

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2013 NC Cooperative Extension Forsyth County



### New Mom Cooks More Meals at Home, Saves Money

Providing school or community-based nutrition education for pregnant and parenting teens may be one way to help improve the dietary intake of the teen and her child. Intervention programs that focus on the environment, behavior, and personality of the teen will have a better chance of making a positive impact.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program focuses on all of these components. A six week program in Forsyth county was conducted to reduce the amount of fast food consumed, increase the amount of meals prepared at home as well as improve stretching food dollars, food safety, physical activity and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.

During a lesson about making smart choices when eating out, participants compared the cost of eating out versus preparing meals at home. One participant shared that prior to the lesson she would eat out 2 to 3 times a day. After comparing the costs of fast food to cooking at home, she knew she would save more money if she ate more meals at home. Following the lessons, she began grocery shopping from a list so she could bring meals and snacks with her to work, instead of having to buy them. The participant shared that one strategy she learned from EFNEP was to make additional servings of dinner and bring them for lunch the following day.

Recently, she shared that she now spends less money on food and eats more fruits and vegetables. Not only has this young mom made changes in her own diet, but she has also made positive changes in her child's diet by eating more meals together at home.

### Participant Makes Small Steps to Increase Activity

In 2011, 18.3% percent of North Carolina adults engaged in the recommended amount of aerobic activity and muscle strengthen activity.<sup>1</sup> According to the Center of Disease Control regular physical activity helps improve your overall health and fitness, and reduces your risk for many chronic diseases.<sup>2</sup>

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Program Assistant in Forsyth County worked with local organization such as The Health Department and Social Services to offer the program Eat Smart Move More to encourage physical activity and Health Food Choices. Participants learned about the importance of getting the recommended amount of physical activity.

After learning simple ways to incorporate more activity throughout the day, one participant shared that she began walking around inside the mall. Prior to the lesson, she would go through the grocery store quickly and put food in her cart without paying attention to what she was buying. Now she goes in the evening, when the store is less crowded, and takes time to walk the entire store, looking at the nutrition fact labels on foods she buys. The participant shared she "didn't realize she could take baby steps and follow simple solutions like walking at the grocery store to increase her activity." She stated that she would like to continue to increase her activity level and credits EFNEP with helping her get started.

*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. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics. 2011. Available at: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/brfss/2011/nc/all/rf1.html>

2. Ibid.

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