

# EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

## 2015 NC Cooperative Extension Chowan and Perquimans Counties



### Youth Learn Healthy Recipe to Reduce Sugar

North Carolina ranks 5th worst in the United States for childhood obesity. To combat this major concern, the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with Hertford Grammar School to offer lessons from the curriculum, *Show Me Nutrition*. The lessons include creative recipes to increase consumption of dairy, fruits and vegetables, encourage healthier food choices and provide fun ways to increase daily physical activity.

One area of concern with youth is helping them reduce sugar in their diet. The children learned ways to enjoy their favorite snacks and desserts and still satisfy their sweet tooth. One recipe that they made was a sugar-free pudding that they shake in a container with a lid. Not only did they find this recipe fun to make, they learned that it provided all the benefits of dairy with none of the sugar that is usually found in a pudding dessert. The students could make this recipe easily by themselves at home for a nutritious after-school snack.

The teacher of the class is a father of an elementary school-aged son. He was so impressed with the recipe and how much his students liked it that he decided to try it at home with his son. He shared with the program assistant that he liked that the recipe was quick, easy and more nutritious than other snacks his son usually ate. He went home and made the recipe with his son and now it is one of their favorite recipes.

The children in this class along with their teacher learned to replace high sugar snacks with healthier options as a result of their experience with EFNEP. 4-H EFNEP in Perquimans County continues to help improve the health and well-being of its youth and community.

### School Chooses EFNEP as Intervention to Address Childhood Obesity Risks

According to the 2013 Chowan County Community Health Assessment, children living in the county have a 20.2% obesity rate.<sup>1</sup> Children and adolescents who are obese are at greater risk for adult health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, as well as other diseases.<sup>2</sup>

The Program Assistant with the Chowan County 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with Chowan Middle School to teach healthy eating, physical activity and food preparation skills in an effort to address the risk of childhood obesity among the students. The program assistant offered lessons from the *Teen Cuisine* curriculum which is designed to help youth become self-sufficient in the kitchen while learning healthy habits that will last a lifetime and influence the people around them.

While participating in EFNEP, students learned to make healthier food choices by reading labels. The program assistant helped them develop their cooking skills and as a result, youth were able to positively change their eating and physical activity behaviors. Because of their ability to confidently and safely prepare recipes, some youth, concerned about their weight, shared that they were able to lose weight.

EFNEP helps improve participants' lives by teaching them skills that may help to reduce their risk for developing chronic diseases due to poor nutrition.

1 <http://www.arhs-nc.org/information/reports/>

2 <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>

*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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