



CENTRE COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION
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May 19, 2010 – Do You Know What GED Stands For?

Lynn L. Jaffe, ABE/GED Counselor with State College Area School District Community Education. This weekly column, published on Wednesdays, is a collaboration of Centre County *Communities That Care* serving Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and Philipsburg-Osceola Area School Districts, and Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care* serving the State College Area School District.

If you guessed General Education Development, score one. Now, do you know someone who took the GED Tests and passed? Note the keyword tests. The GED is a compilation of five tests (mathematics, science, social studies, reading and writing) given over eight hours, which provides adults who did not graduate from a traditional high school, the opportunity to validate their academic knowledge. Not an easy task to achieve, as only 60% of graduating seniors would be able to pass the GED Tests on their first try.

As the ABE(Adult Basic Education)/GED Counselor for the State College Area School District's Community Education ABE Program, one of the most satisfying components of my job is calling students to let them know that they passed the GED Tests. What most people do not realize is that students do not complete formal high school for a wide variety of reasons: family issues, psychological problems associated with being in a traditional classroom, lack of attendance for health related issues, academic shortcomings, the need for income and the list goes on. Students must be 18 years of age to test, unless they meet specific criteria for 16 and 17 year olds. The age range of those testing is anywhere from 16 years to 75 and beyond.

Passing the GED Tests can open doors that have been previously closed for many adults. Earning that diploma can enable adults to secure employment, become eligible for better employment opportunities, enter post-secondary education and fulfill a lifelong goal. Currently, 98% of colleges and universities accept the GED Diploma as admissible, and 96% of employers that require a high school degree accept the GED credential. More than 14.1 million adults have earned the GED Diploma worldwide since the program's inception in 1949. Here in Centre County, recent GED graduates have started classes at PSU, the South Hills School of Business and Technology, the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology, and elsewhere throughout the state and country.

To help prepare for the GED Tests there are currently three programs in the area that offer valuable services: the Development Center for Adults at the Central Pennsylvania Institute (CPI) of Science and Technology, the SCASD Community Education's Adult Education Center, and the Mid State Literacy Council. All of these programs offer classes and practice tests to assist with GED preparation.

Both CPI and the SCASD hold a yearly graduation for successful GED candidates. This year's CPI graduation will be held at the Pleasant Gap location on May 21 and the SCASD will hold their graduation at Mt. Nittany Middle School on June 9 - quite an emotional and uplifting event to attend.

Congratulations to the class of 2009-2010, and best of luck to all those pursuing GED studies. For more information, please contact me at 235-5582 or llj12@scasd.org.

Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care*
Serving State College Area School District
Dawn Taylor, Community Mobilizer, 814-237-6191
dtaylor105@gmail.com
Web address: carecentreregion.org

Centre County *Communities That Care*
Serving the School Districts of Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and
Philipsburg-Osceola
Elizabeth Eckley, Community Mobilizer, 814-404-9511
centrecountyctc@yahoo.com
Web address: centrecountyctc.org

