

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 7

Serving Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin, Lenoir, New Hanover,
Robeson and Sampson counties

Third Graders Reduce Milk Waste After Participating in EFNEP

Foods found in the USDA's MyPlate dairy group provide the main source of calcium in our American diet. It is important to intake calcium during childhood and adolescence because these are the years when bone strength is being built. Studies have shown that drinking liquid milk is an easy way to get the calcium needed. Children who do not consume the daily recommended number of MyPlate's liquid milk servings often do not meet their bodies' calcium needs.¹

Third grade teachers at a local elementary school in Robeson County became concerned when they continually witnessed the students throwing away their unconsumed milk every day at lunch. Knowing the important role milk plays in the children's growth and development, the teachers invited the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) to provide a series of nutrition education lessons to their students. During EFNEP's dairy lesson, the students learned that foods found in MyPlate's dairy group provided protein, potassium, vitamin D, and calcium. They learned calcium helps to build strong bones and teeth. They learned that drinking the two servings of liquid milk recommended by MyPlate each day would give them the calcium they needed for the day, and provide stores for later in life. Those stores could keep their bones strong and reduce the risk of osteoporosis when they got older.

After the children learned about how the nutrients found in the dairy group could affect their health, both now and in the future, the teachers observed fewer full milk cartons were being thrown away at lunch. Being educated by 4-H EFNEP made a difference. These young children now understand the importance of drinking milk as a way to get the calcium their bodies need.

1. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-why.html>



Participant's Positive Changes Lead to Doctor's Endorsement of EFNEP

The goal of Lenoir County's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is to teach healthy behaviors that positively change lives. By promoting the healthy lifestyle principles supported in USDA's MyPlate, EFNEP really did change the life of one EFNEP participant who saw significant health improvements after putting into practice what she had learned in EFNEP.

Prior to attending the program, the participant suffered from high blood pressure, was overweight, and was not physically active. As she participated in the program, she discovered how MyPlate's healthy living concepts promoted by EFNEP were directly related to one's health. She learned that by eating smart and moving more, she could lose her unwanted weight, and lower her high blood pressure.

She began to apply what she was learning to her own life. She counted calories, making sure she was burning off more than she was consuming. She also started watching her intake of high-sodium foods hoping to reduce her hypertension. And, she became more physically active, which was the key to both burning more calories and lowering stress, both of which would help better manage her hypertension.

By the end of the EFNEP series, this conscientious participant was exercising daily, had lowered her blood pressure, and had lost 10 pounds. She told the class her doctor was very impressed with the changes she made and encouraged her to continue practicing what she had learned through EFNEP.

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.

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