



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida Department of Health Secretary Encourages Floridians to Participate in Family Day by Eating Dinner with their Families on September 22

Tallahassee -- In a statewide effort to strengthen family relationships and promote healthier habits among children, the Florida Department of Health is encouraging Floridians to participate in *Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children* on Monday, September 22.

Family Day - A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Family is a national effort to promote parental engagement as a natural, effective way to reduce the risk of teen substance abuse by encouraging Americans to make family dinners a regular part of their lives.

“As parents, our children look to us for guidance,” said DOH Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A. “The dinner table offers the perfect forum for conversations that can promote healthier lifestyles for Florida’s families. Mealtimes can serve as a vital link to positive traditions that can last a lifetime.”

Celebrating Family Day is as simple as eating dinner with your children. Since 1996, research conducted by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University has consistently shown that the more often a child eats dinner with his family, the less likely that child is to smoke, drink or use illegal drugs. Children who eat frequent family dinners also have better nutritional habits and are more likely to feel emotionally content, work hard at school and have positive peer relationships.

Parents who are not able to have dinner together on Family Day can still participate by encouraging the family to select another meal or activity to share. For more information on Family Day, visit www.doh.state.fl.us or www.casafamilyday.org.

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