

Graduation: rite-of-passage, or reason to party?

By Seth W. Caton, Outreach & Recruitment Specialist

When does a boy become a man? Is it when he learns to drive, graduates from high school, or gets a job?

When does a girl become a woman? Is it when she gets her first kiss, becomes a mom, or goes to college? Isn't being an adult about more than a piece of paper, a pregnancy, or a paycheck?

Most American families don't have a common defining moment where the children say "Now I'm an adult - now I'm responsible."

Yet in other parts of the world, the day a child becomes an adult (and is expected to act like one) is clear and marked

by a significant event or rites of passage.

For example, a boy must be brave enough to go on his first hunt and spend a night alone in the wilderness. In other places, adulthood is marked by a child having his face tattooed or his or her ear pierced.

Perhaps a child is expected to accomplish physical feats such as climbing a mountain with other men or swimming across a small river. Similar

tests exist for both boys and girls.

The men and women of such societies take care to prepare their children for each rite of passage so each child becomes a responsible adult and part of society.

This way of thinking is a different mindset, and it's rooted in childhood. Children go through life stages, and each one brings new levels of responsibility:

starting kindergarten, graduating sixth grade, entering high school, sweet sixteen party, senior prom, turning 18 (or 21) and graduating high school or college.

You have a choice - these marks of adulthood can be reasons to party, or reasons to mature. You are the teacher of what each event or accomplishment means for your child and you.

If you truly expect a boost in maturity, be prepared to offer more responsibility with each rite of passage. Be prepared for them to fail sometimes, and be sure you're there to support and encourage them to try again. Good luck!



Additional resources about rites of passage

...and how they can help you to raise more responsible children

WEB SITES:

The Rite Journey: <http://theritejourney.com.au>

National Rites of Passage Institute: <http://www.ritesofpassage.org>

Wikipedia "Rite of Passage" entry: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rite_of_passage

BOOKS:

Rite of Passage Parenting: Four Essential Experiences to Equip Your Kids for Life written by Walker Moore

Coming of Age: African American Male Rites of Passage written by Paul Hill, Jr.

The Journey: Adolescent Rites of Passage written by Paul Hill, Jr.

Free stuff to do!

Questions? Call us at 724-437-2590 x322.

Dad 2 Dad class

Starts date to be announced!

Become a more confident, involved, and loving father in just six 2-hour sessions. Get up to \$100 in Sheetz or Walmart gift cards (plus an official Dads Matter t-shirt) when you complete the class! Call 724-437-2590 to register!

Annual Plant Sale (with free kids activities)

Sat., May 7 - 8am-2pm

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 501 Fairfield Drive, Greensburg, PA

Dry Ridge Garden Club will be selling hardy perennials and herbs, and there will be a bake sale, flea market, lunch, and a free children's education and activity corner called "Gardening Is For the Birds." Call 724-832-9260 for more info.

Internet Crime Prevention Seminar

Wed., May 11 - 7-9pm

Penn Township Police Department, Irwin, PA

Police and representatives from the state Attorney General's Office will discuss Internet and mail scams and methods of protection from predators. First-come, first-serve. Call Sgt. Augustine DeGuffroy at 724-863-1119, ext. 170 for more info.

Free Sunday Evening Band Concert

Sun., May 29 - starts @ 7pm

Town Square Bandstand, Ligonier, PA

Every Sunday all summer! Call 724-238-4200 for more info.

SummerSounds - Greensburg's Concerts in the Park

Fri., June 3 - 7-9:30pm

St. Clair Park (downtown), 135 N. Maple Ave., Greensburg, PA

Every Friday all summer! Music ranges from jazz to rock to bluegrass, with a taste of folk, new age and country. Bring a blanket or lawn chair if you want. Call 724-838-4323 for more info.

DAD 2 DAD

FREE CLASS FOR DADS

Be a more confident, involved and loving father in six 2-hour sessions. When you complete the program you'll get up to \$100 in gift cards plus an official Dads Matter t-shirt!

- Learn discipline that works
- Understand yourself & your kids
- Boost your confidence
- Communicate better
- Get more involved
- Deal with anger issues
- Build up your fathering skills

CALL TO SIGN UP FOR FREE

724-437-2590 X322



480A Coolspring Road
Uniontown, PA 15401



Dads Matter is a program of the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc.

It's only **six**
Wednesday nights!
5:30PM - 7:30PM

Start date to be announced!!

Call Dads Matter for more class dates and locations!

Mission Statement: "Dads Matter of Fayette County's mission is to enable fathers to improve their relationships with their children; improve parenting skills; and help fathers overcome barriers that often prohibit them from being effective and nurturing parents by providing them with training and learning opportunities."
Eligibility & Corporate Info: (1) These services are available to all eligible persons, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, or religion. (2) Dads Matter of Fayette County is a program of the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. Participation in Dads Matter of Fayette County is FREE and strictly voluntary. (3) The Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit corporation headquartered in Greensburg, PA.
Funding Info: (1) Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant: 90FR0075/05. (2) Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

The Dad Difference

May 2011 Newsletter

FREE NEWSLETTER FOR DADS

GRADUATION: RITE OF PASSAGE, OR REASON TO PARTY?

GET UP TO \$100 IN GIFT CARDS - GO TO A DAD 2 DAD CLASS!

FREE STUFF TO DO IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY

A free publication of
 **Dads Matter**

 Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/dadsmatter

Private Industry Council
OF WESTMORELAND/FAYETTE, INC.