

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 12

Serving Cabarrus, Forsyth, Guilford and Mecklenburg counties



### Partner Agency Matches Policy to EFNEP Lessons

Overweight and obesity continue to be a problem in Guilford County. According to the State of Guilford County Health Report for 2012, 28% of adults are obese and 23% of adults are physically inactive.<sup>1</sup> Often times, poor diet and limited physical activity will result in obesity which can lead to other serious health concerns.

In an effort to address this problem, Guilford County Extension partnered with Carelink Solutions, a local nonprofit agency that provides educational opportunities to limited resource individuals, to deliver a series of Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) lessons.

During the series, the local agency's coordinator, who serves as an EFNEP volunteer, observed the lessons. After listening to several lessons, the coordinator realized that the lunches served through her program, and to the current EFNEP participants, did not match with the nutrition messages that were shared as part of the EFNEP lessons. She discovered that her agency served a lunch that consisted of convenience foods, often high in calories, fat, and sodium.

After making this realization and with help from the EFNEP Program Assistant, the coordinator worked with her kitchen staff to develop a meal plan that incorporated all the food groups from *MyPlate*, especially fruits and vegetables. In addition, to encourage her participants to increase their physical activity, the coordinator built a physical activity component into the program that included three times a week scheduled group physical activity classes led by a fitness instructor.

As a result of partnering with EFNEP, this local agency now serves their participants healthy nutrient-dense lunches that are high in fiber and low in fats and sodium. Furthermore, the agency has continued to offer physical activity. Recently, the coordinator reported that these changes have a positive effect on the learning environment as well as the health of the participants.

1. [www.co.guilford.nc.us/publichealth/divisions/wpcontent/uploads/2013/01/2012sotchfinal.df](http://www.co.guilford.nc.us/publichealth/divisions/wpcontent/uploads/2013/01/2012sotchfinal.df)

### Healthy Choices Results in Better Concentration at School

According to the most recent State of the County Health Report, the pregnancy rate in Forsyth County was 32.7 per 1000 population in 2013.<sup>2</sup> Pregnancy during the teen years places teens at nutritional risk because of the increased demand for calories and nutrient requirements. Forsyth County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the local school system to address the nutritional risks of pregnant teens in the county.

A pregnant teen participating in EFNEP revealed that she missed breakfast on most mornings and almost always ate unhealthy foods for lunch. She worried about gaining too much weight especially because she was not being active. As a result, this pregnant teen often felt extremely tired and found it difficult to concentrate causing her grades to decline.

In response, the EFNEP Program Assistant focused her lessons on the importance of eating well-balanced meals using *MyPlate* as a guide. Participants practiced making their own plates using a variety of food models. They were able to visualize how much they needed to eat and what their plates should look like. Additionally, participants were given a walking video to encourage physical activity indoors.

As a result of EFNEP, one of the participants shared that she has since started eating breakfast at home and packs healthier lunches. Her energy level has increased too. She has begun walking at least 20 minutes every day and even practices yoga. She reported having better concentration and saw improvement in her grades.

*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.*

2. [http://files.www.appnc.org/data/map/northcarolina/2013\\_pregnancies\\_15-19\\_ranked.pdf](http://files.www.appnc.org/data/map/northcarolina/2013_pregnancies_15-19_ranked.pdf)

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.



NC STATE UNIVERSITY

NORTH CAROLINA A&T  
STATE UNIVERSITY



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture