

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2014 NC Cooperative Extension Wake County



Young Parent Cuts Grocery Bill in Half Following EFNEP's Faithful Families

Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Faithful Families), a project of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the North Carolina Division of Public Health, promotes healthy eating and physical activity in communities of faith. During a recent series of lessons, one participant shared that she was able to reduce her grocery bill after applying the skills she learned from EFNEP lessons, Plan: Know What's for Dinner and Shop: Get the Best for Less.

This participant stated that before the lessons she would shop without a grocery list and do little to no planning for meals during the week. After learning simple strategies from EFNEP, she says she now spends less time at the grocery store, sticks to her grocery list to avoid impulse buys, and avoids aisles with soft drinks and convenience junk foods. She also utilizes the low-cost, easy recipes provided by EFNEP. The participant has been able to cut her grocery bill in half by following these strategies and planning her meals using the low cost recipes in the *Cooking with EFNEP* cookbook.

Participant Sustains Changes One Year After Completing EFNEP—Results in Loss of 70 Pounds!

Overweight and obesity are a major health concern as they are predictors of many serious chronic diseases such as: heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches participants to manage their weight through making small changes in behaviors such as replacing high sugar beverages with healthier alternatives, increasing fruits and vegetables, and increasing daily physical activity.

Taught within a framework that helps participants learn skills and strategies that make following these recommendations both affordable and easy is a key to EFNEP's success. The skills taught in EFNEP can have a lasting impact on a participant's

health. Recently, an EFNEP Program Assistant in Wake County reconnected with a participant she had taught the previous year as part of a collaboration between Wake County's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and EFNEP.

The program assistant shared that at first, she didn't recognize the participant because she was noticeably thinner than the last time she saw her. After talking with her, the participant shared that she has lost roughly 70 pounds by following the strategies she learned in EFNEP. She said, "she was inspired to begin exercising everyday and pay attention to what she eats" and she now tells everyone what she learned in EFNEP.

Youth Learns Cooking Skills—Now Helps Mom with Food Preparation

Learning to cook is an important life skill. Cooking can help young kids learn and practice basic math concepts and build language skills. The experience of creating meals can help build their self-confidence and lay the foundation for healthy eating habits.¹

4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Wake County teaches youth the importance of making healthy food choices and daily physical activity. During each lesson, youth learn how to make a new recipe that includes many of the food groups from MyPlate. Youth are encouraged to bring the recipe home to make with their families.

After one recent lesson, a 4-H EFNEP participant shared that he wanted to prepare meals with his mom but she often didn't want him to help her because she was afraid he would become hurt in a kitchen accident. The program assistant talked with the participant's mother and worked with her son to develop his knife skills and reviewed basic kitchen safety. By the end of the series of lessons, the mother became more comfortable with her son's ability to help her, and they began preparing more meals together at home.

1. http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/learning/cooking_preschool.html

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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