

Family Meals Improve Academic Performance

FMI Foundation Highlights Data During Back-to-School Season and the 10th Anniversary of National Family Meals Month

ARLINGTON, VA, USA, August 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As students head back to school, the FMI Foundation heralds one of the best strategies for succeeding in the academic year ahead – family meals. The growing body of published research demonstrates that family meals contribute to improved academic performance, mental health and physical health. Today, the FMI Foundation released new data in its “Staying Strong with Family Meals” Barometer study, revealing Americans are becoming increasingly aware of these benefits.

- Seventy-five percent of Americans recognize that family meals improve family functioning while 58% recognize they improve fruit and vegetable consumption.
- A growing number of Americans, 28%, recognize that sharing meals help to improve grades at school, while 24% recognize that kids who share family meals are less likely to use and abuse drugs.

“

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David Fikes, executive director of the FMI Foundation

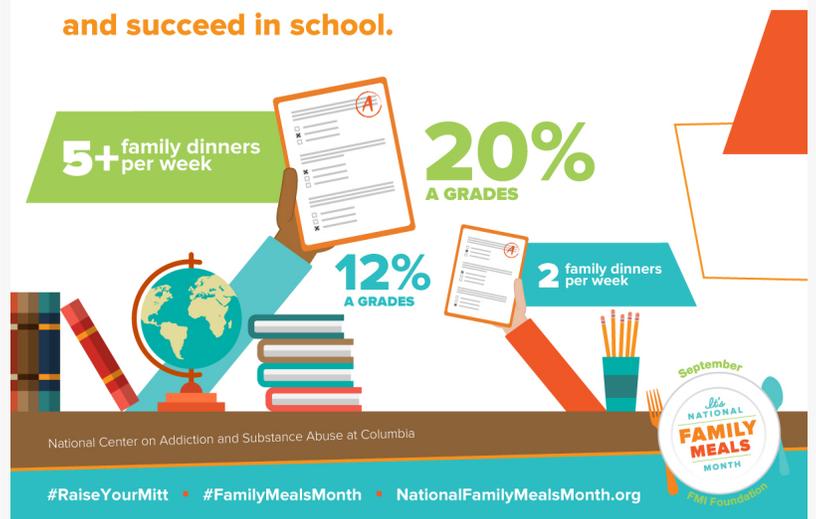
This Barometer is a recurring quantitative study among a nationally representative sample of consumers.

The academic research on family meals is conclusive. [Thousands of peer-reviewed studies](#) over the last 30 years reveal that sharing family meals helps to improve physical,

psychological, and social health outcomes. For children and adolescents, family meals help safeguard against anti-social behavior, protect against the harmful effects of cyberbullying, and reduce drug and alcohol use. They also bolster self-esteem, improve body weight, and enhance

FAMILY MEALS MAKE THE GRADE

Kids—from elementary to high-school age—who eat meals with their families four times a week or more **earn better test scores and succeed in school.**



Family Meals Make the Grade

overall nutritional intake. Family meals deliver all these benefits while strengthening the family unit and increasing the overall connectedness of the family.

“No matter how you define family, sharing meals together helps set children up for success,” said David Fikes, executive director of the FMI Foundation. “The onset of school brings unintended stress and anxiety, but when adolescents share a family meal, they report feeling happier and more fulfilled, therefore less prone to burnout and distress.”

The “Staying Strong with Family Meals” Barometer study also confirms what we already suspect – that the greatest barrier to sharing more family meals is differing schedules – reported by 45% of Americans.

“It’s important to understand that the benefits of family meals are not exclusive to dinnertime,” Fikes adds. “The critical ingredient is taking time to eat together in the same room, regardless of the time of day. The regular time together leads to the myriad benefits documented in the body of research and the benefits get amplified if the mealtime together is device and distraction free.”

[National Family Meals Month™](#) is celebrated each September, marking its 10-year anniversary. This national initiative has generated so much momentum that it is now known as the [Family Meals Movement](#). Embraced year-round, the movement raises awareness of family meals’ many benefits. Learn more about the physical, mental and social benefits of family meals at

FAMILY MEALS FEND OFF RISKY BEHAVIORS

The more families share meals, the less likely their kids are to drink alcohol, smoke or use marijuana.

4x LESS LIKELY

3x LESS LIKELY

2x LESS LIKELY

“Family Meals Annotated Bibliography”
Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network

#RaiseYourMitt #FamilyMealsMonth NationalFamilyMealsMonth.org

September It's NATIONAL FAMILY MEALS MONTH FMI Foundation

FAMILY MEALS help safeguard youth against harmful effects of cyberbullying.

Elger, F.J., Napolitano, A., Saul, G., Dirks, M.A., Craig, W., Potat, V.P., Holt, M., Koenig, B.W., Cyberbullying victimization and mental health in adolescents and the moderating role of family dinners. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2014 Nov;168(11):1015-22. doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2014.1223. PMID: 25178884.

Join the Movement #FamilyMealsMovement

Join the FAMILY MEALS Movement FMI Foundation

Family Meals Safeguard Against Cyberbullying

familymealsmovement.org and follow #familymealsmonth and #familymealsmovement on social media.

About the FMI Foundation

Established in 1996, the FMI Foundation seeks to ensure continued quality and efficiency in the food retailing system and is operated for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes. To help support the role of food retailing, the FMI Foundation focuses on research, education, and resources in the area of health and well-being, which embraces food safety, nutrition and social responsibility concerns. For information regarding the FMI foundation, visit www.fmifoundation.org. #familymealsmonth; #familymealsmovement.

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