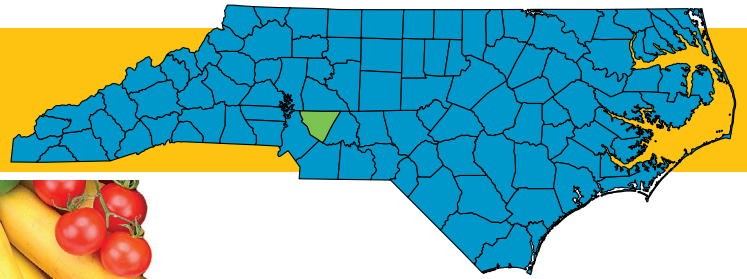




EFNEP
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAM



2016 NC Cooperative Extension Cabarrus County Report

North Carolina's Challenges

- In North Carolina, **1 in 4** children live in poverty.
- North Carolina's adult obesity rate is currently **30%**.
- **15.2%** of 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families are obese. This makes us the **7th** most obese state.
- North Carolina has the **18th** highest rate of diabetes and the **11th** highest rate of hypertension.

Supporting North Carolina's Families with Greatest Needs Since 1969

EFNEP helps address the challenges limited resource families face when introducing healthy changes through nutrition education, cooking classes, physical activity strategies, and shopping on a limited budget. EFNEP provides:

- Peer-to-peer, hands-on education in the community
- Healthy, low-cost recipes
- Simple strategies to help families move more together



In 2016: **827** youth participated in
4-H EFNEP in Cabarrus county

WHAT IS EFNEP?

EFNEP serves limited-resource families with young children, school-age youth, and pregnant teens through a series of lessons offered by paraprofessionals and volunteers, many of whom are indigenous to the population. In 2016, EFNEP served 45 counties in North Carolina. Participants learned how to:

- Make wise food choices
- Increase daily physical activity
- Manage food resources
- Practice food safety

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference in Cabarrus County



90% of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.



61% now practice daily physical activity.



44% practice better food resource management.



52% have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2016, **10** adults and youth donated time to EFNEP, making a difference in their own communities and contributing to EFNEP's ongoing success.



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Cabarrus County
EFNEP programs obtained

\$15,077

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



Both the students and teacher stated that learning the reasons why eating a simple, easy to prepare breakfast was important to initiating a change in their behaviors.



Students Learn Quick, Nutritious Breakfast Recipe

Although taught from a very early age that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, research shows 8 to 12 percent of all school-aged children skip breakfast. The proportion grows to between 20 and 30 percent by the time children enter adolescence.¹ Although reasons for skipping breakfast vary, it has been determined that children from low-income families have a greater likelihood of beginning their school day without eating that most important meal of the day.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) found this to be true when delivering a series of Teen Cuisine classes to sixth, seventh and eighth graders in Cabarrus County. For years, these youth have known it is important to eat breakfast. This year, EFNEP taught them why.

Once the students understood the importance of eating breakfast, EFNEP discussed quick, but nutritious breakfast ideas with the students. Knowing what foods to grab as they run out the door or what choices to make when offered breakfast at school can turn “breaking the fast” into an easy and healthy habit. Learning whole grain breakfast bars, various fruits, and protein foods like hard-boiled eggs are excellent “on-the-go” choices made the students realize breakfast does not have to be a large, complicated meal to provide the energy needed to start their day.

To highlight this point, the youth created a breakfast smoothie following a recipe found in the EFNEP Cookbook. As part of the assignment, they were asked to look up each ingredient included and share what nutrients it provided. They were also asked to compare and contrast the advantages of making a fruit smoothie at home versus purchasing one commercially. Upon checking the nutritional facts of various fast food restaurants, grocery stores and coffee shops, the youth learned the EFNEP fruit smoothie contained far fewer calories, fats and sugars than purchased smoothies. Through this exercise the students clearly understood why making their own smoothie at home, where they can control the ingredients, made a much healthier breakfast drink.

Both the students and teacher stated that learning the reasons why eating a simple, easy to prepare breakfast was important to initiating a change in their behaviors. Other students agreed and now more Gaston County youth are arriving at school either having eaten or planning to eat breakfast. Because they are now convinced this important meal can positively affect their performance both mentally and physically, they plan to continue including breakfast in their daily routine as a healthy, life-long habit.

Reference:

1. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/The-Case-for-Eating-Breakfast.aspx>

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