



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

Engaging Parents & Transitioning Students

Dear parents,

As we navigate through April, it is clear that this is a particularly active and important time for parents across our network. Engaged parents bring forward strong ideas, and there is certainly much work ahead in the coming weeks as our various bodies navigate a busy and meaningful period.

We are pleased to be offering a series of upcoming parent workshops focused on key transition periods in our children's education. Whether it is moving to high school, or preparing for post-secondary pathways, these moments matter. Our goal is to equip parents with the tools, information, and confidence to support their children through these important stages.

At the same time, EPCA has been invited to appear before the Senate as part of its study on the regulatory framework of Part VII of the Official Languages Act. This is an important opportunity to ensure that the realities of English-speaking families in Quebec are clearly understood at the federal level, particularly when it comes to access to services and resources in education.

I would also like to sincerely thank the thousands of parents who took the time to complete the Quebec Families' Well-Being Survey. Your participation is essential. Thanks to you, we now have a clearer picture of the challenges families are facing. Early results point to ongoing concerns around stress, access to services, and the overall well-being of children and parents alike. At the same time, they highlight the resilience and commitment of families who continue to prioritize their children's success despite these pressures. The more voices we gather, the stronger our collective impact.

In March, the Government of Quebec tabled its 2026–2027 budget. EPCA has reviewed this budget with great vigilance. For parents, what matters most is whether education investments are sufficient to keep pace with rising costs and to ensure that every student receives the services they need. We are encouraged by recent comments from the Minister of Education, Sonia LeBel, indicating that administrative requirements for school boards will be reduced and that budget rules will be released earlier than in previous years.

Finally, I would like to thank all parent representatives and volunteers who continue to contribute their time, ideas, and energy. Your engagement is at the heart of everything we do. April is a particularly busy month within our governance structures, and your dedication makes a real difference.

Thank you for your continued engagement and commitment.

Managing School Stress in Children

As the school year comes to a close, it is easy for us all to look ahead to the summer and to lose focus on the work that needs to get done between now and the end of school. It's important for parents and kids to remember that term 3 is worth 60% of the final grade.

One of the biggest triggers of stress is having un-started work ahead. So a great way to mitigate that initial stress is to simply get started. A great place to start is to make a calendar of exams and assignments. Put it up on the wall. Visualize what needs to be done.

At home you can reduce school-related anxiety by establishing predictable routines, practicing relaxation techniques (deep breathing, meditation), challenging negative thoughts, prioritizing sleep, and breaking large tasks into manageable steps. Effective strategies include staying organized, limiting caffeine, maintaining social support, and utilizing school resources like counsellors or safe spaces.

Key Strategies to Reduce School Stress

- **Relaxation Techniques:** Utilize deep breathing, muscle relaxation, or meditation to manage anxiety in the moment.
- **Time Management & Organization:** Break down large assignments into smaller, manageable tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Using a planner helps stay ahead of deadlines.
- **Positive Mindset (Cognitive Restructuring):** Challenge negative self-talk, such as "I will fail," and replace it with more balanced thoughts, such as "I will try my best". Focus on learning rather than just grades.
- **Physical Well-being:** Prioritize 8–10 hours of sleep for teens, maintain a balanced diet, and engage in regular exercise or physical activity to lower stress levels.
- **Build a Support System:** Connect with trusted friends, family members, or school counselors to discuss pressures.
- **Limiting Caffeine:** Avoid high consumption of energy drinks and coffee, which can increase anxiety and feelings of agitation.

Self-Care Strategies

- **Hobbies and Relaxation:** Dedicate time to creative outlets like art, music, or sports.
- **Digital Detox:** Limit screen time, especially before bed, to improve sleep quality.
- **Journaling:** Use a journal to process feelings and track stressors.



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Addressing Bullying: Practical Steps for Parents

Recent results from the 2026 Survey on the Well-being of Quebec Families highlight a reality many parents already feel: school life is becoming more complex, and more challenging, for our children.

The data shows that:

- 57% of parents report their child has experienced bullying or discrimination at school
- 1 in 10 children experience frequent bullying or discrimination
- A low sense of safety affects at least 1 in 20 students
- English-speaking parents are more likely to report frequent bullying (16% vs 9%) and higher levels of social anxiety in their children

These findings reinforce what many families are seeing first-hand: bullying and school climate remain key concerns impacting student well-being. The issue is particularly pronounced for students with special needs, who are significantly more likely to experience bullying or discrimination at school—at rates that are notably higher than those reported for other students.

So what can parents actually do?

Recognize the Signs Early.

Watch for changes such as:

- reluctance to go to school
- anxiety, mood changes, or withdrawal
- unexplained physical complaints
- changes in friendships or online behaviour

Have open, judgment-free conversations with your child early and often.

Know Your School's Plan

Every school in Quebec must have an Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Plan.

This plan outlines:

- how incidents are reported
- how the school investigates
- what support is offered to students
- what consequences may apply

Look on your school's website or ask your school for both the full plan and the parent-friendly summary



Addressing Bullying: Practical Steps for Parents

cont.

Report and Document Concerns

If something happens:

- report it to the school as soon as possible
- keep notes (dates, incidents, communications)
- follow up in writing if needed

Clear documentation helps ensure proper follow-up and accountability.

Work in Partnership with the School

Schools are required to:

- ensure student safety
- respond to reports
- provide support to all students involved

Approach the school as a partner, but don't hesitate to ask:

- What steps are being taken?
- How will my child be supported?
- What follow-up can I expect?

Escalate if Needed

If the situation is not resolved:

- you can use the formal complaint process, found on the School Board's website
- contact the Student Ombudsman for independent review

Don't stop at the first response if your child's safety or well-being is still at risk.

The challenges highlighted in this year's well-being survey are real, but parents are not without resources to address these challenges. By understanding your rights, using the tools available, and staying engaged, you can play a powerful role in ensuring that schools remain safe, inclusive, and supportive environments for every child.

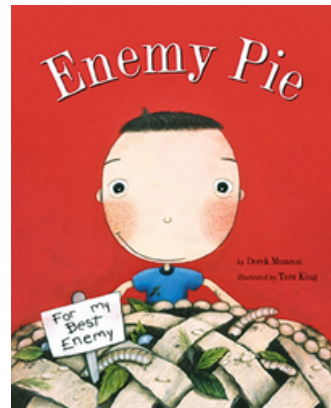
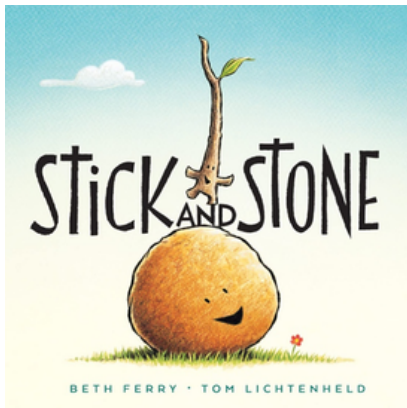


Starting the Conversation at Home: Books for Feelings, Friendships, and Health Habits

As a parent it can sometimes it can be hard to start hard conversations with our children. A great way to begin is by reading a book together. Here are some book suggestions that can help you talk about feeling, friendships, and healthy habits.

Stick and Stone: This delightful book is about friendship, kindness, and standing up for others. Join Stick and Stone on the journey to becoming true friends.

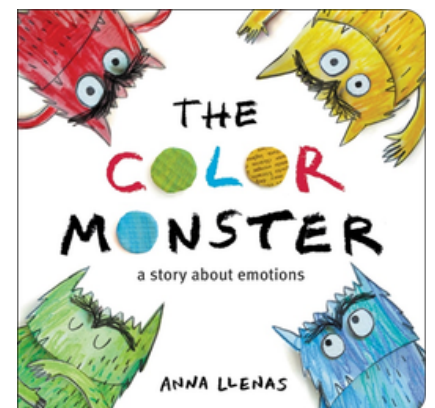
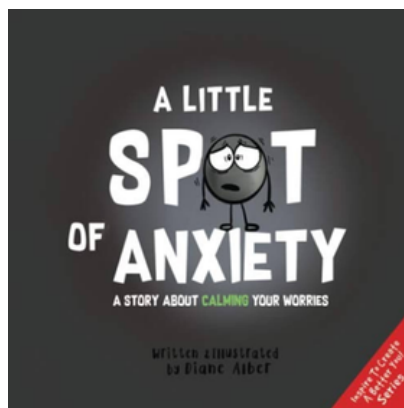
Enemy Pie: This somewhat silly book follows a little boy who, with a little help from his dad, turns his “enemy” into his friend.



The Color Monster: This is a wonderful book that will introduce, and help children identify, the wide range of emotions that they experience in a fun and approachable way.

A Little Spot of Anxiety: This book is fantastic at helping children feel less alone in their anxiety. This book helps identify anxiety while providing children (and parents) with a practical solution for managing it.

The Fabulous Friend Machine: This book is a great way to start a conversation about screen time. Follow Popcorn, the chicken, as becomes obsessed with a smart phone she finds. She quickly learns the difference between real-world friends and online ones.



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Exam Prep Begins! Subject-Specific Tools to Support Studying

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



Exam season energy is upon us with its unique mix of excitement, dread and the collective hum of Quebec students hitting the books. As a parent, you're the ultimate support system, and while you can't take the test for them (tempting as that might be), you can certainly help take the guesswork out of their study sessions. Transitioning from "I don't know where to start" to "I've got this" is all about having the right tools!

At Alloprof, we believe that when students are well-equipped, they approach their work with patience and pride. By trading passive re-reading for active practice, you can help your child navigate their upcoming evaluations and turn those pre-test jitters into can-do confidence.

Mathematics: From Concepts to Calculation

Math requires consistent practice to build self-assurance. For younger students, elementary level exercises provide a great way to reinforce classroom learning through interactive formats. High school students facing more complex topics can use review guides and exam simulations to familiarize themselves with the format and types of questions they might encounter.



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Exam Prep Begins!

cont.

English Language Arts: Mastering the Process

Success in ELA evaluations is built on a clear process. Elementary students can prepare for reading comprehension exams by reviewing concept sheets that break down the response process: before reading, during reading, and after reading. For high school students, reviewing the text production steps can strengthen understanding of written evaluations. These resources can help transform a blank page into a structured, well-thought-out response.

History: Connecting the Dots

History exams often require students to thoroughly understand complex concepts. High school students can test their knowledge and identify what needs more attention by using targeted history exercises to bridge the gap between dates and meaningful historical narratives. Practicing with these tools helps students move beyond simple memorization to truly understanding the "why" behind historical facts.

Science and Technology: Visualizing Complex Ideas

Visual aids can make complex scientific theories much easier to digest. Elementary students can benefit from science videos that explain core concepts clearly in short entertaining clips. For high schoolers needing a thorough refresher before an exam, Crash Courses offer an efficient way to review broad topics and assimilate key materials.

General Exam Prep Tips: Building Healthy Habits

Setting the stage for success involves creating a calm, organized environment. Help your child break study sessions into smaller steps and use our motivational timer to keep them focused while ensuring they take necessary breaks. For more comprehensive guidance, explore these resources:

- Practical study tips for better retention.
- A guide on how to get ready for exams to reduce last-minute scrambles.

Remember, success isn't just about grades: it's about growth, effort, and building habits that last a lifetime. No matter what challenges the exam season brings, Alloprof is always in your corner to ensure both you and your child have the support you need to succeed.



Parent Resources

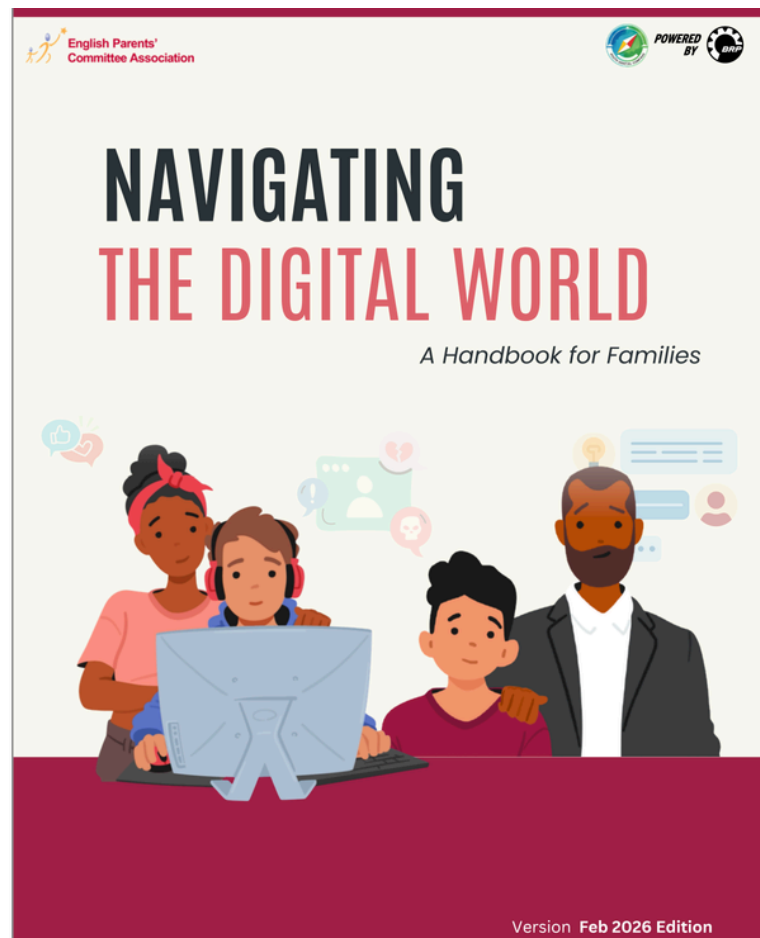
New Resource for Families: Navigating the Digital World

As children and youth spend more time online, families are increasingly looking for practical ways to support safe, respectful, and positive digital experiences.

EPCA is proud to have supported the creation of Navigating the Digital World: A Handbook for Families, a research informed guide developed in collaboration with experts at McGill University. This resource is designed to help parents and youth better understand online risks, including cyberbullying, while providing clear strategies to build healthy digital habits.

The handbook includes dedicated sections for both parents and youth, along with tip sheets, real-life examples, and activities that encourage meaningful family conversations. It also features a curated list of Canadian resources to support families when additional help is needed.

We encourage all families to explore this valuable tool and use it as a starting point for open and ongoing discussions about life online.



Parent Resources - Cybersecurity for Parents

Protecting Your Kids Online — Workshop Recording Now Available

WATCH THE FULL WORKSHOP: youtu.be/EFuYm-Fttjw

Search YouTube: "EPCA Cybersecurity for Parents"

THE 5-MINUTE FAMILY CYBERSECURITY CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you know every app and platform your child uses? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Does every account have a unique password and two-factor authentication (2FA)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are location services turned OFF for all social media apps? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are all your child's social media profiles set to PRIVATE? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is YouTube autoplay turned OFF on your child's devices? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you know what mods are installed on their games? (Check the Minecraft mods folder.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your child know this sentence: "I will never be in trouble for telling you about something online"? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you know how to report to Cybertip.ca ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is YOUR phone updated, with banking apps secured by 2FA (preferably an authenticator app, not SMS)? |

CANADIAN RESOURCES — SAVE THESE

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 | Text CONNECT to 686868 | [kidshelpphone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

[Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca): Report online child exploitation

[NeedHelpNow.ca](https://www.needhelpnow.ca): Help removing intimate images of minors shared online

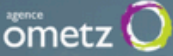

[ProtectKidsOnline.ca](https://www.protectkidsonline.ca): Free safety guides, conversation starters, and parent resources

Parent Resources

HOLD THE DATE
Pearl Leibovitch Parent Evening: May 25th, 2026

**The Luxury of Denial:
It's time we talk about addiction**

Join author and psychiatric nurse Linda Mestel



This year's **Pearl Leibovitch Parent Evening** will feature an informative, personal and honest conversation with **Linda Mestel**, a psychiatric nurse, a local author and a former clinical supervisor at Ometz.

Linda will share the compelling story behind her book, "*The Luxury of Denial: A Moving Memoir. A Mother's Journey of Challenge and Hope Through Her Son's Addiction*". She will also discuss what recovery looks like for parents whose children are struggling with addiction, highlighting why it's so important not to face the journey alone.

Hold the date!

May 25, 2026 | 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Features an exclusive book signing and meet-and-greet, a perfect chance to meet Linda up close!



The graphic shows a stack of three books titled "THE LUXURY OF DENIAL" by Linda Jayne Mestel. The top book is standing upright, showing its cover which features a sunset over a body of water. The two books below it are lying flat. The background is a dark, textured blue with a white, torn-paper-like edge at the bottom.

The location will be disclosed closer to the date.

More details to follow.

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](#)

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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.