

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Congressional District 9

Serving Mecklenburg and Union counties



Single Mother Learns to Stretch Her Food Dollar

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Union County offered a series of lessons attended by a single mother of a teenage son. The participant stated that she wanted to save money on her groceries. She had just moved into a new home, and while this was a positive move for her family, it stretched their already thin budget even tighter. Providing healthy meals for her family on the limited amount of income left was a real challenge for this mother.

The EFNEP Program Assistant taught the participant strategies to help her plan and prepare healthy meals for her family. The participant learned skills to help her plan healthy meals and shop on a limited budget using a shopping list, unit pricing, and comparing products to get the best nutrition at the best buy.

As a result of the EFNEP lessons, the participant now buys fresh fruits and vegetables instead of unhealthy snacks. She has taught her son how to cook meals, and he eats the leftovers for lunch each day. Recently she shared that “she is not only saving money by using the management skills she learned through EFNEP, but she is also able to prepare and serve more healthy meals and snacks for her family.”

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.

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.

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