

Hi, my name is Jessica Nicholas, and this is my story on my returning to learning, as well as the journey that I have taken to get to where I am today.

I have been fighting my whole life to get my education. I've had to realize on my own how important that was. Along my difficult journey I have had to deal with many struggles, from my parents splitting up when I was very young to where I currently am today, a single mother who will soon be getting her CAEC! I will now tell you about my own personal journey.

By the time I was born, all my older siblings, except my brother Carl who is a year and a half older than me, were living with other family members. When I was 4 years old my parents split up. They both tried their best to take care of us. Unfortunately, they had struggles of their own to deal with, which in turn hindered us from getting our education.

Most of my younger years were spent living with my mom. She moved around a lot during these years, which made it very difficult for me, having to learn from so many different teachers along with trying to make new friends. This eventually led to me dropping out of high school.

As I became a young adult, I realized that I needed to finish my education, so I decided to start working on my GED. However, I did not have my status, so my spot had to be given to someone who had their status. While fighting for my status to remain in Canada, my father became sick, so I had to move to Maine where my father was living, in order to take care of him. While there, I decided to start my HISET, which is an actual High School diploma.

After awhile my father got better, but I also found out that I was pregnant. Therefore, my boyfriend and I decided to move back to New Brunswick. There were more job opportunities there, and I would also be able to fight for my status.

We moved in with my mother, and I started to once again fight for my status so that I could continue with my GED. As I was getting closer to my due date, my mother suffered a serious injury which would eventually lead to her losing her leg. She eventually was sent to Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton. While she was there, I was also there where my beautiful baby daughter, Jaylin, was born. Since we were fortunate enough to be in the same hospital together, this allowed my mother to be able to meet her beautiful granddaughter. I also got my status, which would allow me to continue working on my GED.

When my mother returned home, she still required a lot of care. On top of that I was raising my newborn, who also required much care. All along I had been planning to continue with

my GED, but due to all these struggles I was having to cope with, I had to put my educational goals aside a bit longer.

I am now proud to say that, despite all the struggles I've had to overcome, I have completed three of my GED/CAEC tests: Science, Reading, and Writing. Now I only have two more subjects to pass: Math and Social Studies. I only have two more workbooks in Math to complete and pass the assessment on. After that is done, and I feel confident that I will pass, I write the CAEC test and then only have Social Studies left to write.

Upon my completion of my CAEC, I intend to do one of two things. One possibility is starting my own business as a hairdresser. The other one is going to Community College to become a carpenter. I cannot wait for this next chapter of my life to start!

Jessica Nicholas