

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2015 NC Cooperative Extension Halifax County

Elementary Children Choose Low-Fat in Taste Test

Dairy products are an important part of the diet. They provide high-quality protein and are good sources of vitamins A, D, and B-12, as well as riboflavin, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, zinc, and calcium. The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPlate* recommends that Americans consume 2-3 cups of dairy products daily, depending on their age, gender, and level of physical activity.¹

The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program's (EFNEP) Program Assistant in Halifax County partnered with Scotland Neck Primary School third grade classes to offer lessons from the curriculum, *Show Me Nutrition*. The lessons include creative recipes to increase fruit, vegetable and dairy consumption, encourage healthier food choices, and provide fun ways to increase daily physical activity.

At the beginning of the series of lessons, the program assistant realized that a high number of the youth did not drink milk and would not ask their family to purchase it. During the lessons, the children learned about the importance of calcium in the diet and that dairy foods are the primary source of calcium in our diet. To reinforce drinking milk on a daily basis, the program assistant conducted a blind taste test with whole, 1% and skim milk. 1% milk was the winner of the taste test. At the end of the series of lessons, the youth were again asked if they would ask their families to purchase 1% or skim milk. 100% of the children responded yes or maybe.

4-H EFNEP in Halifax County continues to help improve the health and well-being of its youth and community.

Youth are 74% More Active Following EFNEP

North Carolina has the 23rd highest childhood obesity rate in the United States. Currently 31.4% of youth in North Carolina are overweight or obese. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults.²

The Program Assistant for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Halifax County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with Halifax County Schools to teach the importance of eating healthy foods and physical activity through the *Show Me Nutrition* curriculum. Physical activity is an integral part of each lesson and encourages children to work towards achieving a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity each day.

The program assistant received a \$5,000 grant from the Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative, which provided jump ropes, Frisbees and balls to every child in the program. They also received a water bottle to encourage them to drink more water especially when playing outside on hot days.

Teachers have reported that their students are no longer sitting and talking while out on the playground, but are engaged in a variety of physical activities. Post evaluation data show these youth report a 74% increase in physical activity from the beginning to the end of the series of lessons. In addition, the schools are once again including physical activity as part of their daily classroom routine.

EFNEP encourages more "playtime" at school and at home. By increasing physical activity, youth could have an impact on the amount of family budget spent on health care costs. This money can then be used for other family budget items or even set aside in a college fund.



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.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2014-june/trends-in-us-per-capita-consumption-of-dairy-products,-1970-2012.aspx#.VipaVaLufvA>

2 <http://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=2415&r=35>

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