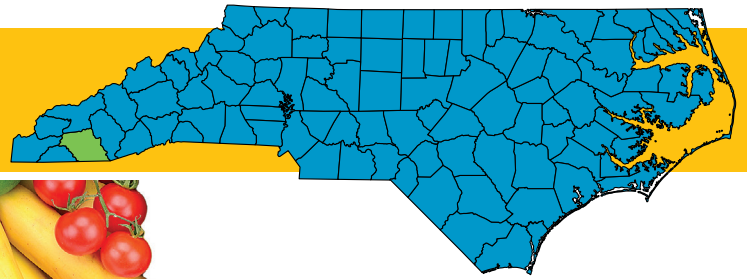




EFNEP
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAM



2016 NC Cooperative Extension Macon 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: **677** youth participated in
4-H EFNEP in Macon 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 Macon County

 **93%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.

 **58%** now practice daily physical activity.

 **47%** practice better food resource management.

 **71%** have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2016, **35** 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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Macon County
EFNEP programs obtained

\$10,849

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



Teachers Praise EFNEP



As a result of participating in EFNEP, teachers reported that many children had started bringing healthier food choices from home for lunch and as snacks. Those eating in the cafeteria were more open to trying foods unfamiliar to them. The children were taught that incorporating the three types of physical activity— aerobic, strengthening and flexibility—into their daily activities would not only make them healthy and strong, but more attentive and alert. Teachers agreed that something as simple as dancing in the classroom to a popular song improved the students' attention span.

References:

1. http://www.who.int/elena/titles/ssbs_childhood_obesity/en/
2. http://healthyeatingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/HER-SSB-Synthesis-091116_FINAL.pdf
3. <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/diet-related-diseases/dental-care/expid/review-food-dietary-habits-dental-health>



Youth Uses Label Reading to Reduce Family Sugar Consumption

For years, research has shown the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages have a direct affect on the health of our children. Not only do they contain empty calories, they do not provide the satiety solid foods do causing children to intake additional calories that may cause weight gain.¹ Additionally, the intake of sugar-sweetened beverages can replace healthier food and beverage choices like fruits, vegetables, and milk. Besides the loss of nutrients, reducing the intake of milk can reduce the intake of calcium, which affects bone density, especially in girls.² And for years, dentists have agreed with the research that sugar-sweetened beverages contribute to dental caries. It is a documented fact that decayed teeth are painful and can be the cause of poor eating behaviors.³

Having been informed of many health risks associated with the intake of sugar-sweetened beverages, Macon County schools invited Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) to teach its students how to make healthy food and beverage choices. Each year, EFNEP provides a series of six basic nutrition education classes in selected classrooms. One of the most popular lessons is devoted to teaching the children about the health consequences related to consuming high amounts of sugar found in soft drinks.

During the lesson, the children learn to recognize sugar-sweetened soft drinks by learning to read the Nutrition Facts label. They pay close attention to serving size, calorie totals and sugar content. To help them conceptualize exactly how much sugar is found in one serving of their favorite drink, they divide the number of sugar grams, as stated on a Nutrition Facts label, by four as there are four grams in each teaspoon of sugar. Physically pouring the resulting teaspoons of sugar into a clear cup helps them graphically identify with the amount of sugar they consume each day.

Recently, one parent and child shared with EFNEP that as their family shops now for soft drinks, the child reads the Nutrient Facts label to determine how much sugar each serving contains. As he calculates the total he asks, "Do you know how many teaspoons of sugar there are in one serving of this drink?"

Proud of his new ability to make healthy choices, the child added to the conversation by saying his most significant label reading experience had been when he discovered an eight-ounce serving of his mother's favorite grape drink contained 33 grams of sugar. He exclaimed, "That's like eight teaspoons of sugar in four swallows!"

That discovery had convinced the child to drink water as EFNEP had suggested. He confessed water could get rather boring, however, so he mixed it with just a little grape drink as EFNEP had suggested. He vowed his search for sugar free drinks he liked would continue. He knew there was hope as he recently found one that tasted good and had 0 grams of sugar!

Just as this family found, EFNEP encourages children to be more cognizant of what they're eating and drinking. Knowing foods and beverages high in sugar can be the cause of poor eating habits and resulting health problems, they become anxious to practice healthy behaviors, and in the process, inspire others to do the same.

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