

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2015 NC Cooperative Extension Onslow County



EFNEP Helps Marine Make Smart Drink Choices

In Onslow County, Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) works closely with young military families enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) at Tarawa Terrace to improve nutritional, food resource management, and food safety behaviors.

During the lesson, *Making Smart Drink Choices*, the EFNEP Program Assistant taught participants about how product marketing can influence customer's food/drink choices. She specifically talked about sport drinks because of the fitness requirements for marines. The group discussed the negative impact sports drinks have on the body and the high level of calories, sugar, and sodium in them.

A marine attending the class with his spouse stated that he drank sports drinks after his workouts because he thought that they were the best way to help him recover since they contained vitamins and minerals. He also stated that he thought that they would help him stay fit. After participating in the lesson, the participant stated that he learned that he was actually doing nothing more than adding extra calories and sugars by drinking sports drinks and that the best way to stay hydrated is to drink water. He also learned that he would save a lot of money on the family food budget by no longer purchasing and drinking sports drinks.

Military Families Learn to Control Portion Sizes with Help from EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Onslow County partnered with the local health department to deliver EFNEP's *Families Eating Smart and Moving More* curriculum to mothers participating in the Women's Infant and Children's (WIC) program.

During a recent lesson on choosing smart portion sizes, a 21-year-old mom with a newborn baby shared with the EFNEP Program Assistant that she was struggling to maintain healthy eating habits while balancing the responsibilities of being a new mom and preparing meals for her husband. As result, she often skipped meals or ate only 2 meals a day (breakfast and dinner). By the time she sat down to eat, she was starving and often consumed larger portions.

After participating in the class, she soon realized why she was hungry at the end of the day and often ate too much. She also realized that the best way to avoid the empty feeling was to stop skipping meals and to add healthy snacks in between her main meals. She learned tips about how to prepare fast, but healthy meals. She was very pleased to learn about the correct serving sizes of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein using measuring cups and other simple techniques such as using the palm of her hand to help her measure the correct portions.

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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