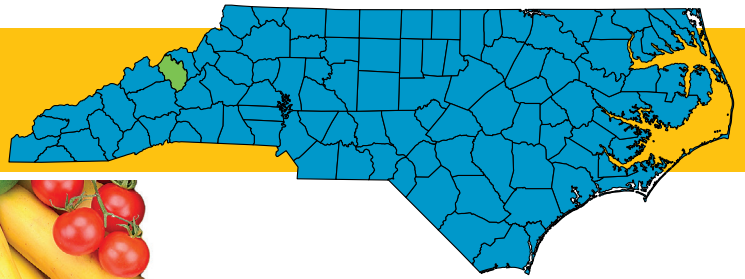




EFNEP
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAM



2017 NC Cooperative Extension Yancey County Report

North Carolina's Challenges

- In North Carolina, **1 in 4** children live in poverty.
- North Carolina's adult obesity rate is currently **31.8%**.
- **15%** of 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families are obese. This makes us the **17th** most obese state.
- North Carolina has the **15th** 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 2017: **1,052** youth participated in
4-H EFNEP in Yancey 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 2017, 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 Yancey County



86% of EFNEP participants
improved dietary intake.



35% now practice **daily**
physical activity.



54% have improved their
food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2017, **98** 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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**Yancey County
EFNEP programs obtained**

\$2,000

**in funding and support
from local efforts.**

EFNEP SUCCESS



5th Graders' Calculations Help Curb Sugar Consumption

To reduce the health risks and medical costs associated with drinking sugar sweetened beverages, the EFNEP Educator in Yancey County facilitated an activity called, "Re-Think Your Drink," with local 5th graders.

After the series of lessons, post-evaluation data showed 65% of the students had lowered their consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.



Students Examine Lunch Menu and Try New Foods

Research has shown that the best time to develop healthy eating habits is during childhood. Selective eating is common in children with up to 50% of children reported to be picky eaters. Picky eating at this stage may cause a child to develop poor eating habits and perhaps nutrient deficiency disorders.

Acknowledging their unique position in the community, the Yancey County school system has partnered with the Yancey County Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) to educate and encourage children to eat their fruits and vegetables and improve their lifestyle by diet and activity. Through a hands-on, six-lesson series, youth learned about the 5 food groups and how to include them in planning healthy meals and snacks. To help students gain experience in making nutritious food decisions, the EFNEP Educator would look over the school lunch options with the students and challenge them to identify the healthiest options while encouraging them to try new foods. Knowing that children will try the foods they make, the EFNEP allowed the students to help her prepare dishes such as fruit and vegetable salads, fruit kabobs, bean dips and others. The children greatly enjoyed the exotic fruits and vegetables such as: mangoes, figs, starfruit and jicama she brought for them to try.

After the six lessons, teachers were asked to complete a survey. One teacher responded to the question of how a student's nutrition behavior had improved stated, "A girl in my class always came to school with a biscuit, mashed potatoes and bug juice. After the first lesson, she decided she wanted to try fruit. Now she brings a balanced lunch daily! The snacks the kids tried really encouraged them to try new foods. Parents have commented that their children are eating better now!" Another teacher stated, "A student who thought he wouldn't like peas, tried them in the cafeteria and loved them!"

These examples provided by the teachers showcase how EFNEP, working with Yancey County Schools has succeeded in empowering their students to make wise food choices and to promote better eating habits, even with the pickiest of eaters. By learning to be mindful of their food choices, these children will reduce potential health risks and positively impact their chances of enjoying a healthy life.



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