

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 8

Serving Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Robeson, Scotland and Union counties



Former Participant Gets Moving Following EFNEP— No Longer Wheelchair Bound!

Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) of Union County teaches families the knowledge and skills they need to improve their overall health and the health of their families.

In a recent EFNEP class, the program assistant reconnected with a former participant, who is now an EFNEP volunteer for a series of classes at her church. When she was enrolled in EFNEP, the participant was morbidly obese with limited mobility and relied on a wheelchair in order to get around. Her participation was limited during physical activity breaks, but she was very active in class discussions and showed great interest in learning.

Recently the participant turned volunteer shared that because of the EFNEP classes, she had been eating healthier and limiting her intake of fried salty foods and sugar-sweetened beverages. She had been able to lose enough weight that she is now able to walk instead of being dependent on a wheelchair. The EFNEP program assistant shared that when she reconnected with the participant at the church for the first lesson, the participant surprised her by walking into the room. This is something the program assistant had not seen her do before.

Under her doctor's care, the participant is continuing to lose weight so that she is able to undergo weight reduction surgery and continue to improve her quality of life. She credits EFNEP with helping her learn the skills to take the steps for leading a healthier life and she credits the program assistant for giving her the encouragement and support she desperately needed to make these changes.

Mother Increases Variety in "Picky Eater" Child's Diet as a Result of EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Mecklenburg County provides families with strategies to make healthy food choices and be active each day. During one recent series of lessons, one mother asked the EFNEP Program Assistant how she could help her young daughter eat a more balanced diet. The mother described her daughter as a "really picky eater." The mother shared that she had a hard time getting her to eat most foods and often resorted to giving her unhealthy foods just so that she would eat.

The EFNEP Program Assistant took her concern into consideration and shared her own experience in getting her picky child to eat more of a variety of foods. Others from the class shared their experiences as well. At each lesson the group prepared healthy recipes, and the mother reported that she would try the recipe at home with her family.

As the class series progressed, the mother reported that she was trying the strategies shared during the class to encourage her daughter to try new foods. She focused on preparing the healthy recipes she learned to make in the EFNEP classes. Her "really picky eater" daughter enjoyed the recipes and over time, the mother shared that she felt more confident that she could provide meals that her daughter would eat.

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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