

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 13

Serving Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Vance, Wake and Wayne counties



Struggling Mom Learns Money-Saving Tips at Critical Time in Life

Edgecombe County is designated as a Tier 1 county, which means it is one of the more economically depressed counties in the state. According to the NC Department Of Commerce, Labor and Economic Analysis Division figures, the unemployment rate for North Carolina is 6.4%. Edgecombe County has the second highest unemployment rank in North Carolina at 11.0%.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) encourages limited resource families and youth to explore and learn how to Eat Smart and Move More. The nutrition education classes include food safety, portion control, increasing physical activity, and food resource management. EFNEP partners with community stake holders and agencies to offer classes to help families get the most value from their food dollars as well as provide fun and simple strategies designed to improve participants knowledge and understanding to obtain and maintain good health.

EFNEP partnered with Edgecombe Community College's adult GED program. For one participant, the classes were offered at a crucial time, she states, "As a single parent of three children ages 9, 11, and 15 and newly laid off from my job, I was very worried about returning to school to get my GED. When the instructor told us about the EFNEP program, I did not know what to expect but I must admit I was pleasantly surprised. One of the most important things I learned was to take time to clip coupons and use a grocery list. I also recently asked my local store for a loyalty savings card and started using it the same day. I was glad I did because I saved a lot using coupons and getting the sales prices. At a time when I really have to watch every penny, it was great to be able to see how much I am saving. The EFNEP classes have really helped me to stretch my food dollar and helped me to provide healthy, easy and quick meals for family." The participant reported she is saving about \$20.00–\$30.00 on her food bill now.

First-Grader's Self Esteem Boosted by Making Healthy Choices

Poor diet and physical inactivity contribute to many serious and costly health conditions, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, unhealthy cholesterol levels, and high blood pressure.¹ Obese children and adolescents have a greater risk of social and psychological problems, such as discrimination and poor self-esteem, which can continue into adulthood.²

The Warren County Cooperative Extension Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the school system to encourage healthy eating habits. The EFNEP lessons teach children healthy eating and physical activity through interactive, hands-on learning that includes easy recipes for healthy snacks, fun ways to be physically active, and activities that engage the students in learning the recommendations of USDA's MyPlate.

Several children attending the EFNEP sessions were overweight or obese. As a result, the teachers and parents worried about their overall health. One first grader stated that his classmates frequently teased him because he is overweight. In addition, students excluded him from team activities and as a result he suffers from depression and low self-esteem. The Program Assistant really focused on making the student feel comfortable during each lesson and working with him to make healthier choices. After attending the six-week EFNEP sessions, the first grader is eating more fruits and vegetables. He has eliminated sodas and candy from his diet and has reached and maintained a healthier weight.

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.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/basics.html>

2. Ibid

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