



**Family Meals Have Greater Protective Effect on Girls**

University of Minnesota researchers have found that while middle-school girls who share regular family meals see beneficial effects throughout their teenage years on substance-using behaviors, boys do not experience the same effects from a regular family presence at the dinner table.

The latest survey, involving 800 Minnesota schoolchildren, indicated that middle-school girls who ate with their families at least five times a week were much less likely to use alcohol, tobacco or marijuana five years later.

**Check out the full article at:** <http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/summaries/2008/family-meals-have-greater.html>

**Bullies May Suffer More Harms than Their Victims**

While both bullies and their victims are at risk for harms such as physical injury, over-the-counter medication abuse, school absence and weapon use, new research is showing that the bullies may be at greater risk than their victims, [Reuters Health](#) reported July 25. Examining a group of nearly 9,600 U.S. students in grades 6 through 10, a pair of researchers led by Jorge Sraibstein, M.D., of the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., found that 39 percent had been either a perpetrator of bullying, a victim, or both. These youths were at higher risk of any form of physical injury than were those youths not involved in any bullying activity.

**Read the article at:** <http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/summaries/2008/bullies-may-suffer-more-harms.html>



For more information on HCTC, Youth Development and for the latest on upcoming HCTC Meetings and Activities

**Go To:** <http://www.gvhp.org/Home/OurProjects/HealthyCommunities/tabid/102/Default.aspx>



**FOCUS ON ALCOHOL AND BOYS**

Although girls are now as likely as boys to drink alcohol, there are important differences in how they drink. Boys are more likely to begin drinking alcohol at a younger age, more likely to move on to binge drinking, more likely to drive under the influence of alcohol, and more likely to initiate sex under the influence, often without protection. Drinking and the capacity to drink in quantity, is often viewed as proof of courage or manliness. However, challenges to "hold your liquor like a man" can have devastating short- and long-term results. Adults need to clearly communicate no-use expectations and community groups need to be aware of the risks adolescent males face and tailor some of their prevention efforts specifically to boys.

**Facts**

- Boys are more likely than girls to begin drinking before age 13. The earlier underage drinking begins, the greater the risk for developing a serious alcohol-related problem, including addiction
- Overall male high school students are significantly more likely than female high school students to report episodes of heavy drinking (Centers for Disease Control)
- A survey high school students found that 18% of females and 39% of males say it is acceptable for a boy to force sex if the girl is stoned or drunk

**What to Do:**

- Contact middle school, high school and after-school athletic program directors and coaches to discuss and develop policies regarding alcohol use among team members. Encourage coaches and others working with boys to educate boys about the serious risks of underage alcohol use, including impact on athletic and academic performance
- Sponsor a club for boys that includes community service projects such as planting trees or cleaning up the town
- Promote the HOPE Youth Mentoring program through Catholic Charities of Livingston County (658-4466 ext. 14—they are always looking for male mentors and often have boys in need of mentoring)

For help with any of these ideas contact Rachel Pena at 748-5146