

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Surry County



93% of EFNEP Participants Make Positive Changes

Obesity and overweight together are the second leading cause of preventable death in the United States.¹ Obesity is associated with reduced quality of life and the development of many serious conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.² Therefore, it is important that families learn skills and strategies to feed their families nutritious meals. In an effort to address this problem, the Surry County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) delivered lessons to 135 participants. A total of 93% (125) of participants showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices (i.e. plans meals, makes healthy food choices, prepares food without adding salt, reads nutrition labels or has children eat breakfast). This successful impact on the participants' nutrition practices will help reduce their risk of obesity and many serious diseases.

Pediatric Clinic Calls on EFNEP to Help Families of Overweight Children Make Positive Changes

With regard to the prevalence of obesity in children ages 5-11, the Surry County Community Health Assessment stated: "In 2000, Surry County's percent of childhood obesity was already higher than the state average. This percent stayed the same through 2004, but in 2008 this percentage increased to 28%."³ Obesity is associated with the development of many serious conditions such as diabetes and liver failure.⁴

In an effort to help address this problem, Surry County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with Kids Count Pediatric to provide basic

nutrition information to families with young children. The EFNEP Program Associate and the 4-H Cooperative Extension Agent delivered a series of lessons for nine weeks to three families. Throughout the lessons, the families learned how to read nutrition facts labels, plan healthy meals, increase daily physical activity, and eat more fruits and vegetables.

After the eighth week of the lessons, the pediatrician reported the following with regard to one family, *"this child lost 9 pounds and his body mass index has decreased from 25.05 to 21.67, and his father has lost 20 pounds! The child is 8 years old, and he told me that he had been practicing what he learned in class: eating slower, making better choices, and knowing when he is hungry. The family states that all the changes they made were because of what they learned in your class. GREAT work! You changed this child's life."*

Because of the successful partnership between this local pediatric office and EFNEP, one family has been able to improve their eating and physical activity habits and reduce their risk of chronic diseases.

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.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/facts.htm>
2. <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/obesity/mortality.htm>
3. http://www.surry.com/data/Surry_County_CHA_20102.pdf
4. <http://press.endocrine.org/doi/abs/10.1210/jc.2008-1399>

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