

FAMILY DAY

A Day to Eat Dinner with
Your Children

SAVE THE DATE

Every Year on the
Fourth Monday in
September

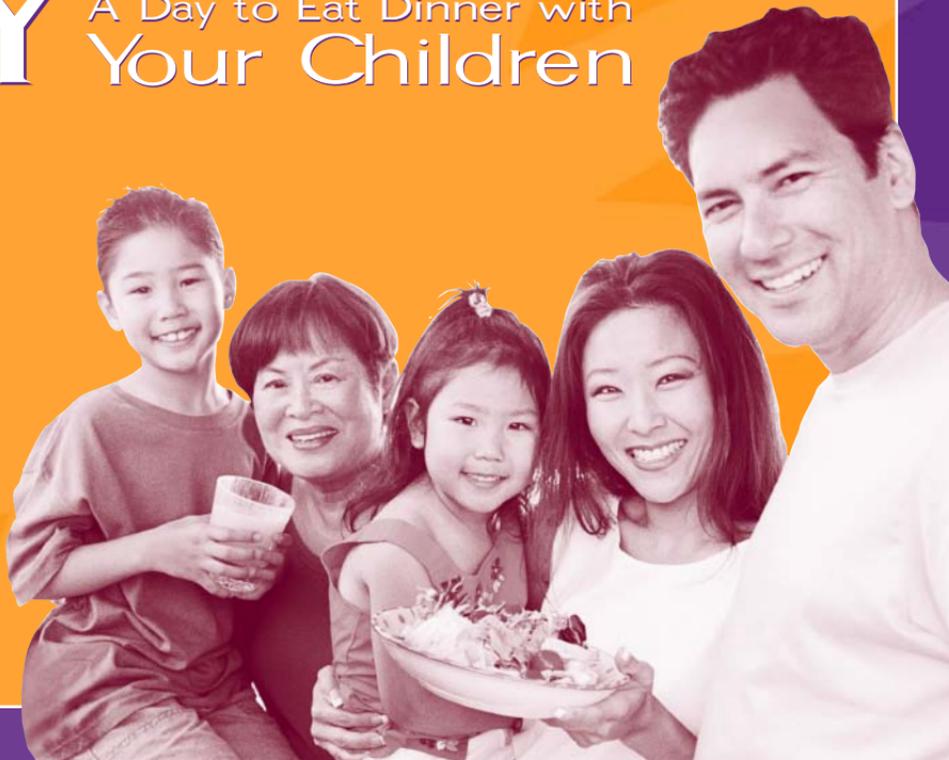
Future Family

Day Dates:

Sept. 27, 2004

Sept. 26, 2005

Sept. 25, 2006



Tips for
SUCCESSFUL
Family Meals

- During dinner, turn off the TV, computer, and video games. Ignore the telephone.
- Establish a routine to start and end each meal. Light candles, say grace, or tell a story.
- Talk about what happened in everyone's day: school, work, friends, or current events.
- Keep the conversation positive and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.
- Linger after dinner and continue the conversation.
- Start the pattern of family dinners when children are young. However, it's never too late to begin this important practice.
- Celebrate by eating together with all your extended family members.

FAMILY DAY

IS A NATIONAL EFFORT
TO PROMOTE FAMILY
DINNERS AS A SIMPLE,
EFFECTIVE STRATEGY TO
REDUCE DRUG USE BY
CHILDREN AND TEENS
AND TO STRENGTHEN
FAMILIES.

BENEFITS of Family Meals

- Sharing meals on a regular basis supports parent-child bonding. Regular family meals provide a sense of routine that is especially comforting to children.
- Parents are the most powerful influence in their children's daily lives. During family meals, as children talk about their day, parents learn more about the challenges their children face and discover opportunities to guide them.
- Children who more frequently eat meals with their parents say that their parents know what is really going on in their lives and make them feel important and loved.
- Regardless of income, family structure, or child gender, eating together frequently is associated with doing well in school, developing healthy eating habits, and reducing risk for delinquent behavior and drug use.

- Teens that have dinner often with their families are less stressed and bored—the top two risk factors for substance abuse. Teens that have dinner with family members only two times a week or less are at double the risk of drug abuse.
- Approximately one-half of the adolescents surveyed in Hawaii report that they feel close to their parents. However, only about one-third of 10th and 12th graders say they have enough opportunities to do fun things together, share their personal problems with their parents, or participate in decisions that affect them. Family meals provide opportunities for all of the above.
- In Hawaii, about 7 out of 10 families say that they eat dinner together 5 to 6 times per week. Make the most of those opportunities to connect with your children by trying some of the Tips for Successful Family Meals included in this brochure.



THINGS You Can Do

FAMILIES

- Increase the number of times the entire family sits together to eat.
- Try focusing on one another without the distraction of TV, computers, or telephones.

EMPLOYERS

- Accommodate employees' schedules so they can have dinner with their children on Family Day.
- Hold a Family Day event, such as a weekend picnic.
- Encourage employees to spend time with their families.

FAITH ORGANIZATIONS

- Promote Family Day and the importance of regular family meals through sermons and congregation newsletters.
- Conduct a special Family Day service.

SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- Host special Family Day events, such as potlucks, cooking classes, or newsletter articles.
- Work with the media to promote events and deliver the message on the importance of regular family meals as a simple and healthy strategy to help our youth remain drug free.

REFERENCES

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