

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Halifax County

4-H EFNEP Classes Result in Vegetable Soup Day for Local School

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010 encourage Americans, including youth, to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables. Individuals are encouraged to “eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green and red and orange vegetables.” Fruits and vegetables are sources of many under-consumed nutrients and consuming fruits and vegetables is associated with a decreased risk of chronic disease.¹ Vegetables benefit kids in many ways, including improved nutrition, decreased obesity, and better performance at school, but most children do not eat the recommended serving amount.

The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP) Program Assistant in Halifax County partnered with Hollister Elementary to offer lessons from the curriculum, Show Me Nutrition. The lessons include creative recipes to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables, encourage healthier food choices, and provide fun ways to increase daily physical activity.

During the fruits and vegetables lesson, the program assistant read the story, *Who Grew My Soup?* The story is about a little boy who refused to eat his soup until someone could tell him who grew the vegetables in it. After reading the book, students learned about the variety of fruits and vegetables available, especially those grown locally in North Carolina. To reinforce eating those vegetables, the program assistant led the youth in an activity where they practiced creating a pot of soup with pictures of vegetables they colored.

The youth were so inspired by the children’s story and subsequent activity that they asked their teachers to allow them to create a real pot of soup to share with the school community. Together, the teachers, parents, and youth created Vegetable Soup Day. Parents and students brought in their favorite vegetables and helped prepare the soup. The entire school community joined in the activity and enjoyed the soup. Because of its popularity, Vegetable Soup Day has become a new tradition at the school.

4-H EFNEP in Halifax County continues to help improve the health and well-being of its youth and community.

Children Share How EFNEP Helped Them

North Carolina has the 23rd highest childhood obesity rate in the United States. Currently 31.4% of youth in North Carolina are overweight or obese. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults.²

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Halifax Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP) Program Assistant partnered with Aurelian Springs Elementary School, to teach the EFNEP curriculum, Adventures in Nutrition. This curriculum takes youth on an exploration of nutrition, healthy food choices, and physical activity. The participants traveled to *The Land of Variety*, *The Land of the Gembusters*, *The Land of the Farmers*, *The Land of the Rabbits*, *The Land of the Rainbows*, *The Land of the Great Beyond*, and *The Land of Green Eggs and Ham*. After the lessons, the children wrote notes to the Program Assistant sharing the changing they had made as a result of what they learned in EFNEP. Below are five of the responses received.

Child 1: “Thank you for telling us how to eat healthy. I love fruit, and my Mama is going to start buying it for me now. I like the children in the Land of the Rainbows and fruit keeps me well.”

Child 2: “Thank you for healthy food. I like fruits and vegetables. I am going to eat them at home now.”

Child 3: “Thank you for the good food. I liked the Astronaut pudding from the dairy group. I know milk helps my bones and teeth. I like the apples and pineapple, too.”

Child 4: “Thank you for the fun exercise. I exercise every day for 60 minutes. I do not watch TV as much. Thank you for the good snacks. Thank you for teaching us about the 5 food groups and how to be healthy.”

Child 5: “I had fun on our adventure to the Land of the Gembusters. I really liked BAC and all his friends. We learned the “Clean Hands” poem and put our hands under a light. It was neat! I wash my hands for a long time to get those germs. We ate green germ cups for snack. It was fun.”



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.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/DietaryGuidelines2010.pdf>

2. <http://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=2415&r=35>

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture