

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2012 NC Cooperative Extension New Hanover County

### Students Learn Practical Ways to Live Healthy

The 6th grade students at DC Virgo Preparatory Academy had a great baseline understanding of nutrition and what it means to live a healthy lifestyle. They were very familiar with MyPyramid and interpreted it well. They also knew that they should try to get an hour of physical activity every day.

But even though these students knew the fact about nutrition, many of them did not know how to practically implement these ideas into their daily lives—especially about how to cook healthy foods for themselves. For this reason, the focus of the EFNEP lessons was placed on food and recognizing the ingredients in the foods that we eat. Evaluating nutrition fact labels proved to be the most eye-opening experience for those students. They knew the health and nutrition messages that had been taught to them. What they didn't quite know was what they were eating. The class used beverage labels to learn how to read the labels and to identify fat, sugar and calorie contents. Some students checked their backpacks to look at the labels on drinks and snacks that they had packed for after school. They began to see what they were consuming as a quantifiable value that can be measured and managed and they were receptive to the idea of monitoring how much they eat of those foods that they like.

### Students Learn While Having Fun

Youth 4-H EFNEP was introduced in New Hanover County for the first time in April 2012 with all three branches of Community Boys & Girls Club. An initial assessment of students participating in this after school program revealed a poor understanding of food sources and an inability to correctly identify food groups. In order to increase those students' awareness of food groups and food sources as well as to provide a fun outlet for built up energy at the end of the school day, students participated in physical activities which focused on foods. Utilizing relay races that directed students to place food models in the appropriate labeled 'food group' or to choose from a pile of food models an example of a food that represented a given group, students used their competitive instincts to focus on determining the correct answer. The result of incorporating physical activity as the method of teaching was an improved understanding of food groups and an improved focus and participation by students.



*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.*

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