

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2013 NC Cooperative Extension Jackson and Swain Counties



### Summer Camp Doubles the Number of Active Youth in Community

According to the World Health Organization, physical activity improves a child's cardiovascular and muscular fitness, as well as his bone and metabolic health. It also fosters his self-expression, and builds his confidence. Children who are physically active tend to avoid the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs and also demonstrate higher academic performance at school.<sup>1</sup> In Jackson County, Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) discovered that of the 55 students attending a Parks and Recreation Summer Camp only 22 were participating in any physical activity on a daily basis. Knowing the benefit physical activity can have on overall health, the EFNEP program assistant shared with the children *MyPlate's* recommendation of participating in at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. She also facilitated simple outdoor games and other everyday activities to demonstrate moving more can be easy and fun. At the conclusion of EFNEP's six-week series, one student stated she had shared the importance of being physically active with her mother. Other students declared their favorite part of the EFNEP was learning about the different ways in which they could participate in fun, physically activities. Through their comments, the program assistant discovered 42 of the students were now physically active at least 60 minutes each day. If these improved behaviors continue, these students will strengthen their psychological and physiological health and ultimately enjoy a lifetime of active living.

### Mother Learns Program Provides Milk Alternatives, Now Has Healthy Meals Throughout the Month

The recent recession caused many North Carolinians to adjust their food budgets due to lower wages and higher food costs. For many, this adjustment resulted in challenges that left their family without a sustainable quantity of quality food at the end of the month. One young Swain County mother who attended a series of Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) classes discussed the challenges she faced when striving to stretch her family's food budget. The EFNEP program assistant suggested she consider utilizing support services like WIC, but the mother explained she thought "WIC was useless because it only provided access to regular dairy products." She explained that her children needed dairy alternatives like soy or almond milk because of lactose intolerance. Understanding her misconception, the program assistant shared recent changes in the WIC food package that now offered access to a greater range of products, including soy and almond milks. Upon learning this, the mother took advantage of these new WIC dairy selections and all other foods WIC offered. By combining the skills learned in EFNEP with the benefits she received from WIC, she was able to stretch her limited food dollars and still meet both the USDA's *MyPlate* recommendations and her children's unique dietary needs. She now feeds her family three healthy meals a day, every day of the month.

*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.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet\\_young\\_people/en/](http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_young_people/en/)

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