

Family Day Sept 23rd

September 16, 2013

FREQUENT FAMILY DINNERS IMPACT YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE RATES
Family Day is Sept. 23, a day to enjoy a family meal

TOPEKA - Children and youth who eat dinner with their families frequently are less likely to drink, smoke or use drugs, according to a recent study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASAColumbia™). Kansans are encouraged to take part in *Family Day—A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children* on Sept. 23.

***Family Day* is a national movement that promotes parental engagement as a simple and effective way to reduce youth risk of drinking, smoking and using drugs. *Family Day*, celebrated on the fourth Monday of September, was launched as a campaign by CASAColumbia in 2001, and has been coordinated statewide by Kansas Family Partnership (KFP) since 2002.**

“I wish every Kansas child had the opportunity to eat dinner with his or her family every night of the week, but busy schedules can make that difficult to accomplish,” Kansas First Lady and Kansas Family Day Honorary Chair Mary Brownback said. “I encourage families to make time to eat dinner together on Sept. 23 for *Family Day*. It is an ideal time to strengthen relationships with our children.”

Over the past 18 years, CASAColumbia has surveyed thousands of American youth and parents to identify situations that influence the risk of youth substance use. These surveys have consistently found a relationship between youth who have frequent family dinners and youth who don’t drink, smoke or use drugs. As a result, CASAColumbia has concluded that parental engagement fostered at the dinner table is one of the most effective tools to keep youth drug free.

“We know that quality family time plays an important role in the development of children,” Kansas Department for Children and Families Secretary Phyllis Gilmore said. “The more we can make family a priority, the better it is for child well-being.”

Although Kansans are encouraged to have a dinner together on *Family Day*, organizers of the observance hope this family time will turn into habit.

“We hope that *Family Day* will remind parents to make family dinners an important part of their regular routines,” Executive Director of Kansas Family Partnership Michelle Voth said.

For resources to celebrate *Family Day*, including recipes, dinner ideas and conversation starters, visit Kansas Family Partnership’s website at www.kansasfamily.com. Additional information can be found by following KFP on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kansasfamily or on Twitter @KsFamilyPartner.

Kansas Family Partnership, Inc., is a statewide nonprofit that promotes safe and healthy youth, families and communities by connecting them with substance abuse prevention education, networks and resources. KFP provides drug prevention programs for youth, coordinates statewide drug awareness campaigns and a drug prevention material clearinghouse, supports prevention providers and healthcare professionals, and informs lawmakers about sound drug policy. KFP is the statewide coordinator of Family Day, Red Ribbon, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and Kansas Youth Leadership Summit. Family Day is funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.