



2018 NC Cooperative Extension Cabarrus County Report

North Carolina's Challenges

- In North Carolina, **1 in 5** children live in poverty.
- North Carolina's adult obesity rate is currently **32%**.
- **15.2%** of 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families are obese. This makes us the **16th** 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



EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences in Cabarrus County

In 2018: **797** 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 2018, 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

- 88%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
- 60%** now practice daily physical activity.
- 43%** practice better food resource management.
- 48%** have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2018, **8** 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

\$15,558

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



Youth Learn the Value of Eating Local

EFNEP partnered with 4-H, a local grocer, and a farmer to offer the opportunity for low-income youth to learn about healthy eating. The youth participated in a summer camp titled "Local Food Hunt." The camp class series helped youth explore healthy eating and the connection to local foods.

As part of the experience, youth were taken on a tour of a grocery store that utilizes locally grown foods and to a farm that supplied food to the store. In the grocery store, youth spent a lot of time in the produce section, discussing the value of fruits and vegetables. They talked about eating more fruits and vegetables not just as meals, but also for snacks. Youth learned that processed foods were higher in saturated fat, sodium, sugar, and calories. While in the store, they had the opportunity to sample organically grown produce and fresh-made smoothies. Following the grocery store tour, the campers visited a local farmer. They walked to a field where the students saw okra growing and discussed the value of eating local.

At the conclusion of the camp, 100% of youth participants indicated an increased knowledge of healthy eating and local food opportunities.

Middle School Students Learn to Make Smart Drink Choices

EFNEP partnered with Mt. Pleasant Middle School to offer a series of nutrition education classes to a group of middle school youth. As part of the series, the EFNEP Educator focused on teaching the youth about healthy drink choices. Sugar-sweetened beverages are a leading source of added sugars in the American diet. Frequently drinking sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with excess weight gain possibly leading to obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. Limiting the amount of sugar-sweetened beverages can help individuals maintain a healthy weight and have a healthy diet. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

During the lessons, students learned about the impact consuming empty calories has on their health. The EFNEP Educator expanded upon this message by taking soft drinks, fruit juices, sports drinks, energy drinks, and tea into classrooms to discuss the amount of sugar in these beverages. She also showed the students the sugar content of popular milkshakes, smoothies, and coffee drinks. The Educator encouraged youth to reduce their consumption of sugary beverages and increase their water consumption. She also explained to them how important water consumption was to overall health.

At the conclusion of the EFNEP series at Mt. Pleasant Middle School, students were asked to write an essay on what they had learned through EFNEP and how they had changed their diet. Of the 60 students participating, 25% included in their essay that they had decreased the consumption of sugary beverages and increased their consumption of water.

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