

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2015 NC Cooperative Extension Lenoir County



Label Reading Helps Mom Cut the Sugar

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 stake holders 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 to obtain and maintain good health.

As part of a recent class series, the EFNEP Program Assistant taught a lesson about making smart drink choices. The lesson focused on sharing strategies to reduce the consumption of sugary beverages and replace them with healthier choices.

One participant in the class spoke up and said that she was buying an orange drink beverage for her children because the label on the front of the product said, "100% Vitamin C." She said, "I never thought about the sugar content or that I needed to read the nutrition label until I was taught the drink lesson." She went on to explain that she was devastated to learn that the product contained so much sugar and said, "I have been giving my children sugar water." She stated that she would definitely not be buying this product anymore and would read the labels on all products from this point on. This parent learned tools to help her make healthier choices for herself and her children. She stated she would be reading the nutrition facts and all parts of the food label to help her make better choices for her family's health because of what she had learned from EFNEP.

Family Chooses Better Health and Saves Money

In Lenoir County, Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) works with families in the community to improve nutritional, food resource management, and food safety behaviors.

During one recent class the EFNEP Program Assistant had a participant tell her that following each class, she would go home and prepare the recipe she learned in class for her family. This mother shared that using the EFNEP recipes gave her a quick and healthy plan for family meals that helped her save money on her groceries, incorporate more vegetables in her family's diet, and reduce their sodium intake for her family. She also reports that her family has been eating more meals at home.

Prior to EFNEP, the participant shared that her family ate a lot of fast food and, when they did have meals at home, they were not the healthiest choice. Following EFNEP, she said her family enjoys the meals she prepares and asks every morning what EFNEP recipe they will be eating that evening. As a result of this Mom's participation in EFNEP, her family is eating better for less.

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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