December 2023



ARC is dedicated to assisting and empowering people of all ages to access health and social services, information, resources, programs, and activities in English on the South Shore, to promote well-being



Information source for the South Shore English-speaking community ADVSOR

Inside This Issue

Activity Calendar	2
HRR Review	3
GPK News	4
Caregivers Corner	5
Mental Health	6
Community Christmas	7
Community Activities	8
Notable Dates and Tidbits	0



The holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek out ways to make life better for those around us. -Terri Marshall

It's hard to believe that another year is almost behind us and that 2024 is only a month away. In December, our offices will be closed from Friday, December 22 to Tuesday, January 2. We'll be back hard at work on January 3, preparing the next issue of The Advisor and a new month of activities.

Speaking of activities, check out the calendar on the next page for a complete list of what's being offered this month. In addition to the regular roster, we have:

On Monday, December 18, join us for an **Exclusive ARC Members-Only Activity!** The Greenfield Park and St-Jean-sur-Richelieu offices are pleased to invite you to a **Christmas Ornament Workshop** from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Materials will be provided and no crafting experience is necessary. Snacks and refreshments will also be served. Registration is required by contacting Therese at (514) 605-9500 for GPK or Lauren at (450) 357-0386 for St-Jean. Space is limited! If you're not already a member, but would like to attend, for only \$10.00 per year you can become a member and have access to these exclusive activities and events. To sign up, visit our website.

The Community Language Development Program is back with two information sessions in December. This **program is for parents, grandparents and caregivers of children 0-5**. We have a dynamic speech-language pathologist as our host and we'll be talking about strategies to optimize language development when your little one is living in a bilingual world and also understanding how that baby babbling is an important language milestone. See page 4 for more information.

Also for parents, ARC has developed a <u>Resource Guide for Parents of Children with Special Needs and unique abilities</u> and it's live on our website now.

And finally, we would love to hear your thoughts and comments about this newsletter and how we can improve your reading experience! Please take a couple of minutes to <u>complete</u> <u>this form</u>. It's completely anonymous. Thank you so much!

If you have been forwarded this newsletter and wish to **subscribe**, <u>send us an email</u>.

December Activity Calendar

Activities in **bold** are open to everyone. Additional activities may be made available throughout the month, watch for our emails, or check out our website and social media for updates!

For information or to register, please contact our

Administrative Coordinator at: info@arc-hss.ca or call (514) 951-9711

<u>Sun</u>	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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	4 Mother Goose GPK	5 Mother Goose Brossard	6 Mother Goose on Zoom	7 Mother Goose St Lambert	8	9
	English Conversation @ CISSS	English Conversation @ CISSS	English Conversation @ CISSS	English Conversation @ CISSS		
	French Conversation Group	Cook Cave @ Activity Centre	Caregivers Café @ Activity	Ilana's In-Person Drawing Class		Family Wellness
	@ Activity Centre	10:00-12:00	Centre 10:00-11:30	via Zoom 10:00 - 12:00 pm @ Activity Centre		Saturday (
	10:30-11:30 am	Conversations About Grief via Zoom	Mommy & Me Walking Club (St-Jean) 10:00-11:00	Tai Chi/Qi Gong 9:00-10:00		St-Jean Military
	Rock Painting Workshop @ Activity Centre 1:00-2:30 pm	7:00-8:30 pm	SWC @ GPK 1:30-3:00	@ GPK Community Centre		College 10:00-2:00
	Community Language Devel-		SWC @ Chambly 1:30-3:30	Walk & Talk @ GPK 10:30-11:30		10.00-2.00
	opment via Zoom 7:00-8:30 pm		Addie's Colour Café via Zoom	Seniors Activity @ CHSLD		
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				TBN Café Our Harbour 2:00-4:00 pm		
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	French Conversation Group	Social Cooking with Jody @ Activity Centre 10:00 am-12:00 pm	Caregivers Café @ Activity Centre 10:00-11:30	Tai Chi/Qi Gong 9:00-10:00 @ GPK Community Centre		
	@ Activity Centre 10:30-11:30 am		Mommy & Me Walking Club	Walk & Talk @ GPK 10:30-11:30		
	Rock Painting Workshop @	Caregivers Support Group	(St-Jean) 10:00-11:00	Walk & Talk & OFK 10.50-11.50		
	Activity Centre 1:00-2:30 pm	via Zoom 7:00-8:30 pm	SWC @ GPK 1:30-3:00			
	Ilana's Virtual Drawing Class via Zoom 2:00-3:30 pm	Holiday Magic Storytime with	SWC @ Chambly 1:30-3:30			
	AmiQuebec @ Activity Centre	South Shore Literacy @St-Jean				
	6:30-8:00 pm	10:00-11:30				
	Community Language Devel-					
	opment via Zoom 7:00-8:30 pm					
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	Decoration Creation Members-Only Special Activity			Tai Chi/Qi Gong 9:00-10:00 @ GPK Community Centre		
	(GPK and St-Jean)			,		
	1:00-3:00					
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	Merry	ARC	OFFICES	CLOSED		
	Christmas		1			1

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Activities This Month

Before everyone takes a well-deserved break for the holidays, we have a few fun activities happening this month at the **Seniors Wellness Centre in Chambly**. Even if you have never joined us, you are always welcome!

- **December 6:** Name That Tune we will be playing music-themed games, joined by a guest musician.
- ◆ December 13: We will wrap up 2023 with a cozy holiday movie and popcorn party. Please bring a written copy of your favourite holiday recipe as we will be exchanging recipe cards with one another.

Family Wellness Saturday is happening on December 9 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. We will be joined by Canadian Parents for French, which is a nationwide, research-informed, volunteer organization that furthers bilingualism by promoting and creating opportunities to learn and use French for all those who call Canada home. There will also be ornament painting and gifts for every child. Please register beforehand by contacting Lauren.

You and your child are welcome to join us on December 12 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. at our office in St-Jean for **Holiday Magic—A Special Storytime** event, with Rachel Wagner from the South Shore Literacy Council. Please register in advance with Lauren.

'What we leave behind is the greatest love. It is for love that we do it, a love that hurts, especially at times like these, when coloured lights and Christmas spirit fill our days and nights, with nostalgia, sometimes in the half-light we cry a little, asking the moon to be our accomplice and to carry in its light, a hug for our loved ones, one that leaves them alone and that shelters their own nostalgia.'

This is the testimony of a person who uses our satellite office services. She is a professor of English literature at a university in Montreal; it has been almost 5 years since she left her native Argentina to settle in Carignan.

Although it is emotionally difficult for this migrant professional to be away from her parents and children whom she can only hug once every two years, her work is her way to express her love for her family and to guarantee them a better lifestyle. However, some women in our region are not so 'lucky'. Most of the users of the Food Banks in the region are single mothers with small children and female survivors of domestic violence.

"Financially, it's tough. We're living on the verge of poverty," says a 38-year-old mom, who temporarily received welfare and food aid in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, after the birth of her daughter. She was working evenings in an administration position and decided to look for a job with a better schedule. She struggled to find anything better. She even lost a new job when she had to leave midway through training to pick up her sick daughter from daycare. "My boss said he hoped this wouldn't be a trend. I told him I had no choice because I was a single parent."

Single mothers are women who have decided to have more power over their lives, and who are seeking their independence and autonomy. Some have chosen to free themselves from the violence they were experiencing in abusive relationships; which takes a lot of courage. According to Statistics Canada, three out of four single-parent families in Quebec are headed by women.

In Haut Richelieu-Rouville, there are resources that can help these families. We can put you in contact with the resources you need. Call us at (450) 525-1176 or email us at stjeanseniorcoord@arc-hss.ca. In the case of people who want to help alleviate a little of the stress of the holiday season for single mothers in vulnerable situations in our region, we invite you to give a little of your time, fill yourselves with hope and good energy and volunteer with organizations that make a difference for many families. Here are some options:

Women's Centre Chambly www.ainsisoitellecdf.ca
Maison Hina www.maisonhina.com
Women's Centre St-Jean-sur-Richelieu centrefemmeshautrichelieu.ca

Alexi Utrera is our Senior Coordinator in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu. She can be reached at (450) 525-1176 or steanseniorcoord@arc-hss.ca
Lauren McTaggart is our Outreach Coordinator in Haut-Richelieu–Rouville. She can be reached at (450) 357-0386 or stean@arc-hss.ca.



NEWS FROM THE GPK OFFICE

Learning to cook for one is a difficult task for anyone. At the Cook Cave, you will learn recipes and techniques to help you reduce food waste while sharing with others in the same situation. Join us on the first Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Please register with Therese at outreachgpk@arc-hss.ca or (514) 605-9500.

Our 55+ Seniors Wellness activities take place on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00 p.m. Here is the list for the month.

- ◆ December 6: Come & stay active with yoga instructor Sherri Rattray.
- December 13: With Christmas around the corner, come join us for a cozy Christmas movie day with board games, coffee, hot chocolate, sweets, popcorn and great people.

Our **Tai-Chi classes** take place at the GPK Community Centre (located at 330 Gladstone St. in Greenfield Park), from 9:00-

10:00 a.m. on Thursdays. Why not get out there and try something new? It's free, fun and a great way to invest in your well-being by practicing 'meditation in motion'. If you are a new student or continuing on your Tai Chi journey, we kindly ask you to <a href="mailto:e

Our **GPK Walk & Talk group** is a wonderful way to meet some pretty amazing people who love to stroll, socialize and connect with the community! It's also a great opportunity to get some fresh air. Why not give it a try? You'll be glad you did. To register email Tania.

Have you ever wanted to improve your French? You can do it with ARC in a fun and informal social setting! Our **French Conversation Club** takes place on Mondays at the Activity Centre from 10:30-11:30 a.m. For more information, send an email to Tania.

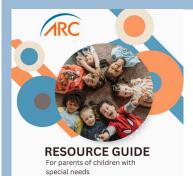
Tania Blood is the Community Outreach Coordinator in our Greenfield Park office, covering the cities of Greenfield Park, Brossard, St-Lambert and St-Hubert. Contact her with any questions at qpk@arc-hss.ca or call (514) 213-3744

Parents of 0-5s: Our Community Language Development Program is back!

We have two great learning opportunities for parents, grandparents and caregivers of children 0-5 coming up on December 4 and December 11 at 7:00 p.m. We have a dynamic speech-language pathologist as our host and we'll be talking about strategies to optimize language development when your little one is living in a bilingual world and also understanding how that baby babbling is an important language milestone. Join us on Zoom and learn from the best of the best - Kristy Findlay from Centre Mosaïque de Québec.

Contact our Early Childhood Program Coordinator for more information and to sign up. caregivers@arc-hss.ca or call (514) 608-9600.

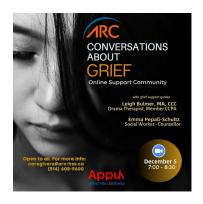




Caregivers of Kids! November 20-26 was the 8th Annual Early Childhood Week. Did you know that there are over 500,000 mini-citizens in Quebec under the age of 5? ARC has developed a resource guide for parents of children with special needs and unique abilities and it's live on our website now. It lists resources and activities that are available in English here in the Montérégie and surrounding areas. It's a collective effort so we're calling on the experts to help us add to it as new resources become available. If you're a parent, then you know best! If there's a service or activity that we should include, then please reach out to tell us about it.



Our **Caregiving Community activities** give caregivers and former caregivers the opportunity to connect, share insights and learn from our team of professionals and community partners. Sometimes we feel the need to put on a brave front and show the people around us that we've set grief aside.



Conversations About Grief is a brave place and a safe space to talk about the person you've lost and feel supported by a community of people who care. With the holiday season upon us, now might be the time to find some tools while sharing what was special about your loved one. Join us on Tuesday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom with grief support guide Leigh Bulmer, drama therapist. Feel some warmth around you as we talk about holiday memories and navigate the festive season when someone important is missing.



Our **Caregivers Cafe** is turning into something remarkable. Why? It's open and welcoming and people are sharing and learning from one another. Respite comes in many forms and this is definitely a way for caregivers to do something nice for themselves while the ARC team serves up cozy refreshments. Are you a former caregiver and feel like maybe you don't fit in now that your role has changed? You have things to teach us and there's a place at the table for you at the Caregivers Cafe. Our nurse consultant Penny Fleming, RN shares insights from her 30+ year career as a health care provider and teacher and will be leading the discussion at both sessions in December. Join us on Wednesday, December 6 + 13 from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. at our Activity Centre at 91 Churchill Blvd.



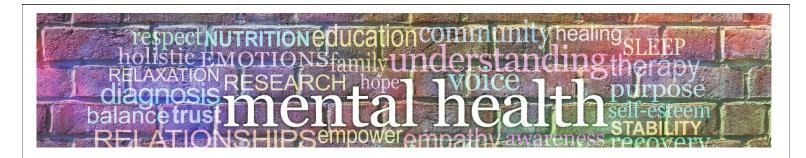
Topics for December:

December 6: First Aid Basics for Caregivers - What to Do in An Emergency. December 13: Caregiver Burnout and Depression - Let's Talk About It

Share your caregiver story! Have you participated in one of our Caregiver Community activities and would like to share a few words? Understanding the impact of our programs helps us showcase our services and gives us the ability to develop new content and activities. We'd love to hear from you. Contact our Program Manager at pm@arc -hss.ca.

Holiday Tip for Caregivers: Simplify your plans and enjoy what truly matters. Forgive yourself if you have fewer decorations this year. Forgive yourself for the online shopping and the skipped Christmas cards. Flip the narrative and congratulate yourself! Remind yourself that as a caregiver, health, and wellbeing are a gift to your loved ones. By skimping on some of the frills and extras from years past, the people you love will have more quality time with you. That is far, far more important than the Hallmark movie Christmas.

Christine Prince is ARC's Caregivers Program Coordinator and oversees the Caregiving Community Programs and grief support group. For information, please feel free to reach out to her at (514) 608-9600 or caregivers@arc-hss.ca.



Violence: A Pervasive Problem in Society

Globally, 1 in 3 of women experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner. 1 in 4 men will report being victims of intimate partner violence. In Canada, 32% of adults report that they experienced abuse in childhood and 25% of students in grades 6 - 12 report being bullied. Because of this, many people seeking services - in health care, housing, justice or other systems - will have histories of violence and trauma.

Trauma is a term used to describe the challenging emotional consequences that living through a distressing event can have for an individual. Traumatic events experienced early in life, such as abuse, neglect and disrupted attachment, can often be devastating. Equally challenging can be later life experiences that are out of one's control, such as a serious accident, being the victim of violence, living through a natural disaster or war, or sudden unexpected loss.

The Montreal Polytechnique massacre that we commemorate every December 6, was an act of violence that was traumatic for all involved and left long-lasting impacts on all of Quebecois society. The people who were present or had family members present will experience trauma which can have varied mental and physical health impacts. Trauma at a societal level, also known as collective trauma, may show up as a reduced sense of security and higher levels of anxiety for anyone who closely followed the media exposure of the event.

Traumatic events can affect physical and mental health in the immediate as well as for many years after the event if you don't have help to process the trauma.

Seeking health care for trauma can be difficult if the provider does not understand the root cause of your psychological and physical symptoms. Seeking out trauma-informed medical care will help ease the difficulty of getting adequate care. Trauma-informed care shifts the focus from "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" A trauma-informed approach to care acknowledges that health care organizations and care teams need to have a complete picture of a patient's life situation - past and present - in order

to provide effective health care services with a healing orientation. You may need to take the time to educate your care provider on your trauma history and spend time learning about how your trauma impacts your daily health. Even accepting that you have trauma that impacts your daily life is a large step towards getting the appropriate care.

In addition to therapy and symptoms management with medication, you can ask your care provider about trauma therapies such as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) or trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy. There are support groups specifically for trauma online and in certain institutions such as the Elspeth McConnell Mental Health and Wellness Centre at the Jewish General Hospital and at the Douglas mental Health Institute. Try to maintain routines such as eating regularly, managing your stress, exercising, getting enough sleep and avoiding drugs and alcohol to help manage more of the symptoms.

Remembering the Victims

It has been over 30 years since the murder of 14 young women at Polytechnique Montréal (December 6, 1989). This act of violent misogyny shook our country and led Parliament to designate December 6 as The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Ways to honour the victims of this tragedy are to wear a white ribbon, observe a moment of silence at 11:00 a.m., attend a vigil in your community, visit the government's <u>website</u>, or follow #16Days on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn. Throughout the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence (from November 25 to December 10), add your voice to the conversation and share the ways you are being part of the solution to end gender-based violence. Use the hashtag #16Days.

Therese Callahan is ARC's Outreach Program Coordinator and oversees the Mental Wellbeing Initiative. For information, please feel free to reach out to her at (514) 605-9500 or outreachapk@arc-hss.ca.



Weekends from November 25-December 17; **Marché de Noël des Traditions de Longueuil,** at St-Mark Park, 340 St-Charles West, Longueuil.

The Greenfield Park Old Fashion Christmas Celebration is on December 2 and is free for the entire community, at Empire Park located at 195 Empire Street in Greenfield Park. From 12:00-5:00 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive at 2:00 p.m. with gifts for all the children, upstairs in Cynthia Coull Arena. There will be a mini farm, pony rides, marshmallow roasting, hot chocolate/coffee and hot dogs free for everyone. The Greenfield Park International Elementary School Choir will be singing between 1:00-4:00. Pat's pet show, princesses, Spiderman and a bake sale will be in the lobby of the arena. There will be a Christmas Market in the Greenfield Park Legion.

Kids Carnival at St. Paul's Church from 1:00-3:00 p.m. See poster on the next page.

December 3 at 10:30 a.m. City Point Church presents **A Christmas in Brossard 2023** live music with Christmas carols and drama on stage, fresh baked Christmas treats and a new toy giveaway for kids up to 12 years of age. Free event, no registration. Cineplex Theatre Quartier Dix30 in Brossard, 9350 Leduc Blvd.

Centennial Regional High School Craft Fair is being held on December 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at 880 Hudson Street in Greenfield Park. 120+ artisans will be on site with their fabulous arts & crafts.

Heritage Regional High School is having a used book sale on December 5; all proceeds will go towards Christmas baskets. Heritage is located at 7445 Chemin Chambly in St. Hubert.

Phoenix Programs Christmas Craft Sale on December 9 in St. Hubert, at 4955 Montée St. Hubert. For more information contact (438) 935-0372 or email dir.phoenixprojects@gmail.com.

Holiday Spectacular with Preville Fine Arts Centre on Sunday, December 10 from 2:00 p.m. See poster on the next page.

Bells & Carols Christmas Concert! Presenting the Village Ringers Handbell Choir & the Montreal Welsh Male Choir, Thursday, December 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the St. Lambert Unit-

ed Church, 85 Desaulniers Blvd., St. Lambert. Tickets: \$20 at the door.

Christmas at the Bleu Blanc Bouge rink! December 17 from 12:00-4:00 p.m. Music, games and several surprises. Free access and free equipment rental.

On December 17 the **Children of St. Paul's Church** will be leading the Christmas service in the morning and it will include their annual Christmas pageant put on by the children. It starts at 10:30 a.m. and usually lasts about an hour. For more info, please send an email to Gloria @gkidd71@yahoo.com.

Join us for an **Exclusive ARC Member Only Activity** this month on Monday, December 18! The Greenfield Park and St-Jean-sur-Richelieu offices are pleased to invite you to a **Christmas Ornament Workshop** from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Materials will be provided and no crafting experience is necessary. Snacks and beverages will also be served. Registration is required by contacting Therese at (514) 605-9500 for GPK or Lauren at (450) 357-0386 for St-Jean.

On December 25, Christmas Day, the Rodney family will be hosting a **Christmas turkey dinner** for any senior who will be spending their day ALONE. This is not for families to come, only for seniors who have no family nearby. For more info, please call Rod @ (514) 983-4278 or Debbie (514) 515-4278.

Christmas Food Baskets

- Brossard (450) 445-7124 for registration and information.
- ◆ Greenfield Park (450) 463-7100 p. 2327. Registration until December 14, Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. People need to come to the Cynthia Coull Arena to register in person. 195 Empire St., Basket distribution will occur December 20.
- ◆ Saint-Lambert (450) 671-5721, ext. 0, Paroisse St-Thomas d'Aquin. Call for registration and information.

Santa Visits at the Mall

- Place Longueuil, 825 Saint-Laurent West, local 85, Longueuil
- ♦ Mail Champlain, 2151 Boulevard Lapinière, Brossard
- Promenades St. Bruno, 1 Blvd. des Promenades, St-Bruno -de-Montarville

discover community activities for all

Holiday Restaurant Get-together with Celiac Canada on Friday, December 1 at 6 pm at the Scores Rôtisserie, located at 444 Dorval Avenue, #115, Dorval H9S 3H7. The owner of this particular Scores franchise is very knowledgeable about celiac disease. <u>Email</u> for more info or just show up and ask for the Celiac Support Group table.

Free Basic Computer Classes for beginners on Monday, December 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Brossard Library, 7855 San Francisco, multi-purpose room. Contact Michele Tibblin at (450) 923-6311, ext. 6280 or email michele.tibblin@brossard.ca.

Hope + Cope is there to support you through your cancer journey. You are not alone. Join the webinar about *Managing your Fatigue*, open to cancer survivors and caregivers. December 4 from 6.00-7.30 p.m. For more info. Click here.

South Shore Retired Educators Festive Luncheon is on December 7. Retiring this year? Or have you already retired? Want to keep in touch with retired colleagues and have fun? Anyone who has worked with students or staff in Elementary and High School education as a Teacher, Support Staff, Administrator or School Board Personnel is welcome. Send an email to southshoreretirededucators@gmail.com to reserve your place.

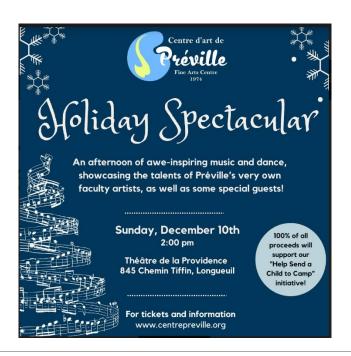
Caring about someone who lives with mental illness can take a toll on your physical and mental well-being. Join **Ami -Quebec** on December 13 for some tips and resources and an interactive discussion that will help ease your stress level. An online virtual interactive workshop for stress management from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Click here to register or send an email to register or call (514) 486-1448 with any questions.

Mission Nouvelle Generation: The MNG Store situated beside the Mission at 1423 Provencher Blvd. in Brossard offers a large variety of new and used goods at low prices. Clothing, home accessories, furniture and other interesting items to be found. Click here for more info.

The South Shore Literacy Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to offering free literacy programming, tutoring for adults, a Care-Share Program for adults with developmental delays, the Mother Goose Pre-Literacy Music Program for parents and their infant children (ages 0-4) and inclusive senior programming. Click here for more info.

La Maison Internationale de la Rive-Sud is an independent community organization, whose mission is to support newcomers and public refugees with the settlement process and socio-economic integration. For more info click here.





The Last Word

Vent Over Tea: Not everyone needs advice, just someone to listen. Vent Over Tea offer a free and confidential active listening service to all members of the local community to promote mental wellness and connection, by pairing people who need to vent with great listeners.

What is active listening? Active listening is a skill that requires full attention to the speaker and consists of verbal and non-verbal cues displayed by the listener. In essence, it's listening to understand, and not listening to respond.

Their volunteers can help you work through your problems by asking reflective questions and showing empathetic regard. Click <u>here</u> for more info.

Winter Driving

Along with colder temperatures, snow, and ice, winter also brings potentially dangerous driving conditions. Slippery roads and decreased visibility can make driving in Canadian winters a challenge. Get prepared by following a few simple tips, provided by Public Safety Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Automobile Association.

Slow down – Fog, black ice, slush or snow-covered roads can make driving dangerous.

Get winter tires – Traction is the key to good movement, turning and stopping on wet, slushy or icy surfaces.

Top-up windshield fluid - Fill up on winter washer fluid and replace wiper blades that streak.

Keep the gas tank topped up - When driving in bad weather, think caution, plan ahead and make sure you have enough fuel. Keep the fuel tank at least half full.

See and be seen - clear all snow from the hood, roof, windows and lights. Clear all windows of fog or ice.

Get an emergency car kit – Have the appropriate safety and emergency winter equipment always stored in your car.

Learn more by visiting Transpost Canada's website.

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You may <u>unsubscribe</u> at any time.

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Haut-Richelieu-Rouville

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www.arc-hss.ca

This ARC initiative is thanks to funding provided by Canadian Heritage and the Secretariat aux relations avec les Quebecois d'expression anglaise.

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