

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2013 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 6

Serving Durham, Guilford, Orange and Surry counties

### Young Mother Becomes Counselor, Helps Other Young Mothers Succeed Too

Adequate nutrition for teenage mothers is vital. Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Guilford County helps young women acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and changed behavior necessary for nutritionally sound diets; which will contribute to giving birth to a healthy baby.

During a recent lesson at a group home, the Pregnant/Parenting Teens program assistant in Guilford County reconnected with a participant she taught in 2005. At that time, the participant was an 18 year-old pregnant woman who wanted to learn how to care for herself and her new baby. The program assistant talked with her about the importance of making healthy choices by choosing fruits and vegetables as part of meals and snacks. Also, the program assistant taught her how to prepare healthy, inexpensive recipes at home and the importance of limiting unhealthy fast food items.

Recently, the participant shared that, following the series of EFNEP lessons, she enrolled and graduated from college and became an On-Site Counselor for the group home where she had been a participant. She shared that she continues to make the EFNEP recipes at home with her son and teaches him about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.

The participant stated, "I am very thankful for the information I learned from EFNEP because I know I needed to eat better." EFNEP not only provided her with nutrition education that resulted in a healthier lifestyle for both herself and her young son, the program gave her the confidence to pursue her dreams. The participant knows she is a role model to the other young women and teenagers at the group home. Recently, the participant began studying to become a nurse.

This is a great example of how EFNEP has helped a young mother learn the necessary skills to make healthy choices for herself and her young son. With the knowledge and support EFNEP provides, we are able to educate and encourage communities to live healthier lives.

### Participant Learns Way To Move More, Loses 30 Pounds

In North Carolina, approximately 65.3% of adults are overweight and obese.<sup>1</sup> Only 18.3% meet the current recommendations for physical activity.<sup>2</sup>

In an effort to help combat this problem, the EFNEP Program Associate with Surry County Cooperative Extension partnered with the Workforce Development Center to teach classes that provide participants with strategies to make healthy choices. During each lesson, participants were encouraged to increase their physical activity and learned simple activities they could do at home.

At the end of the program, one participant stated, "Before, I could not even walk to the end of my driveway to get my mail without losing my breath. Now, however, I have lost over 30 pounds and walk all through the neighborhood feeling great. At my last check-up, my health had improved so much that my doctor said he thought he was examining a totally different patient."

*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. <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Data/Texts/Quick%20Facts.pdf>

2. Ibid



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