



English Parents' Committee Association



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Katherine Korakakis is the President of the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA) and Head of Entrepreneurship at ProMontreal Entrepreneurs (PME), an early-stage VC fund. She has spent over a decade fostering entrepreneurial initiatives in Quebec, particularly through the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge. Katherine also serves as Vice-President of PME MTL Centre-Ouest, participates on key investment committees, and has co-authored guidebooks on entrepreneurship education, contributing her expertise to various corporate boards.

President's message

Happy 2025! Let's work together for our children!

Dear parents,

Happy New Year! As we step into 2025, I hope this message finds you and your family rested and ready for the exciting opportunities that a new year brings. January is not only a time for resolutions, but also for reflection and renewed commitment to the causes that matter most—our children's education and well-being.

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) is here to support you in navigating the challenges and triumphs of parenting in Quebec's education system. Over the past year, we have worked tirelessly to amplify parents' voices, advocate for equitable access to education, and ensure that our children have the tools they need to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

In 2025, we are determined to continue this work with even greater focus. From addressing the impacts of mental health on students to improving support for special education in our schools and fostering digital literacy, EPCA is committed to tackling the issues that have the largest impacts on your family. In the coming months, EPCA will host a series of workshops dedicated to helping parents stay well informed and navigate various issues and concerns they may face – including the forthcoming “ABC'S of Parent Governance” workshop.

This issue of EPCA'S newsletter covers midterm exam study tips for both neurotypical and children with special needs, information about how and what you need to prepare for CEGEP, school board registration dates, what is TEVA and does my child need it, and more!

This month, I encourage you to join us in preparing for the year ahead. Stay informed about educational policies and initiatives through our newsletters, attend Governing Board and Parents' Committee meetings, and – most importantly – make your voice heard. As parents, we are a powerful force for positive change, and your involvement strengthens our collective impact.

Thank you for being part of the EPCA community.

Katherine Korakakis
President, English Parents' Committee Association

8 Tips to Help Your Child Cope with Test Anxiety

As children progress through school, they face increasingly challenging tests in a range of subjects. For kids who've struggled with tests before, the fear of failure can become overwhelming. These tips will help you support your child in reducing test anxiety and building confidence.

1. Start by Understanding Their Worries

Talk openly with your child about what's making them anxious. Is it the subject matter, the test format, or fear of time constraints? Once you know the root cause, you can work together on specific strategies to address it. Reassure your child that their feelings are normal and try to remain calm while discussing the situation. Your calm demeanour can help them feel more at ease.

2. Practice Makes Perfect (and Less Stressful)

Encourage your child to practice with mock tests, if available. If not, go over past quizzes and assignments to review the test format and content. Familiarity with the process can reduce the fear of the unknown.

You can also help your child practice pacing by timing how long it takes them to complete a test. This can teach them to manage their time effectively during the real exam.

3. Plan Ahead to Avoid Last-Minute Stress

Scrambling to prepare for a test the night before can create unnecessary anxiety. Work with your child to stay on top of test dates by keeping a shared calendar. Regularly reviewing this calendar together can help your child feel more organized and in control.

4. Prepare Gradually and Consistently

Cramming for a test the night before is likely to heighten stress levels. Instead, integrate test preparation into your child's regular study routine. As the test date approaches, gradually increase the amount of time dedicated to review. Help your child prioritize tests that carry more weight toward their overall grade and focus their efforts on those subjects.



8 Tips to Help Your Child Cope with Test Anxiety

cont.

5. Boost Confidence in Study Materials

Children who struggle with note-taking may worry that their notes aren't accurate. If this is a concern, encourage them to seek out additional resources. Teachers might be willing to review their notes or provide a summary of key points. Another option is pairing them with a study buddy to cross-check notes and share ideas. Feeling prepared can go a long way in reducing anxiety.



6. Ensure Test Accommodations Are in Place

If your child has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or requires testing accommodations, confirm these details with their teacher ahead of time. Knowing accommodations—such as extra time, a quiet room, or a reader—are in place can make your child feel supported and less stressed.

7. Recognize Their Efforts and Emotions

Acknowledge the hard work your child is putting into studying, even if they feel nervous. Validate their feelings by saying things like, “I can see how hard you’re working. That’s going to help you feel more prepared.” Praise their efforts, not just their results, to emphasize the value of preparation and perseverance.

8. Teach Them That Setbacks Are Learning Opportunities

Sometimes, even with preparation, kids don't perform as well as they'd hoped. Use these moments to focus on improvement rather than failure. Discuss what went well and what could be done differently next time. Help your child develop an action plan. For example, “You worked so hard for that test. Let's talk to your teacher about some additional strategies or resources that could help you for the next one.”

By encouraging open communication, preparation, and a focus on progress rather than perfection, you can help your child develop the tools they need to face tests with confidence and calm. With practice and support, test anxiety doesn't have to hold them back.

5 Midterm Study Practices for Neurotypical Students

Midterms can be stressful, but with the right approach, you can maximize your study time and performance. EPCA recommends these five best practices that neurotypical students can follow to succeed:

1. Create a Study Schedule

Time management is crucial. Break down your study material into manageable chunks and set specific goals for each session. Plan your study schedule ahead of time, allowing for regular breaks to maintain focus. Use a planner or a digital calendar to stay organized.



2. Active Learning Techniques

Engage with the material actively by summarizing key points, asking questions, or teaching the content to someone else. Methods like self-quizzing, flashcards, and mind mapping help reinforce concepts and enhance memory retention.

3. Prioritize Difficult Subjects

Focus on the subjects or topics you find most challenging first. Tackling these when your mind is fresh will make studying more efficient. Once you've spent time on the hardest material, the easier topics will feel more manageable.

4. Use Multiple Study Resources

Don't rely solely on textbooks. Online videos, practice exams, and study guides are valuable tools for understanding different perspectives and clarifying complex ideas. Mix different resources to strengthen your understanding. [Alloprof](#) and [Learn Quebec](#) can help too.

5. Get Adequate Rest and Nutrition

Sleep is essential for cognitive function. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night, especially in the days leading up to the exam. Eating balanced meals and staying hydrated will keep your brain alert and focused.

Using Agendas Helps Kids Stay Organized

Today's students are being pulled in many different directions - from homework, sports, family obligations, and extracurricular activities to their social relationships, our children are being asked to juggle a lot of responsibilities. Keeping track of all this is challenging to say the least. Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams are vital tools our kids use in conjunction with their teachers to keep their schoolwork organized, and they could not work without these technological tools today. But when we add in all the other obligations, the calendar on their phone (which, in fact, they are no longer allowed to bring into class) or the calendar on the fridge become cluttered and confusing. Things get forgotten and priorities are difficult to recognize and respect.

Up until recently **agendas** were required school supplies, and for good reason. For some schools, this is still the case... but for others, agendas are no longer required on school supply lists or given out by schools. Regardless, agendas are a fundamental tool to enable your child to organize all their school and extracurricular obligations.



For your child, being able to see how due dates of assignments are aligned, and especially when they conflict, gives them the opportunity to plan how they will tackle their work along with their many other obligations. The agenda's weekly view and the monthly view complement each other to give the student the opportunity to plan for the schoolwork that is required to be done alongside all the other engagements they have. Using these different views, it is easy to visualize bottlenecks and to be proactive in completing work on time and without the unnecessary stress of last-minute cramming.

If your child does not already use an agenda, and you are not familiar with them yourself, please consider how having all their responsibilities chronicled and organized by date can help them prioritize their tasks. A properly used agenda will relieve a lot of the stress caused by planning for homework, assignments, and your child's other obligations. Getting your child an agenda and helping them use it is an easy way to help them manage their demanding schedules and reduce unnecessary stress due to a lack of planning and organization. It can also instill good time management now that will help them as they transition into higher education and work life in the future!

CEGEP

How to Prepare your Child - General

Source: [Alloprof](#)

CEGEP marks an important and exciting new chapter in your teen's life. Here are a few tips on helping your child make a smooth transition from high school and navigate the many changes they're about to face.

At the CEGEP level there are 3 courses of study:

- **Pre-university.** Pre-university Diploma of College Studies (pre-university DCS). A pre-university DCS prepares students for university studies. Pre-university programs include general education courses as well as courses related to the student's chosen area of study. The number of required courses depends on the program. Duration: usually 2 years (3 for double DCSs)
- **Technical.** Technical Diploma of College Studies (technical DCS). A technical DCS prepares students to enter the job market right away or go on to pursue university studies. This type of program is open to anyone with a high school diploma, DVS, or relevant work experience in the chosen field and who has completed the prerequisites required by the school. Duration: usually 3 years (4 for certain programs)
- **Short-term technical.** Attestation of College Studies (ACS). An ACS allows graduates to enter the job market immediately after finishing their studies. These programs are primarily intended for adults who have interrupted their studies for at least one year and who hold a high school diploma or a DVS related to their desired program of study. Other prerequisites may be required. Since colleges regularly change their program offerings, check online for the most accurate information. Duration: 3 to 24 months

Help Your Teen Choose a Program of study

Your child got a taste of choosing their courses in Secondary IV and V (math, sciences, etc.). Now they have to decide what CEGEP program to take based on their career goals. There are a number of things you can do to help them make an informed decision:

- Talk to them about their options
- Discuss why they're leaning towards one program over another
- Discuss why they're leaning towards one school over another
- Identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Encourage them to make an appointment with a guidance counsellor
- Visit CEGEP websites to learn more about their programs
- Go to open houses



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CEGEP

How to Prepare your Child - General

cont.

Discuss the Differences Between High School and CEGEP

Going from high school to CEGEP is a pretty big jump. Students have more autonomy, but also more responsibility. You can help prepare your child by talking over what they can expect. Your teen should know that the CEGEP school year is shorter (two 15-week semesters), that full-time studies typically means 15 hours of class per week, that classes are usually 2 to 3 hours long (including a break), that students have to manage any learning difficulties more independently and that their grades will affect their chances of getting into more competitive university programs. Remember that individualized education plans apply only to students who've received an official diagnosis

Promote the Merits of Being Well Organized

There's no secret recipe for academic success, but organization is a great place to start. In theory, your child has been developing and experimenting with various organization strategies since elementary school. With CEGEP on the horizon, you can encourage them to keep up good habits such as using an agenda, setting priorities, dividing work into smaller tasks and making time to have fun.



Ensure a Healthy Work-Study Balance

Many CEGEP students work or take on internships. Consequently, it's essential that they learn to maintain a good work-study balance. To ensure your teen stays on the right track, you can help them determine the ideal number of hours they should devote to work, set their own limits, choose an empathetic employer and identify signs of burnout.

Watch for Signs of Anxiety

Anxiety looks different for everybody. It has a wide range of symptoms, including migraines, insomnia, and digestive problems. It can also come through in more insidious ways through absenteeism, lack of motivation or just exhaustion. To help your child better manage their anxiety they can go for walks or get other forms of exercise. They can listen to music, draw, or do other relaxation exercises. If, despite your best efforts, your teen is still struggling with anxiety, you can encourage them to seek professional help through the mental health services at their school.

CEGEP

How to Prepare your Child – Parents of Children with Special Needs

Navigating the transition from high school to CEGEP can feel overwhelming, and more so for parents of students with special needs. Here are some practical tips to help with a successful transition:

1. Start Early with Planning

Research programs and investigate the CEGEPs in your area to identify programs that match your child's strengths, interests, and career goals. Many CEGEPs, such as Dawson College and Vanier College, offer inclusive education services.

- Link: [Student Accessibility, Dawson College](#)
- Link: [Access Center, Vanier College](#)

Take advantage of CEGEP open houses and visit them. Tour the facilities and ask and learn about available support services for students with special needs. Meet with the guidance counselors if possible. Collaborate with your child's high school guidance counselor to create a clear post-secondary transition plan.

2. Understand Accommodations

Prepare the necessary documents. Make sure your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or psychoeducational assessment is up to date. This documentation is required to access academic accommodations in CEGEP. Make arrangements to speak to Disability Services. Contact the CEGEP's Student Access Centre to learn about their available support services, such as note-takers, tutoring, and extended time for exams.



3. Build Independence Skills

Continue teaching your child time management and organization skills. Help them develop the skills to manage their time and stay organized. Self-Advocacy is a very important skill for students with special needs. Encourage your child to practice expressing their needs to teachers and peers. Role-playing conversations can help build their confidence in this regard.

CEGEP

How to Prepare your Child – Parents of Children with Special Needs

cont.

4. Plan for Transportation and Accessibility

Look at transportation options. Research and arrange transportation, whether it's public transit, adapted transport services, or carpools. Becoming familiar with the campus will be very helpful to your child. Visit the campus with your child so they can familiarize themselves with its layout and accessibility features.

5. Set Realistic Expectations

Be prepared for an adjustment period. The transition to CEGEP is a significant step, and it's okay for your child to take time to adapt. Be patient and supportive while they find their footing. Celebrate all successes and achievements along the way and focus on building their confidence and motivation.

6. Stay Involved and Supportive

While encouraging independence, remain a supportive presence. Check in regularly and stay up to date with any challenges they might have.

With careful preparation and by utilizing the resources available, our children can flourish in this next chapter of their journey. Remember, you are not alone, connect with educators, support centers, and other parents to share insights and guidance. Together, we can empower our children to succeed.

The logo for CEGEPs (Collège d'Études Supérieures) features a stylized purple leaf-like shape above the word "cégeps" in a bold, black, lowercase sans-serif font.

études supérieures
Québec - Canada



Preparing for Life Beyond School : Understanding the TEVA Program

Transitioning from school to adulthood is a pivotal time in any child's life, especially for those who face additional challenges. The Quebec Ministry of Education's Transition de l'école vers la vie active (TEVA) program offers critical support for students and families during this period. Designed to empower students with disabilities or those requiring additional support, the TEVA program aims to prepare children for a fulfilling and independent life.

What: The TEVA program, or Transition from School to Active Life (TSAL), is an initiative by the Quebec Ministry of Education focusing on assisting students as they prepare to leave the school system and transition into adult life.

For Who: The TEVA process is specifically designed for students who have a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability or with a severe social maladjustment or learning disability.

Why: The goal of the program is to provide young people and their families accessible, coordinated, and complementary services that align with their needs, aspirations, and the young person's life plan.

When: The timing depends on each student's situation, but generally the recommendation is to begin the process at least three years prior to the young person's expected secondary-school leaving date.

With Who: The process is led by the school administrator and involves a coordinated and collaborative approach between the school team, health and social services and other community partners. A navigator is named who will accompany the student during the process, and ensure continuity of services after the student's transition into active life.

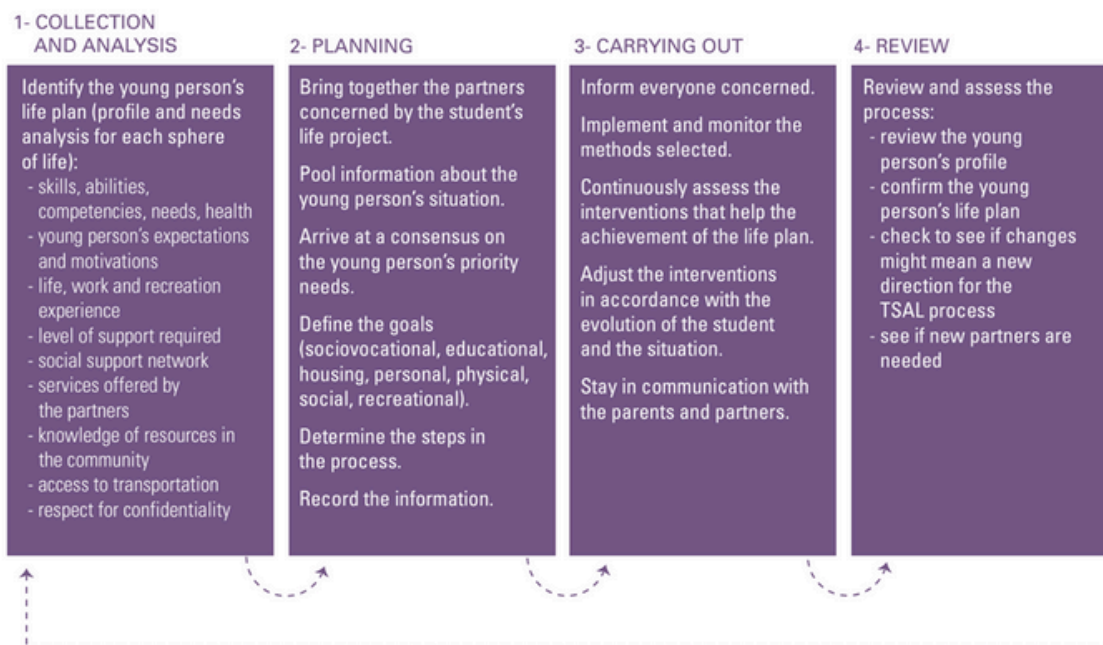
How: The school principal and their team collaborate with the student and their family to gather information across all aspects of the student's life. Together, they identify the student's chosen objectives and determine the strategies to be implemented in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

Figure 1: The transition process involves the young person's various spheres of life.



Preparing for Life Beyond School : Understanding the TEVA Program cont.

Figure II: The steps in the TSAL process



How Can Parents Get Involved?

Parents play an integral role in the TEVA process. Parents should initiate discussions early with their child's school team and administrators to determine when and how to embark on this important planning process to ensure their child's transition to adult life is adequately supported. By advocating for their child and collaborating with schools and community partners, they can ensure the program's success. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Attend transition planning meetings and actively participate in discussions.
- Communicate regularly with teachers and professionals involved in your child's plan.
- Encourage your child to explore their interests and develop their independence.

Being proactive and engaged can make a significant difference in your child's experience with the program.

How to Access the TEVA Program

If you believe your child could benefit from TEVA, the first step is to speak with their school administration. They can provide more information about the program and help you initiate the planning process. You can also visit the [official TEVA website](#) for additional resources and guidance.



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New Year, New Homework Habits: Alloprof Helps You Set Resolutions for Success

Mission: Alloprof helps students in Quebec to transform academic challenges into successes, thanks to its free, professional, and stimulating services.



The new year offers the perfect chance to reassess how your family approaches homework and learning. Whether it's deciphering tricky math problems or corralling the tangles of doodled notes, we understand the challenges that families face. With some small, practical changes, you can create a more harmonious and productive homework routine. [Alloprof](#) is here to support you in making the most of this pivotal mid-year moment, with tools and tips designed to make learning easier and more enjoyable.

Here are four resolutions to make 2025 a success:

1. **Freshen Things Up: Routines and Study Spaces**
Consistency is key! Start the year by establishing homework routines that integrate seamlessly into your child's daily schedule. Consider dedicating a set time after school or dinner for focused study sessions. Alloprof offers customizable posters, ideal for both elementary and high school students, to serve as engaging reminders for tasks and help create a positive homework rhythm.

Refreshing their study space can also enhance motivation—simple updates, like adding a desk lamp or organizing supplies, can turn any corner into an inviting and productive workspace. It doesn't have to be expensive; often, a few simple changes can create an inspiring environment for your child!



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Homework Habits: Set Resolutions for Success

cont.

2. Tackle Challenges Together

If your child needs more guidance during homework time, consider setting up their study space nearby. When they pause mid-sentence, puzzled by a tricky math problem, you can say, “Let’s tackle this together,” or encourage them to ask for help. By being involved in their study sessions, you can transform this time into a meaningful family bonding experience that enhances motivation. Your presence can also help deter distractions and procrastination with timely interventions and support.

3. Foster Independence

As your child prepares for a busy evening of completing assignments, a quiz, and an art project, a quick check-in can help them organize materials and prioritize tasks. Encourage their autonomy with strategies like prepping materials and deciding task order. Using an agenda to track assignments and deadlines fosters independence, while letting students choose their work sequence empowers them and builds confidence.

Alloprof’s resources can help them take ownership of their learning. Our interactive games and concept sheets are there when they want to review concepts independently, keeping things fun and engaging. Our Motivational Timer can also help kids stay focused and work through their established routines! And if your child has questions, encourage them to ask a teacher on our website!

4. Celebrate Achievements

Every milestone, big or small, deserves recognition. Celebrate your child's successes by adding their achievements to an achievement jar filled with colourful notes. These small moments boost confidence over time. Turn rewards into family fun by enjoying a movie night together or baking their favourite dessert. Encourage your child to recognize their efforts with praise using our list of words that’ll do a world of good!

Supporting Secondary V Students: Navigating Post-Secondary

For families with Secondary V students, this time of year brings important decisions. Alloprof can help you through the CEGEP application process with updated resources and tips, including a checklist to help make well-considered choices. Our materials provide insights into various programs and application strategies, ensuring students make informed choices about their futures.

As 2025 unfolds, let Alloprof be your partner in fostering a positive, successful learning journey for your child. Together, we can make this year an enriching experience for your whole family.

Psst! Don’t miss out—sign up for our parent newsletter today! Subscribe here.

Parent Resources

ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARD REGISTRATION DATES

- Central Quebec : Feb 3 - Feb 14
- Eastern Shores: Jan 13 - Jan 31
- Eastern Townships: Jan 27 - Feb 7
- English Montreal: Feb 3 - Feb 7
- Lester B Pearson: Jan 13 - Feb 12
- New Frontiers: Jan 20 - Jan 31
- Riverside: Feb 3 - March 28
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier : Jan 27 - Feb 28
- Western Quebec: Starting Feb 3

EPCA WORKSHOPS - Feb-May 2025

- Consent and Boundaries
- Body Image and Self-esteem
- Alcohol, Vaping, and Drug Awareness
- Transitions leaving Elementary
- Managing Challenging Behaviours / Risky Business
- Bullying
- The digital Literacy
- The Anxious Generation
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Alloprof
- Concussions - What Parents Need to Know

Parent Resources



The Quebec Federation of Parents' Committees, with support from various partners - including EPCA's President Katherine Korakakis, has put together a guide to assist parents whose children are facing violence or bullying issues at school - click [here](#).

Tutoring



Homework Help



ENGLISH ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATES

Explainer: What Quebec parents and students need to know about English eligibility certificates: At this [LINK](#) are details on how to apply for a certificate and who is eligible to attend English schools in Quebec.

EPCA MISSION STATEMENT

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) is a coalition of parents' committees of Quebec's English-language public school boards, representing more than 100,00 students in the youth sector.

EPCA advocates for a strong and sustainable English-language public education system to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for our children, while respecting the culture and language of anglophone Quebecers.

To do so, EPCA seeks to engage and motivate parents across Quebec to contribute to strong, representative and effective parent governance, to foster positive relationships with stakeholders across the educational spectrum, and to provide guidance and support to all member organizations.

What would you like to see in
our upcoming editions?

[TELL US HERE](#)

5253, Blvd. Decarie, Suite 309, Montreal, Quebec, H3W 3C3
(514) 778-3722 - epcaquebec.org - president@epcaquebec.org

EPCA STRATEGIC PILLARS

INFORM

Using all communications tools at our disposal, offer up-to-date information on public education initiatives, parent governance interests, best practices and issues management to ensure a healthy, well-engaged anglophone parent community.

CONSULT

Ensure strong, high-quality and consistent feedback mechanisms with members and partners across the English-language public school network through both electronic and in-person methods.

SUPPORT

Provide training and professional development at all levels of parent governance, optimize the sharing of best practices and provide multiple support services for parent committees, governing boards and parent delegates in need.

ADVOCATE

Push for appropriate policy change and improvement through enhanced partnerships with like-minded organizations, Government working groups/tasks forces, and related organizations, through well-considered political positions on behalf of English- Language parents committees across Quebec, taking into account regional difference and the urban/rural divide.