

Why is adult education so important?

Forty-five percent of the adult population has basic skills deficiencies and they ripple through many sectors of society, including:

- **Business:** American businesses lose more than \$60 billion in productivity each year due to employees' basic skill deficiencies (NIFL). Furthermore, new jobs require advanced skills. Public schools produce only 2% of the workforce annually.
- **Children's education:** Children of parents who are unemployed and have not completed high school are five times more likely to drop out than children of employed parents. Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents, especially their mothers. Adult education prepares parents to be their child's first and most important teachers.
- **Public Health:** 46% of American adults can not read and follow medical instructions (AMA). According to the NAAL (National Assessment of Adult Literacy, 2003), senior citizens have the most difficulty.
- **Corrections:** Participation in correctional education reduces re-arrest, re-convictions, and re-incarceration.
- **Immigrants:** Only 1.5 million of the nation's 20 million limited English speakers can access adult English language and literacy instruction.
- **Learning Disabled:** 50% of adults without a high school diploma are learning disabled.

How effective are adult education programs?

During the previous Administration, OMB rated adult education as "effective" — its highest rating. A review of state data also demonstrates the effectiveness of adult education in serving those in need of assistance. Adult Education is a good investment!

National needs alter plans for 5th Edition GED Test

Reprinted from *The Community* (Newsletter for GED Testing Professionals and Adult Educators), October 2009



Over the past several months the movement towards more rigorous national standards for high school education has gained momentum. This changing national conversation on what it means to be a high school graduate and what is needed to be college- and career-ready has a direct impact on the GED Test. We must introduce changes and improvements to the GED Test that are aligned with this new direction. As a result, GED Testing Service® will not introduce a GED Test, 5th Edition, on January 1, 2012.

Because of the changing national landscape we will work with the field, government and other stakeholders to transition directly from the current 2002 Test Series to a new, more comprehensive assessment program. This new program, GED 20/20™, will dramatically increase the number of test-takers and GED credential recipients who are prepared to pursue postsecondary education opportunities. Elements of the new program will be introduced as early as 2010.

For more information, visit www.acenet.edu; click on the GED icon.

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Guide maps pathways to work

The National Center on Education and the Economy recently released its 52-page [Guide to Adult Education for Work: Transforming Adult Education to Grow a Skilled Workforce](#). The new report, funded by the Walmart Foundation, lays out specific steps that policymakers, program administrators, and providers can take to begin to transform existing programs into adult education for work programs. It includes:

- a vision for constructing a comprehensive career pathways system to better meet our nation's skill needs,
- a framework for an effective adult education for work program with 23 quality elements in seven focus areas designed to prepare adults for both postsecondary learning and work, and
- benchmarks and promising practices that illustrate quality elements already implemented in programs across the country.

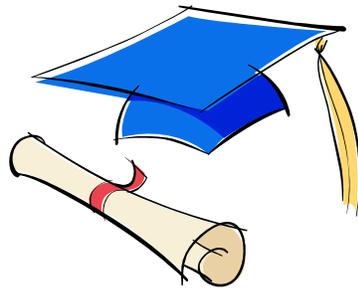
The guide includes a self-assessment tool that providers can use to evaluate their programs against a recommended set of benchmarks, identify gaps, and plan strategically for change. An [Employer Guide to Adult Education for Work: Transforming Adult Education to Build a Skilled Workforce](#) is also available.

Search for the documents at www.jff.org.

New models for transition

New partnership models for transition programs are detailed in a report published in October by the Workforce Strategy Center. Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, [Employers, Low-Income Young Adults and Postsecondary Credentials: A Practical Typology for Business, Education and Community Leaders](#) offers models for education and training programs involving employers in efforts to help disadvantaged young adults attain postsecondary credentials leading to career-track employment. The study identified 14 model programs led by five distinct types of organizations: community-based organizations, community and technical colleges, employers, industry, and social enterprise organizations.

Visit www.workforcestrategy.org to view or download the publication.



New Web site prepares students for college

The National College Transition Network (NCTN) recently launched www.collegeforadults.org, a site geared for independent study or as a supplement to in-class work. It teaches study skills, links to sites with academic online preparation, and guides prospective college students through offices such as Admissions and Student Support.

Most GED classes do not fully prepare adults for college. They do not teach adults how to write term papers, read college texts, understand college terminology, take notes at a lecture, or navigate the college environment. The [College for Adults](#) Web site helps to fill these gaps.

The site was piloted at three Massachusetts adult ESOL programs and redesigned this year with funding from Verizon Foundation, Massachusetts.

NCTN moves research to practice

The National College Transition Network (www.collegetransition.org) provides many strategies for helping ABE students transition successfully to postsecondary education. The "Promising Practices" button links to detailed descriptions of field-tested strategies, as well as research that has been "translated" to strategies for use by teachers, counselors, program coordinators, and others.

Some examples:

- ✓ Research to Practice 3: [Contextualized Grammar Instruction for College Transition Students](#)
- ✓ Research to Practice 5: [Strategies to Facilitate Reading Comprehension in College Transition Students](#)
- ✓ Research to Practice 6: [Learning Communities: Promoting Retention and Persistence in College](#)
- ✓ Promising Practice 4: [Preparing Students for College-level Math](#)
- ✓ Promising Practice 5: [Transition to College Monthly Mentor Evenings](#)
- ✓ Promising Practice 9: [Wrap-Around Services](#)



Get published!

Women's Perspectives: What would you do? Creative ideas for difficult times.

Women's Perspectives issue #5 will showcase original writings and artwork by adult literacy/basic education students across all levels. Student writers and artists are encouraged to reflect and to share ideas on this theme. For example:

- What would a "better world" look like to you? What would you do to make this happen? How do women leaders change the world?
- What are the most pressing issues affecting women today? And what would you do to address one or many of these issues?
- In a position of authority or as a decision-maker, what would you do to solve the big issues of the day where you live or work?

Submission deadline
for issue #5 is
December 11!

Back issues, as well as more details and ideas about this theme, are available at

<http://www.litwomen.org/perspectives/>. Contact welearn@litwomen.org for additional information.

National Gallery of Writing accepting general submissions

ProLiteracy and the National Gallery of Writing have launched a Web site where students and people who work with them can publish their writings and share their experiences, ideas, and opinions about teaching, learning, or any other topic that interests them.

Students may write the pieces themselves or dictate them to their tutors/teachers. The pieces can be descriptions of how their lives have changed as they learned to read or to speak English, stories about experiences or someone they admire, letters to friends or relatives, poems, reviews of movies, recipes, lists of steps to make or do something, grocery lists, descriptions of jobs or hobbies, their hopes for their future or that of their children, etc. It doesn't matter if students are beginning or experienced writers — all writers are welcome!

Contributions
accepted through
May 2010

The Gallery will also accept photos, drawings, audio files, or links to videos that the person has created and housed elsewhere, such as on YouTube.

Writings went public on October 20. Contributions will be accepted through May 2010. [Visit the website \(www.galleryofwriting.org\)](#), search for the ProLiteracy Gallery) to learn more or to submit a piece of writing.

The National Gallery of Writing is sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English with funding support from Verizon and Verizon Thinkfinity. For more information about the ProLiteracy Gallery, contact Linda Church at lchurch@proliteracy.org.

Key conferences for 2010

What: COABE/ProLiteracy Joint Conference, March 15-19, 2010, Chicago, IL
Contact: www.coabe.org

What: 44th Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibit, March 24-27, Boston, MA
Contact: www.tesol.org/s_tesol/convention2010/

What: Mountain Plains Adult Ed. Association (MPAEA) 2010 Conference, April 21-24, Phoenix, AZ
Contact: www.mpaea2010.org

What: CATESOL 2010 Annual State Conference, April 22-25, Santa Clara, CA
Contact: www.catesol2010.org/



The new normal?

Jobs held by low-skilled adults may not be coming back, according to Anthony Carnevale, director of Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce. The current recession is "remarkable," he noted, because workers who lose jobs may not be coming back to the same job, employer or even occupation. "The current recession has accelerated the shift in America's economy toward selecting workers based on broad skills gained from postsecondary education." —Lumina Foundation podcast, 4/9/09



This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion or religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ADULTS
WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS**

NAASLN offers Webinars focused on math

The National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs is offering a series of one-hour Webinars focused on teaching math to adults with learning differences in December and January. The sessions will be led by Dr. Richard Cooper, director and founder of the Center for Alternative Learning and nationally acclaimed learning specialist, trainer, speaker, and author.

The live events are at 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Eastern time and cost \$20 each for NAASLN members, \$40 for non-members. Visit www.naasln.org to register.

Math I - Learning Differences, Difficulties and Disabilities that Limit Math Skills, Dec. 2

Presents information about the effects learning problems have on math and suggestions for handling issues involving auditory processing, attention, right/left discrimination, memory, and organizing/sequencing.

Math II: Developing Number Sense/Quantitative Concepts with Adults Who Learn Differently, Dec. 16

Learn techniques for instructing adults who have underdeveloped number sense and poor quantitative concepts. Participants will learn why some basic concepts are misunderstood by adults with learning problems and how to fill gaps that many of these adults have in their understanding of numbers, quantities, and math operations.

Math III: Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division, Jan. 6

Demonstration of alternative techniques useful with adults who have problems learning, including techniques for completing the basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Dr. Cooper will explain and show how adults can increase their speed, accuracy, and self-confidence about doing basic arithmetic.

Math IV: Teaching Fractions to Adults with Learning Differences, Jan. 20

Provides a variety of techniques for teaching fractions to adults who understand “parts” in everyday life but cannot make the connection between the numbers and the quantities.