season 2 of Young Voices of Quebec](#). It's an honest and heartwarming discussion that reminds us all: connection takes intention, and every effort we make to show up for one another matters.

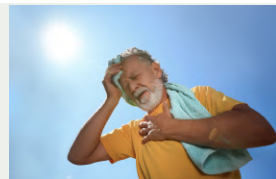
Seniors Wellness

SUMMER RULES TO REMEMBER TO KEEP THIS SEASON SAFE, COMFORTABLE AND ONE TO REMEMBER!

Summer is a wonderful time for sunshine, relaxation, and making special memories — but staying safe in the heat is key to enjoying it fully. For older adults, a few simple precautions can make all the difference. Here's your quick guide to staying cool, comfortable, and healthy all summer long.

Know Your Risks

Hot temperatures can pose serious health risks, especially for individuals with breathing difficulties, heart problems, high blood pressure, kidney issues, mental illness, or Parkinson's disease. If you take medication or have a medical condition, speak with your doctor or pharmacist to find out if the heat could affect you and follow their guidance to stay safe.



Prepare For The Heat

Stay up to date with local weather forecasts and alerts so you know when to take extra precautions. Arrange regular check-ins with family, friends, or neighbours during very hot days, and follow your local public health authority's advice. Make sure your air conditioner works before the heat arrives, or find a nearby air-conditioned space to cool off and stay safe.

Pay Attention To How You Feel

Pay attention to how you and those around you feel during hot weather. Symptoms of heat illness include dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting, headache, extreme thirst, rapid breathing or heartbeat, and dark yellow urine with reduced urination. If any of these occur, move to a cool place right away and drink water.



Stay Hydrated

Drink plenty of water regularly—don't wait until you feel thirsty, as thirst isn't a reliable sign of dehydration. Keep a glass of water by the sink as a reminder, and include more fruits and vegetables in your diet since they're high in water content.

Avoid Very Hot Temperatures

Never leave people or pets in your care inside a parked vehicle or in direct sunlight. Even on cooler or moderate days, the temperature inside a vehicle can quickly become dangerously high.



For more information visit [HEALTH CANADA](https://www.healthcanada.ca)



Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

Employment

SUMMER JOB SEARCH: BEAT THE HEAT AND BOOST YOUR CAREER

Summer may feel like a time to slow down—but when it comes to your job search, it's actually the perfect moment to gain an edge. While others hit pause, you can make progress. Here's how to stay motivated, make valuable connections, and build new skills—even during the summer lull.

Stay Motivated in a Slower Market

Hiring may ease up during the summer, but that's no reason to put your search on hold. Use this time to update your resumé, tailor your applications, and practice interview skills. Set small, achievable goals each week—like submitting a set number of applications or reaching out to contacts—to keep your motivation high.

Network in Summer Settings

Summer is full of informal gatherings—community events, barbecues, and outdoor festivals. These settings are ideal for casual networking. Have a short introduction ready about what you're looking for, and don't underestimate the power of a friendly conversation. Many job leads come from unexpected places.

Use Downtime to Upskill

If your schedule is more flexible during the summer, take advantage of the extra time. Explore online courses, industry webinars, or tools that can strengthen your skill set. Even short, focused learning sessions can give you a competitive edge.

Let MEPEC Support Your Search

You don't have to do this alone. MEPEC offers personalized job search support, resumé clinics, and skill-building workshops that are available all summer long.

Our team is here to help you stay focused and make meaningful progress toward your goals.

Complete our Employment Service Form [HERE!](#)

Your future career doesn't take a summer break—let's make this season work for you.



Job Board

NEW POSITIONS NEAR YOU

In this new section of our newsletter, we want to promote our fellow partners' job opportunities.

This helps our partners find appropriate candidates and helps our members find local partnership job opportunities in one place.



Corporation de Développement Communautaire, Job Board and Offers (multiple)

To visit their job offers, click [HERE](#).



Educaloï, Multiple Positions

To view their open positions, click [HERE](#).



YES Emploment + Entrepreneurship, Multiple Positions

To view their job board, click [HERE](#).



AMI Quebec, Care Champion in Schools

To view the job position, click [HERE](#).



ARC, Administrative Assistant

To view the job position, click [HERE](#).

Arts & Culture

SUMMER READING LIST: MEPEC STAFF PICKS!



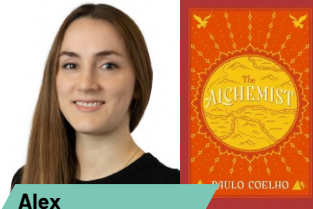
Karoll-Ann

I recommend **The Emphyrean series** : (1) **Fourth Wing**, (2) **Iron Flame** and (3) **Onyx Storm**. If you like dragon fantasy, politic wars and a good romance story, these 3 books are for you! Rebecca Yarros is a great writer and will keep you entertained from the first page to the last one. Two more books are planned to be published and a TV series is in development! What are you waiting for??!



Karen

The Guest List by Lucy Foley
A glamorous wedding on a remote island off the Irish coast should be the perfect celebration – but as the storm rolls in, so does tension, secrets, and betrayal. Every guest has something to hide, and by the end of the night, someone will be dead. A chilling, fast-paced whodunit that will keep you guessing until the very last page.



Alex

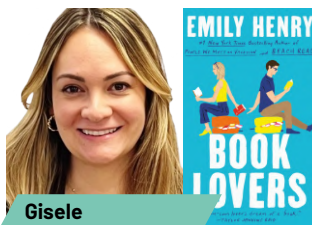
As summer vacation begins, lose yourself in the pages of a great adventure and get inspired for your next journey! I recommend **The Alchemist** by **Paulo Coelho**—a timeless tale of chasing your dreams and listening to your heart. It follows a young shepherd crossing the desert in search of treasure, only to discover that the true riches lie within. Let life and your inner strength surprise you!



Jamie

The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave

The Last Thing He Told Me follows a woman searching for the truth after her husband mysteriously disappears—leaving behind a cryptic note and a teenage daughter she barely knows. With twists at every turn, this fast-paced novel explores trust, identity, and the lengths we go to protect those we love.



Gisele

Lovers by Emily Henry

This book is about Nora, a serious and successful book agent from New York, who ends up spending a few weeks in a small town with her sister. While there, she keeps running into Charlie, an editor she didn't get along with in the past.

If you enjoy books about love, sisters, and people who work with books, I think you'd enjoy this one too!



Tommy

Blindness (Ensaio sobre a cegueira) by José Saramago.

This powerful novel explores what happens when an unexplained epidemic of sudden blindness strikes a city, revealing both the fragility and resilience of human society. It challenges us to reflect on the structures that hold us together, and what remains when they collapse. It's a thought-provoking read that stays with you long after the last page.

Partners' Activities and Services



AMIQUEBEC SUPPORT GROUPS

AMI-Québec warmly welcomes everyone! April is packed with free workshops offered by Ami-Québec. Join online!

Click [HERE](#) to view their full online schedule with additional details on workshops. Support groups begin at 6:30 PM virtually.



SOUTH SHORE LIFE-LONG LEARNING GROUP

The South Shore Life-long Learning Group now meets every **Tuesday, at 2:30pm** at 330 Gladstone, Greenfield Park. A variety of speakers will discuss: Climate Crisis, Antarctica, Zimbabwe, Celiac Disease, Monarch Butterflies and Human Evolution.

For more information call 450-466-1325 or contact them by email at sscpn@bell.net



MCGILL COMMUNITY LIFELONG LEARNING

For people who want to learn for the fun of it! Do you know about the MCLL for Seniors? The McGill Community for Lifelong Learning, part of McGill University, is a non-profit, volunteer-based community of seniors focused on peer learning.

Check out their website [HERE](#).



THE SOUTH SHORE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB

The CFUW Montreal-South Shore (South Shore University Women's Club) has supported women's education and community since 1957. This primarily Anglophone group raises funds for bursaries and offers monthly events, guest speakers, and interest groups like book discussions, cooking, and walking. They welcome women seeking friendship, personal growth, and a shared belief in education.

For more information, contact sscfuw@gmail.com.



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

**Monteregie East Partnership
for the English-Speaking Community**

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106-551, Sir-Wilfird-Laurier Blvd
Beloeil, Qc J3G 4J1

Community Space

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