



The National Center on
Addiction and Substance Abuse
at Columbia University



Ten Benefits of Frequent Family Dinners

The more often children and teens eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink and use drugs. Children and teens who have frequent family dinners:

- are at half the risk for substance abuse compared to teens who dine with their families infrequently
- are less likely to have friends or classmates who use illicit drugs or abuse prescription drugs
- have lower levels of tension and stress at home
- are more likely to say that their parents are proud of them
- are likelier to say they can confide in their parents
- are likelier to get better grades in school
- are more likely to be emotionally content and have positive peer relationships
- have healthier eating habits
- are at lower risk for thoughts of suicide
- are less likely to try marijuana or have friends who use marijuana

Percent Teens Who Smoke, Drink, Use Marijuana (by frequency of family dinners)		
	5 to 7 dinners per week	0 to 2 dinners per week
Cigarettes	14	34
Alcohol	30	52
Marijuana	12	35