

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 5

Serving Ashe and Forsyth counties



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 2013.¹ 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.

1. http://files.www.appcnc.org/data/map/northcarolina/2013_pregnancies_15-19_ranked.pdf:

Fourth Grader Teaches Parent How to Read Food Label

Reading the Nutrition Facts Label correctly to compare ingredients and nutrients in similar products is a great tool when trying to make smarter food and beverage choices. The Nutrition Facts Label is an easy tool for making quick, informed food choices that contribute to a healthy diet.

Through Ashe County's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in partnership with Ashe County Schools, fourth graders learned to read the Nutrition Facts Label and practiced their skills by reading labels on foods and beverages they consumed. The children discovered there is "hidden" sugar, fat, and sodium in foods that can contribute to the onset of chronic disease.

Following the lesson, a fourth-grade student shared with the 4-H EFNEP Program Assistant that his father had been reading food labels because the father was concerned about the amount of added sugar his family was consuming, but his father had never looked at the serving size when comparing foods. This misunderstanding led the father to believe his favorite soda had half the amount of sugar than another brand. After the 4-H EFNEP lesson, the student taught his dad how to read the Nutrition Facts Label to determine calories consumed per the amount consumed. The father learned from his son that he was not reading the label correctly for the amount of soda he was drinking. Because of the nutrition information learned in EFNEP, the student and his family are now reading labels correctly and keeping track of calories consumed.

Additionally, to reduce their consumption of added sugars, they are also now choosing healthier beverages, like water and low-fat and fat-free milk. Learning how to read nutrition labels helped this family learn how to make healthier beverage choices. As a result, this family has taken steps to reduce their risk for developing chronic diseases due to poor nutrition.



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