

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2012 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 7

Serving Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin, New Hanover, Robeson
and Sampson counties



Mother Makes Healthy Lifestyle Changes

The rates of obesity and overweight have steadily grown in recent years. In fact, compared to other states, North Carolina ranks 41st in obesity prevalence, and fewer adults are physically active (44.0% versus 49.5%). This trend is appearing in children as well; more than 3 out of 10 children between the ages of 2-18 in North Carolina are overweight or obese, placing them at increased risk for developing diseases such as type 2 diabetes or hypertension and making them more likely to face social discrimination and have low self-esteem.¹ In Robeson County, 67% of adults are overweight or obese.² In 2007, almost \$12 million spent on Robeson County Medicaid was attributed to overweight and obesity related issues.³

In order to address the obesity epidemic in Robeson County, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), in partnership with Robeson Community College Adult Literacy Program, delivered nutrition classes to demonstrate to participants how to cook quick, easy and healthy meals, food safety skills, and how to plan affordable menus which helped them save money on the cost of food.

One participant stated that she was glad to have the opportunity to be a participant in the classes and learn things about nutrition that she didn't know before. Every week she has learned a new health tip that can help her and her family eat healthier. As a result of one of the classes, she now only serves her children 100% fruit juice instead of sodas. In addition, she now substitutes the Easy Fruit Salad for sweet desserts, such as cakes and junk food. Before attending the EFNEP classes, this participant never realized the importance of making sure the kitchen area is sanitized in addition to being cleaned. She stated that the Adult EFNEP classes were extremely helpful and informative for her and her family. She is very grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of EFNEP.

EFNEP supports families who struggle overcoming the barriers to living a healthy lifestyle through education, budgeting, community

support, and creative ways to prepare and cook healthy foods. With EFNEP, many families impacted by the program have made the necessary changes in their lifestyles to decrease their risk of chronic disease and improve their family's overall health and wellbeing.

Participants Learn How to Increase Their Physical Activity

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) in Columbus County partnered with the Columbus County Health Department to teach classes to 160 families on the importance of getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. Participants learned that consistent physical activity could reduce chronic diseases, reduce stress, help reduce obesity as well as improve their physical and mental well-being. They were given a walking DVD and stretch bands to help them achieve their goal to improve physical activity. They were also taught how to include physical activity into their daily activities such as parking farther away, washing their cars instead of taking them to car wash, and playing outside with their kids instead of watching TV.

At a follow up class, 50% of the participants said they were now getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week.

EFNEP helps address the challenges limited resource families face when introducing healthy changes through nutrition education, cooking classes, exercise strategies, and shopping on a limited budget.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Overweight and obesity. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/consequences.html>.

2. NC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey, NC State Center for Health Statistics, NC Department of Health and Human Services (2006)

3. Robeson County: Eating Smart and Moving More <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/CountyProfiles/Texts/Robeson%20County.pdf>

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EFNEP
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAM

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