

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2012 NC Cooperative Extension Union County

Teacher Uses Skills Learned in EFNEP to Influence Her Students' Health

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) taught a series of lessons with adults in the community. One participant, who is a teacher, shared that she has struggled with controlling the hyperactivity of one of her kindergarten students since the beginning of the school year. Upon learning how to read nutrition facts labels during an EFNEP class, the teacher taught her students how to do so as well in hopes that reducing his sugar intake would help improve his behavior. The class would go to the cafeteria together and read the labels on snacks and drinks to make healthy choices with less sugar. The lunchroom monitor, who is an EFNEP volunteer, stated that the particular student with hyperactivity has settled down and his teacher says his behavior and reading level has greatly improve. By educating teachers and adults the importance of good nutrition, this participant taught her student what she learned and he is now learning how to make healthy food and drink choices. This particular student has improved not only his health, but his ability to engage in the classroom and increase his learning potential.

Students Make Better Decisions for Their Health

An EFNEP Program Assistant partnered with the YWCA of Monroe, NC to deliver six nutrition classes with students in grades K-5. The lessons consisted of eating the proper amounts of each food group as well as how to make healthier choices. Physical activity was included in each lesson to stress the importance of being physically active instead of leading a sedentary lifestyle. Of the youth in third through fifth grades, 62% of them reported having decreased their TV, computer, and video game time to less than 2 hours a day, in turn, increasing their physical activity level. Also, 31% reported to have cut sodas out of their diets completely, resulting in less empty calories in their diets. All of the students said that the classes have helped them make better decisions when choosing foods and they cannot wait to start the next group of classes.

Youth Include More Nutritious Foods in Their Diets

EFNEP teamed up with 21st Century Community Learning Center and the Union County Public Schools after-school program to deliver a series of 6 lessons to students on eating healthy. There were a total of 253 students evaluated in grades 3-8 who participated in the program. Of those students, 77% increased their knowledge of human nutrition, while 59% are now eating a broader variety of foods. Along with the essentials of nutrition, EFNEP also teaches students how to select low-cost, nutritious foods. 89% of students have increased their ability to locate and select nutritious foods on a budget. Due to this success, 4-H EFNEP will continue to partner with the Union County After-school program and 21st Century to ensure that the students continue to broaden their nutritional knowledge, and stay active and healthy.

Student Improves Health and Loses Weight by Decreasing Her Sugar Intake

Soda, candy, and many other sugary "treats" have become an everyday staple in the diets of many teens. With the help of EFNEP, students at Monroe and East Union Middle Schools learned the importance of cutting down their sugar intake and did so with great results. Using goal setting, the students slowly reduced the amount of sugar they were consuming on a daily basis. For example, instead of reaching for a soda after school, many of them were opting for juice or milk. Also, when given a choice of plain milk or chocolate, the plain milk won. As for foods, several of the students said that they had started replacing sweets such as candy and cookies with popcorn, crackers and even veggie chips. After six weeks, 69% of the participants had greatly decreased their sugar consumption. A thirteen year old participant even reported having lost 4 pounds thanks to her sugar reduction. Many of these youth have asked when they will get to participate in EFNEP again. Their eagerness to live healthier lives is evident in the impact that the program has had on them.



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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