

# CALL & POST

CLEVELAND EDITION

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## Old Stone Foundation helps dropout moms earn GEDs



Above: Children of Old Stone Foundation participants enjoy a snack in the toddler room. Left: The Old Stone Foundation provides child care for dropout moms pursuing a G.E.D.

By RHONDA CROWDER  
Staff Reporter

Since the '80s, The Old Stone Foundation has served to improve the quality of life for the less fortunate in our community by providing opportunities in education, family structure and job skills.

And, just recently, they've had a change of guard as Art Mayers – who served as executive director for more than 10 years – has retired and Marc Nathanson – former director of development at New Life Community – has taken his place.

Serving moms and moms-to-be who didn't finish high school, the program helps them achieve a performance level that prepares them to take the G.E.D. test. Classes are from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participants have to be at an 11th-grade level before they can take the G.E.D. practice test. Then they can go on to take the official test.

"There are 14 G.E.D. sites sponsored by [the Cleveland Metropolitan School District], but we are the only one who serves moms," said Nathanson,



Providing G.E.D. classes is just one of several support services mothers can access through the Old Stone Foundation.

who explained that they have a full-time G.E.D. instructor, as well as a tutor and skills enrichment instructor who assists with reading, math and writing.

He also explained that the program goes beyond academics by providing a parenting teacher that makes home visits. Participants are also given books, for herself as well as her child, to take home and build a library. There's a health care

component with a nurse who instructs the mothers on nutrition, sexually transmitted diseases and CPR, as well.

Additionally, computer literacy classes teaching Microsoft Word, Excel, use of the Internet and e-mail are conducted between from 2-3 p.m., while there is an on-site daycare, serving children from 6 months to 5 years.

And, the school to work pro-

gram or vocational training option helps the participants once they received their G.E.D. Then, the Old Stone Foundation will assist the students with college enrollment or securing employment.

Typically, Old Stone Foundation enrolls girls between ages 16 to 18 years but will accept any mother who needs to get a G.E.D. Between 2007 and 2008, they've served 42 students with 10 having passed the G.E.D. and 4 passing the practice test.

There's no timeframe to complete the program so students work at their own pace.

Because the program is partnered with CMSD, all of Old Stone Foundations' teachers come from the district. A portion of the pay comes from CMSD while Old Stone Foundation also raises money to support the teaching staff.

"Our staff works with each student to make a sure all individual needs are met to move on," said Nathanson.

To learn more about educational programs at The Old Stone Foundation visit Old Stone Foundation.org or call (216) 241-0311.