

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2012 NC Cooperative Extension Harnett County

### Teacher Makes Healthy Changes and Shares with Family and Friends

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Families Eat Smart Move More, has partnered with Central Carolina Community College's English as a Second Language (ESL) program to provide nutrition classes to their students. The ESL teacher not only translated the information for the class, but she also participated in and learned from the program. She started planning her meals and saves her meal planning sheets to show the participants so they may learn by her example. She is now using unit pricing and has seen a reduction in her food bill from meal planning and checking prices.

This teacher and her husband were experiencing some health issues. She was waking up in the middle of the night with stomachaches and her husband had high blood pressure and high cholesterol. They have seen improvements in their health from what she has learned in class and cooking healthier recipes. Her husband was resistant to the changes at first but now enjoys these new meals. They now use products like Mrs. Dash and have made other changes to reduce their sodium. Both have lost weight and have seen a reduction in his blood pressure and cholesterol. In addition, she is no longer waking up in the middle of the night with stomach pains.

This teacher has shared all of the program information, ideas and recipes with her mom, sister and son. She is helping them reduce their sodium as well. Originally from Mexico, she has also learned about new recipe ingredients that are used in the USA but are not found in Mexico.

This ESL teacher is a wonderful advocate for Eat Smart Move More. She is passionate about being healthy and helping her students learn English, as well as learn skills to have healthy families.

*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.*



### EFNEP Uses Real Life Examples

Changing behavior can be very challenging for anyone because diet and lifestyle is greatly influenced by a person's culture, physical environment, and social networks; these challenges are often compounded for limited resource families because of constrained budgets. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (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. This program improves the lives of each one of these families through the positive changes they have made to reducing their risk of obesity related illnesses and supporting healthy lifestyles.

One reason why EFNEP participants are successful at changing lifestyle habits is because EFNEP uses real life situations to reinforce the skills learned in class. This is because people are more likely to adopt a new practice when they are able to translate class lessons to their own environment. Through collaborative efforts with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, EFNEP participants have the opportunity to tour a grocery store as a part of a series of classes where participants learned how to feed their families healthier foods on a limited budget.

Participants used the tour to practice using the skills they learned in class, such as comparing nutrition labels and practicing unit pricing on many different healthy foods. All the participants practiced finding foods low in fat, sodium, and high in nutrition. Participants were challenged to shop for nutritious foods from each food group to take home and prepare for their families. Each participant purchased a whole grain product, vegetable, fruit, low fat dairy item and a lean protein using skills gained in EFNEP for under \$10. As a result of the tour, participants said they had become more confident in their ability to shop for healthier foods, and the experience connected the lessons learned in class to their real life shopping needs. Each participant expressed greater confidence in their ability to feed their families healthy foods on limited incomes.

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EDUCATION PROGRAM

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