

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Robeson County



Youth Teaches Mom to Read Food Label Following EFNEP

Making healthy food choices can be complicated. And, although USDA created the Nutrition Facts Label to help us, it can sometimes be difficult to read and understand.¹

For this reason, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Robeson County always includes in its series of classes a lesson on how to use the Nutrition Facts Label. In the lesson, the program assistant teaches participants how to apply the information found on the label to the food choices they make.

Recently, 4-H EFNEP in Robeson County partnered with the public school system to teach the “Show Me Nutrition” curriculum to 175 first and second grade students. During the series, one student shared with the program assistant that he had taught his mother how to read the ingredients list found on the Nutrition Facts label of a cereal box while grocery shopping. The student explained to his mother that the least nutritious types of cereals listed sugar as their first ingredient while the healthier choices listed whole grains first. The child’s mother was impressed that her son knew how to read the food label and was proud of him for teaching her something that she didn’t know.

Through 4H EFNEP, this mother is now equipped with the knowledge needed to read the ingredient list on the Nutrition Facts Label and can make healthier food purchases 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.

1. <http://www.eatright.org/kids/article.aspx?id=6442467733>

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.²

Third grade teachers at a local elementary school in Robeson County became concerned when they continually witnessed the students throwing away their unconsumed milk everyday 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 2 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.

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

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