

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2013 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 1

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EFNEP Teaches Money-Saving Skills And Brings Family Together

Limited income families often face greater hardships in stretching their resources to provide healthy meals and snacks for their family. As part of a series of nutrition education lessons, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches families food resource management skills related to planning and purchasing healthy foods.

During a lesson, *Shop: Get the Best for Less*, participants learned how to compare prices in weekly grocery store advertisements to find the best deals. They also learned how to find coupons for items on their grocery list. Participants learned to plan menus around healthy items on sale for which they also had a coupon and that by using their new skills in planning and shopping they could save a significant amount of money on their overall grocery bill. One of the participants stated that her grandchild had shared a healthy recipe she wanted to try. Prior to the class, the participant wanted to prepare the healthy recipe with her grandchild but felt the ingredients were too expensive. Using what she learned in EFNEP, the participant planned a menu that included the healthy recipe her grandchild wanted to try.

Applying what she had learned, she planned the menu around sale items and used coupons in combination with the weekly specials to purchase some of the ingredients for the recipe at a lower price. The participant was surprised by how much she could save, almost \$8 on this one meal, by combining the store sales and coupons. Not only did she learn that she could eat healthy and save money on her family meals, but this participant shared that she had the opportunity to experience this new recipe with her grandchild and the time they spent together preparing and eating this meal was something they both treasured. The skills she learned will help her continue to get the best value for her money and stretch limited resources throughout the entire month.



EFNEP Increases Fruit And Vegetable Consumption In Youth Participants

Fruit and vegetable intake among children is inadequate. In Pasquotank County, approximately 37% of youth are not consuming recommended fruit servings and 74% are not getting recommended vegetable servings.¹ Teachers at a local school concerned about their students' nutritional choices sought help from the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

In a series of lessons offered through Pasquotank County's 4-H EFNEP, over 300 kindergarteners learned about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables as part of meals and snacks. The program assistant taught the youth about the food groups in USDA's guide for healthy eating, *MyPlate*. During each lesson, youth tried a new healthy snack, including in-season, local produce. Kindergarteners were encouraged to ask their parents to buy new fruits and vegetables to try at home.

After a lesson on fruits, one student shared that his family had bought mango and that they enjoyed it. Additionally, during the series of lessons, several teachers noticed that the kindergarteners brought more fruits and vegetables, rather than pre-packaged chips and cookies, for snacks. As a result of the program, 98% of youth improved the quality of their diet including an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption. In addition, youth reported more fruits and vegetables available in their homes, demonstrating that parents were buying more fruits and vegetables following the series of classes. 32% of participating youth reported more vegetables and 36% reported more fruits to eat in their homes.

1. <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/CountyProfiles/Texts/Pasquotank%20County.pdf>

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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