

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2012 NC Cooperative Extension Scotland County

Students Enjoy Trying Healthy Recipes

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 Scotland County, obesity is the number one health problem in children. According to the 2010 North Carolina Child Health Report Card (NCDHHS), the percentage of overweight children in Scotland County has increased 3.5% since 2005.



This problem has serious consequences; schools and other agencies have seen the negative health implications associated with excessive weight in children and value prevention programs that promote healthy lifestyles.

Prolonged unhealthy eating and physical inactivity significantly contributes to chronic disease and obesity. These findings are especially alarming for children and youth because being overweight or obese increases the risk of chronic diseases. In order to address the childhood obesity epidemic, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Scotland County 4-H Expanded Foods and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) collaborated with Oxendine Elementary School to provide nutrition education classes. Each class received 6 lessons on healthy eating and the importance of physical activity. While doing these classes, several students were able to make and taste foods that they had never eaten before. Some youth and teachers also stated that they made these foods at home for their families.

As a result of this collaboration, 100% of over 350 teachers and students have requested more healthy, kid friendly recipes. They also reported that they not only enjoyed trying new foods but also enjoyed participating in the physical activities.

Overweight Children in Scotland County²

Age range	Percent overweight
2-4 years old	15.4%
5-11 years old	25.8%
12-18 years old	28.0%

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. State of the County Health Report: Scotland County, North Carolina. (2011). <http://www.scotlandcounty.org/Data/Sites/1/sotchdocument2011.pdf>

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