

BETter Living ...

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September 24, 2015

Celebrate Family Day – September 28

Do you remember the last time your family sat down and ate a meal at the table? If you are saying yes, that is great. If you are having to think more, I encourage you to plan a meal time to sit down as a family. Next Monday, September 28, is Family Day, a day to sit down and eat a meal with your family. Another suggestion would be to have a no electronic policy while at the table. Without electronics, family members will be encouraged to communicate with one another, which will foster a positive environment and relationships.

Children and teens who eat dinner with their families 5-7 times per week are less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs, according to recent studies by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASAColumbia®). Children and teens who have frequent family dinners are also more likely to report having excellent relationships with their parents.

Family Day – Be Involved. Stay Involved.® is a national movement launched by CASAColumbia® in 2001 to inform parents that frequent family dinners can make a difference. Celebrated annually on the fourth Monday of September, Family Day promotes parental engagement as a simple and effective way to reduce the risk of substance use in children and teens. The campaign has been coordinated statewide since 2002 by Kansas Family Partnership (KFP).

Over the past 20 years, CASAColumbia® has surveyed thousands of American children, teens and their parents to identify situations and circumstances that influence the risk of youth substance abuse. Nine out of 10 Americans who meet the medical criteria for addiction started smoking, drinking or using drugs before age 18. Thus, children and teens who get through age 21 without smoking, abusing alcohol or using illegal drugs are virtually certain never to do so.

For resources to celebrate Family Day, including recipes, dinner ideas and conversation starters, visit Kansas Family Partnership's website at www.kansasfamily.com/family-day-campaign. Find KFP on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ksfamilypartner and Twitter @KsFamilyPartner.