

connexions news

Your link to a healthy community

Welcome to our Spring 2020 Issue

Connexions Resource Centre serves and promotes the health, well-being and vitality of the English-speaking population of the Outaouais. We encourage and appreciate your comments and questions. If you have any difficulties accessing the information in this newsletter or if you need assistance in finding information or services in English, please contact us at 819-777-3206 or info@centreconnexions.org.

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE ON COVID-19

Following the recent government directives, and to assist with the efforts to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable groups such as seniors, the following activities are suspended until further notice:

- The Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup (Tuesdays) and Baby Chat (Fridays) at Heritage College
- The information session on *Health and Social Services: Your Rights and the Complaints Process* with CAAP Outaouais scheduled for Monday, March 23.

Please note that we are available to answer your questions as usual by phone and email. We will continue to regularly update our website and social media to keep you up-to-date on the most current information and to provide you with a variety of resources for all age groups to help you maintain a healthy lifestyle and mental well-being during these difficult times. Here are a few resources to get you started:

For the most reliable and up-to-date news and information per COVID-19, please visit:

- Government of Québec - COVID-19: <http://bit.ly/39S6n1f>
- Government of Canada - COVID 19: <http://bit.ly/2U7p8aj>

If you have any questions about COVID-19 or if you have symptoms and need to be tested, please call the NEW Government of Québec Info-Santé line at: **1 877 644-4545**

If you must self-isolate, please follow the Government of Quebec's Instructions for Home Isolation: Person under Investigation for COVID-19 (<http://bit.ly/2voLhbN>)

For useful resources on how to talk to your child about COVID-19:

- CBC News' *How to Talk to Children and Address their Coronavirus Concerns* (<http://bit.ly/2TQ6BAk>)
- Child Mind Institute's *Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus* (<http://bit.ly/2x0gDFS>)
- Psychology Today's *How to Talk to Kids and Teens about the Coronavirus* (<http://bit.ly/2WceLVf>)

WHAT'S NEW!

➔ Join the Challenge!

We will be especially active over the next couple of weeks on our Facebook page sharing fun activities and games, free online resources and more!

We will also be sharing some fun daily challenges with our new friends Uni the unicorn and Bubun the rabbit!

Join the challenge at: www.facebook.com/ConnexionsResourceCentre

➔ Join the discussion!

Learn about available health and social services within your community, ask questions and share stories. Check out our Facebook Discussion Groups:

50+ Chat
<http://bit.ly/2StoJzm>

Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup
<http://bit.ly/38ukwAW>

Parent Chat
<http://bit.ly/2SIEqkY>

Parents for Youth
<http://bit.ly/2HlwnW6>

➔ Missed a Past Event?

If you've missed one of our information sessions or workshops, you can still find a summary of information and resources shared on our website at: <http://bit.ly/39Dr3K9>



819.777.3206 | info@centreconnexions.org | centreconnexions.org | facebook.com/connexionsresourcecentre 1.

CELEBRATING FAMILY LITERACY DAY!

Family Literacy Day takes place every year on January 27th to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in literacy-related activities as a family. We were thrilled to extend this one day celebration into a full-week filled with fun events and activities.

During our Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup, we created some cute story books with sticky tape and other fun materials with our little ones.

We took part in the Western Quebec School Board's (WQSB) two-day Kinder Registrations where we spoke to parents at our kiosk about our organization and available health and social services in the region. To help parents prepare their child for their transition to kindergarten, we also provided them with a wide range of pre-school resources, including tips on limiting screen-time, learning through play, and lists of books to share with children on transition to kindergarten, kindness and empathy, and more. We even got the chance to play some fun literacy-based games with the visiting toddlers. Our alphabet magnet board, sensory rice and dinosaur bin, and alphabet pipe cleaner bracelets were especially popular with the little ones.



We would like to extend a special thank you to Andrea Shattler and Steven Tremblay, both Social Services Officers at the WQSB, for inviting us. Andrea is working with the families within the WQSB to help their children transition successfully to kindergarten. During the event, Andrea and Danielle Nikota, a Social Work Placement Student, helped parents fill-out a questionnaire about their child to share with their new teacher and spoke to the parents about the Centre intégré de de santé et de service sociaux de l'Outaouais' (CISSSO) new Child Development Program, which provides assessments and follow-up services in speech therapy and occupational therapy for children 5 years of age and under who have not started Kindergarten and may have developmental delays.

Our week of celebrations ended on Saturday with our visit to the Lord Aylmer Home & School and Western Quebec Literacy Council's (WQLC) Family Literacy Day & Book Fair. We had a great time participating in the day's activities, which included the WQLC's song rhyming game and circle-time with local children's book authors Fanny Robert and Sunshine Tenasco.

Visit our website for more information on Family Literacy Day, fun literacy-based activities and games, as well as tips for reading with your child (<http://bit.ly/39WdjKO>). You can also visit our online Community Resources webpage for Children and families to find tip sheets on limiting screen time, learning through play, lists of books to read with your child, and other useful resources for children 0-5 and those transition to kindergarten (<http://bit.ly/2IRY4Gw>).



Be Our Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup Guest!

We are looking for community members and professionals who would like to organize a fun activity for our toddlers during our Itsy Bitsy Tots Playgroup.

If you are a children's book author or illustrator, a fitness or yoga instructor, work in a field related to young children or would just love to join us, make sure to reach out!



LISTEN UP LADIES! HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HEART DISEASE

During her videoconference presentation in February, special guest speaker, Wendy Wray, RN, B.Sc. N, Nurse, spoke to us about women's heart health, how simple lifestyle changes can lower your risk for heart, as well as some of the more common signs of heart disease in women. As she explained:

Heart disease is your biggest health threat: It is the #1 killer of women worldwide and it affects women of all ages.

Heart disease cannot be cured. It is a chronic condition. But it's never too late to start improving your heart health. 80% of risk factors are within your control to change. Here are a few simple steps you can take to prevent heart disease:

- **Get active:** 30 minutes each day, 5 times per week. Make sure to try-out different physical activities that you enjoy.
- **Eat better:** fruits and vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains and lean meats such as fish are great choices.
- **Maintain a healthy body weight:** help reduce the burden on your heart, lungs, blood vessels and skeleton to improve your overall health.
- **Don't smoke:** there is no safe number of cigarettes. Quitting is the best thing you can do for your health.
- **Control your cholesterol:** this gives your arteries their best chance to remain clear of blockages.
- **Manage your blood pressure:** high blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease. Keeping your blood pressure within healthy ranges reduces the strain on your heart, arteries and kidneys.
- **Reduce your blood sugar:** temporary spikes in blood sugar after meals is normal, but long-term inconsistencies can damage your kidneys, eyes and nerves.



For both men and women, the most common sign of a heart attack is chest pain or discomfort, which includes a feeling of pressure, squeezing, fullness, pain, burning or heaviness. Women, however, can experience a heart attack without chest pressure. They may experience:

- shortness of breath,
- pressure or pain in the lower chest or upper abdomen (i.e., neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back or stomach),
- nausea or gastrointestinal issues,
- dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting, or
- extreme fatigue.

Women often miss the early signs of heart disease or wait too long to seek help. Their symptoms may be vague and as a result, they are less likely to seek medical help.

Find more detailed information about women's heart health in the following resources:

- Women's Healthy Heart Initiative Pamphlet (<http://bit.ly/2Pgq1f6>) and Life's Simple Seven (<http://bit.ly/2w1fxJr>)
- Canadian Women's Heart Health Center's *Heart Disease and Women: What's at Stake?* (<http://bit.ly/32inc2n>)
- Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada's *Take Charge of Your Heart Health—Do you know your risks?* (<http://bit.ly/3a2Jibx>).
- You can also find a long list of resources from the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada (<http://bit.ly/3c4JlWs>)

WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD YOU TAKE IF YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, IS EXPERIENCING A HEART ATTACK?

- Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number immediately, or have someone call for you.
- Stop all activity and sit down or lie down in whatever position is most comfortable.
- If you have been prescribed nitroglycerin, take your normal dosage.
- If you are experiencing chest pain, chew and swallow one adult 325 mg ASA tablet (commonly referred to as Aspirin) or two 80mg ASA tablets.
- Wait for emergency medical services personnel to arrive.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING (MAID) INFORMATION SESSION: UNDERSTANDING THE LAW

During their presentation in early March, Khisnika Dassoruth and Joshua Chmielewski, Law Students from the University of Ottawa, answered many questions about end-of-life care with a focus on MAID.

What is MAID?

Legal in Canada since 2016, MAID permits nurse practitioners, physicians, pharmacists, and “persons aiding practitioners” to administer a medication to those who meet certain specific criteria and who have explicitly requested help to bring about their death.

What are the criteria for accessing MAID?

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Be capable of giving consent to care;
- Be insured under the RAMQ;
- Be at the end of life;
- Suffer from a serious, incurable illness;
- Be in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capability; and
- Experience constant and unbearable physical or psychological suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner the person deems tolerable.

Where can I obtain MAID?

- In institutions of the health and social services network (i.e., hospitals, residential and long-term care centres); or
- At home.

What is the Process?

The request must come from the patient, who must:

- Tell the doctor about the decision orally.
- Ask a health-care professional for the government form and fill it out.
- Sign and date the form in front of a health-care professional and two independent witnesses, who must also sign the form. The witnesses cannot benefit in any way from the person's death (i.e., inheritance).
- Repeat the wish to receive MAID at each new meeting with the doctor or other health-care professional.

People who ask for MAID can change their minds or ask for a postponement at any time during the process.

Find more detailed information on Éducaloi's *Medical Help to Die* (<http://bit.ly/33hBn8n>) and the CISSS de l'Outaouais' *End-Of-Life Care* (<http://bit.ly/2x10lgg>).



ARE YOU, OR A LOVED ONE, SIGNING A LEASE OR CURRENTLY A LESSEE OF A DWELLING LOCATED IN A PRIVATE SENIORS' RESIDENCE?

The following guides offer simple and precise answers on how to act and what actions to take in case of problems when signing a lease or enforcing clauses in your lease or the quality of services provided.

Signing a Lease in a Private Seniors' Residence (<http://bit.ly/3c5jRs3>) provides answers to the most frequently asked questions as well as contact information for resources and services that future tenants may find helpful.

Being a Lessee in a Private Seniors' Residence (<http://bit.ly/2Pde89y>) provides answers about how to act and what actions to take if problems arise, as well as what to do when it is time to renew your lease and, if necessary, how to terminate your lease.

Éducaloi's Caregivers: Practical Legal Tools (<http://bit.ly/2TbIOJx>) and **Private Seniors' Residences** (<http://bit.ly/38Wcgdf>) offer detailed information about leasing.



HOOKED ON SCHOOL DAYS: WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Hooked on School Days (HSD), held from February 17 to 21, was an opportunity for all of us to refocus on one of our most important issues: encouraging young people to stay in school!

This year, the campaign took place under the theme: Our Actions, A+ in their Success. The aim was to illustrate the power of small gestures that anyone can take. When added up, these actions can make a real difference in the success of young people, from pre-schoolers to young adults.

Learn more about HSD: <http://bit.ly/2IR2AW1>



ENCOURAGE SCHOOL PERSEVERANCE!

- Maintain a close bond with your child by doing fun activities together and asking questions.
- Get involved in your child's school life.
- Provide adequate supervision of homework.
- Instill a love of reading and learning.
- Encourage effort, regardless of results.
- Be supportive during tough times.
- Keep an eye out for fatigue from an overload of work or activities.
- Help your child identify their strengths and look to the future.
- Encourage your child to talk to you about their interests and nourish their aspirations.
- Place a high value on your child's success at school, on education as a whole and on graduating from high school.

Find more great ways to encourage perseverance at: <http://bit.ly/2wWENRK>

SUICIDE PREVENTION - TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE SAVES LIVES

This year, Suicide Prevention Week in Québec focused on a critical component of suicide: speaking up and actively listening. Though this week-long campaign has now passed (February 2 to 8), it is important that we continue to break the silence by informing ourselves of the signs of suicide so that we are better prepared to help our loved ones.

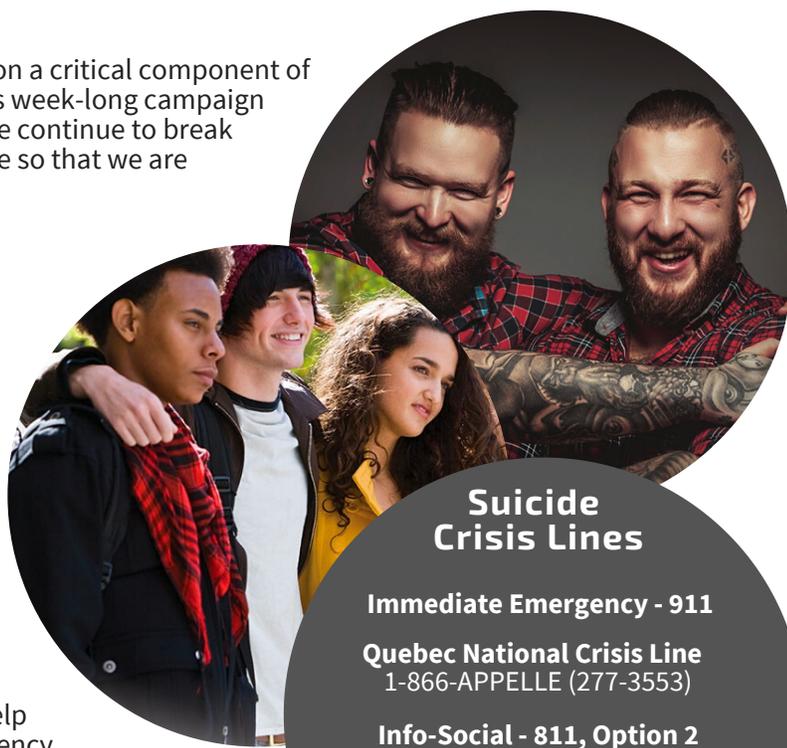
Suicide Warning Signs - What to Look Out For:

- Increased substance use;
- Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness;
- Dramatic mood changes;
- Anxiety, agitation or uncontrolled anger;
- Unable to sleep or sleeping all of the time;
- Feelings of being trapped;
- Withdrawal from friends, family and society;
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking.

You Can Help a Loved One - Break the Silence:

- Be sure to listen and let them know that you are there for them and that there is no judgment;
- If they are having suicidal thoughts, contact the help lines in our list to the right, or dial the local emergency telephone number (9-1-1) in your area;
- Be there for the person who is in need and make sure to follow through with your promised help;
- Make sure to re-connect with them (i.e., either visit, call, send them an email or text them); and
- Help the individual connect with any resources that may help them, including people or services in the community.

Find youth-specific resources: <http://bit.ly/3a4QB3f>



Suicide Crisis Lines

Immediate Emergency - 911

Quebec National Crisis Line
1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)

Info-Social - 811, Option 2
or 819-966-0180

Distress Centre of Ottawa & Region
613-238-3311

Centre D'Aide 24/7
819-595-9999



Association québécoise
de prévention du suicide