

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2013 NC Cooperative Extension Wake County



Mother Reduces Grocery Bill, Involves Children in Shopping

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that the consumer price index for food at home has increased 2.8 percent since February 2011¹. Additionally, the prices of fruits, vegetables, grain products, meats, and dairy foods have increased over the last year.² Increasingly, it has become important for families, especially those of limited resources, to shop wisely and make the most of the foods they have on hand.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) offered a series of lessons attended by a mother with a family of five. The participant stated that she wanted to save money on her groceries because it was becoming very expensive to feed her family. The EFNEP Program Assistant taught the participant strategies to help her plan and prepare healthy meals for her family. The participant learned skills to help her plan healthy meals and shop on a limited budget using a shopping list, unit pricing, and comparing products to get the best nutrition at the best buy.

Additionally, the participant learned ways she could involve her children in the grocery shopping.

Following the lesson, the participant started allowing her children to select fruits and vegetables and retrieve some of the items on the grocery list. She shared that it became “a great way to keep the kids focused and teach them about healthier food options.” Also, she said shopping trips became quick and efficient. By following the strategies she learned from EFNEP, the participant shared that she learned to feed her family for about \$400 a month, instead of the \$800 she had been spending previously.

Participant Loses 17 Pounds after Reducing Sugary Beverage Consumption

In Wake County, Cooperative Extension’s Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Wake County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) have a long-term strong partnership to meet the nutrition education needs of pregnant women, families and their young children. Through this partnership, the two organizations have offered WIC clients both high quality nutrition education through EFNEP and efficient service and counseling through WIC.

During a recent series of EFNEP lessons presented on-site at the WIC office, a group of mothers learned about the importance of making smart drink choices for their families. The EFNEP program assistant taught them to choose healthy drink choices such as low-fat milk and water and limit the consumption of soft drinks and high sugar juice drinks for their families. The mothers learned how to recognize 100% juice by reading the food label. They also learned that even though the juice had many nutrients, it also should be limited because of the sugar content. The mothers discussed the importance of being educated about the nutritional information and talking with their children about how product marketing can influence their choices, especially of unhealthy food.

During a follow-up visit and lesson, one participating mother shared that she lost 17 pounds over four months by eliminating soda. She shared that instead of soda, she now consumes water. She shared that her family now felt they had more energy to do things together. Additionally, this mom stated that she enjoys the savings from not spending money on soda anymore. This savings leaves more money to purchase healthy foods to feed her family.

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://missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/nut401.htm>

2. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cpi.pdf>

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