

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2013 NC Cooperative Extension Bertie County

### Handwashing Increases and Colds Decrease after Youth Participate in EFNEP

It is estimated that 22 million school days are lost each year due to colds and illnesses, most of which can be avoided by practicing better hygiene. Hand washing and proper use of hand sanitizer are effective ways to prevent the spread of germs.

An important goal of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is to improve food safety behaviors that can help avoid illness. As part of a lesson with 4-H EFNEP in Bertie County, youth learned the importance of hand washing and what can happen if we are careless with food safety.

They participated in activities that taught them about harmful bacteria and viruses and learned that although we can't see them, bacteria and viruses that can potentially make us sick are everywhere. Following the activities, youth learned proper techniques for washing their hands to prevent illness.

After the lesson, one teacher noticed her students washed their hands more frequently and did so without needing additional instruction. Most students kept their hand sanitizers close by and used them after playing outside, during recess, before eating lunch, and before eating snacks. The teacher reported that her students had fewer colds than the previous year, and that because they were properly washing their hands, they were spreading fewer germs to each other and missing fewer days of school. EFNEP supports school success by helping youth adopt healthy behaviors.

*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.*

<http://www.itsasnap.org/snap/statistics.asp>

### 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.



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