

Family Week - A Week to Eat Dinner with Your Children



August 26, 2010

Dear Superintendent:

Governor Carcieri and I are pleased to join with Kids First and the Rhode Island Hospitality Association in promoting *Family Week – A Week to Eat Dinner with Your Children* from September 26 to October 2. This week was proclaimed by Governor Carcieri to build on the annual observance of *Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children*TM, a national movement started by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University to remind parents that “Dinner Makes A Difference”. We invite you to assist us in the effort to keep our children safe and healthy through the simple act of family dining.

Family Day was established by CASA in 2001 after its research consistently found that **the more often kids eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink or use drugs**. CASA’s research has also linked frequent family dinners with higher academic performance, while other studies have shown that family dinners help children develop good language skills and healthier eating habits.

I am sending messages to principals in your community inviting their schools to play a meaningful role in the effort to keep our children safe and healthy by promoting the message about family dinners. The letter lists the following suggestions that schools may follow if interested in participating:

- **Make an announcement to parents about Family Week during the Open House this year.**
- **Post information about Family Week on the school website.**
- **Encourage the school PTO to spread the message to parents.**
- **Post flyers at school.**
- **Partner with a local community substance abuse prevention task force to celebrate.**

Information about Family Week and the importance of family dinners can be found online at www.substancefreekids.ri.gov/family_week. If you have any questions about this important observance, please contact Cheryl Martone at cmartone@gov.state.ri.us or at (401) 222-8148.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Carcieri
Rhode Island First Lady
Honorary Chair, Family Day 2010

