

EFNEP SUCCESS STORIES

2015 NC Cooperative Extension Wayne County



Participant Loses 15 Pounds Applying Lessons Learned from EFNEP

North Carolina has the ninth highest prevalence of overweight and the 26th highest prevalence of obesity among the 50 states and Washington, D.C.¹ In Wayne County, 32% of adults are obese. Studies in children and adults have found that reducing sugary drink consumption can lead to better weight control among those who are initially overweight.¹

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.

During a recent series of lessons, the Wayne County EFNEP Program Assistant talked with her program participants about the importance of limiting calories consumed from beverages, such as regular soft drinks, as a strategy to achieve a healthy body weight.

In a recent conversation, a participant of the program stated that EFNEP had caused him to think about life and the choices he's made especially as they relate to healthy living. Before starting the class, he stated he "loved regular soda and would drink them often." After hearing the *Smart Drink Choices* lesson and seeing the amounts of sugar contained in regular sodas, he "made a conscious decision to cut back on drinking regular sodas". When this participant last spoke with the Program Assistant, he shared that he had lost 15 pounds, moving him toward a healthier weight.

1 http://www.communityclinicalconnections.com/_downloads/CCCCH_FactSheet_Obesity_FINAL_June2015.pdf

2 <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/north-carolina/2015/rankings/wayne/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

3 <https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2012/10/sugary-drinks-and-obesity-fact-sheet-june-2012-the-nutrition-source.pdf>

Family Learns Recipes to Add Vegetables to Meals

Overweight and obesity are a major health concern as they are predictors of many serious chronic diseases such as: heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches participants to manage their weight through making small changes in behaviors such as replacing high sugar beverages with healthier alternatives, increasing fruits and vegetables, and increasing daily physical activity.

In an effort to increase fruit and vegetable intake, Wayne County EFNEP partnered with the Young Families Connect program which provides services coordinated through the Wayne County Health Department in an effort to promote self-sufficiency, health and wellness, and parenting skills for young parenting or expectant families.

As a part of this partnership, the EFNEP Program Assistant taught lessons and provided food demonstrations of healthy recipes. And because of the partnership, participants received a bag of fresh fruits and vegetables to take home so they could use them in the recipes they learned how to make.

After a recent lesson, one participant shared that the lessons had a big impact on her family. Prior to EFNEP, they did not like vegetables, especially kale and turnips. However, after seeing the Program Assistant demonstrate a recipe for a vegetable casserole, the participant had the opportunity to taste it and decided to use her fresh produce from the week to make the recipe at home.

She shared that her family made the vegetable casserole twice in one week using the fresh vegetables, and "her husband, who normally refuses to eat vegetables really enjoyed the recipe." This mother stated that her family had never eaten turnips before but now, because of the exposure through EFNEP, they will now be a regular part of their diet.

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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