

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2012 NC Cooperative Extension Perquimans County

Parents Learn about Sugars in Their Drinks

The Perquimans Parent Gang Prevention Mentor Group has collaborated with the Perquimans County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) to share strategies on food safety, meal planning and healthy meals with the Parent Mentor Group.

In the Making Smart Drink Choices session, the parents were astonished to see how much sugar is in the drinks they buy on a weekly basis. They did not associate sweet tea, sports drinks and 100 vitamin C drinks as a sugar product. In this session, one participant commented, "I drink at least 4 sport drinks a day or Arizona Drinks. Oh my that's why I feel funny sometimes after I drink them—I did not know I was getting all that sugar!"

Another parent shared, "We have to be able to see with our own eyes how to make changes." One mother shared that neither she nor her children drank any water, but because of all the sugar they were drinking, she will now make a change in her household. With this group, parents as well as students vowed to make changes with their drink choices.

Youth Learn New Kitchen Skills for a Healthy Lifestyle

The number of overweight and obese children has steadily grown in recent years. In fact, compared to other states, North Carolina ranks 41st in obesity prevalence, and fewer people are physically active (44.0% versus the 49.5%



national prevalence).

What is even more

concerning is that more than

3 out of 10 children between the ages of 2-18 in North Carolina are overweight or obese, which places 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

Prolonged unhealthy eating and physical inactivity significantly contributes to chronic disease and obesity. Childhood obesity has become a major problem in recent years, and NC Cooperative Extension has conducted programs aimed at reducing the number of youth impacted by this epidemic.

In 4-H EFNEP, youth in Perquimans County learn how to prepare healthy, low-cost meals, and understand the importance of daily physical activity. This allows the youth to learn new skills in the kitchen setting and provides recipes for low cost, nutritious meals and snack ideas. Upon completing the lessons, 93% of 142 youth increased their ability to select low cost, nutritious foods; they were also encouraged to share the information they learned with friends and family.

EFNEP supports individuals 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.

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>.

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