

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2015 NC Cooperative Extension Bertie County



Faith Leader Makes Personal Change to Lead by Example

Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More is a practice-tested obesity prevention intervention developed by North Carolina State University and the North Carolina Division of Public Health. The program is based on the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program's (EFNEP) lessons and is implemented by EFNEP Program Assistants in collaboration with lay leaders from the faith community and a nutrition or health professional.

Bertie County EFNEP participated in a partnership to bring the program to a small rural faith community in a high need area of the county. The pastor shared that his personal goal was to greatly reduce and eventually eliminate soda from his diet. He stated the lesson on Making Smart Drink Choices really hit home and that he knew he needed to lead by example. Prior to the program the pastor shared that he consumed 4-5 sodas a day. Since learning the number of empty calories and reviewing the number of his community members with diabetes, he has reduced his consumption to 1 soda a day.

As a community, the group decided to serve healthy options including water as a beverage for their weekly group meetings, and they asked the EFNEP Program Assistant to return to the faith community to teach their children healthy eating and food preparation. One member, a small farmer, was so enthusiastic about the changes he saw, he donated a plot of land to the faith community for a community garden so the members could have access to more fresh fruits and vegetables. As the pastor stated, "This program nurtures the body. As a faith community, we need to nurture the body as well as the soul."

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.

Participant Saves Money Using Lessons Learned from EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) encourages limited resource families and youth to explore and learn how to Eat Smart and Move More. The nutrition education classes include food safety, portion control, increasing physical activity, and food resource management. EFNEP partners with community stakeholders and agencies to offer classes to help families get the most value from their food dollars as well as provide fun and simple strategies designed to improve participants' knowledge and understanding of nutrition to obtain and maintain good health.

In Bertie County, EFNEP has successfully partnered with St. Luke Baptist Church for several years to offer a series of lessons. After the lessons, the participants wrote notes to the Program Assistant sharing what they have learned in EFNEP. Below is a note written by one of the participants:

"The EFNEP program was very informative and enjoyable. Not only was the food delicious, but also I learned a lot about how to save money in the grocery store and how to properly prepare food. I was thrilled to learn the expensive microwave vegetables I had been purchasing could be done inexpensively at home. (The program assistant) shared that we could purchase our vegetables fresh or frozen and use microwave-safe zip-closing bags. Then (you) make holes in the bags and add a little water and microwave. I have used this so many times, and have saved a lot of money already. Another money saving tip she shared was the unit pricing. I often did not use the unit price in comparing prices. Now I use the unit price when making any purchase! Sometimes store brands are not the best price; it depends on the unit price, (loyal card savings), and/or store specials and sales. Finally the discussion regarding the ingredients listed in the product was very beneficial. I was shocked at the sodium and sugar in some products."

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