

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2012 NC Cooperative Extension Moore County

### Participants Learn Strategies to Be Healthier

In 2007, \$2,843,536 of the total dollars spent on Moore County Medicaid was attributed to overweight and obesity.<sup>1</sup> EFNEP's Families Eating Smart and Moving More partnered with Sandhills Community College to provide the program to their Family Literacy class. Nineteen participants attended Families Eating Smart and Moving More. They learned skills including meal planning, how to save money at the grocery store, how to read nutrition labels, how to make smart drink choices, how to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption, and ways to get more exercise. After the classes, participants remarked that they were reading and understanding labels more, they started to plan their meals and they were implementing physical activity strategies in their daily lives. They are consuming more fruits and vegetables and one said her family has gone from drinking 2% milk to skim milk. They are more aware of what they are eating as a group and look for healthy options.

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

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