



2018 NC Cooperative Extension Halifax 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 Halifax County

In 2018: **8** families enrolled in EFNEP
630 participated in 4-H EFNEP
63% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.

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 Halifax County

-  **100%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
-  **89%** now practice daily physical activity.
-  **83%** practice better food resource management.
-  **57%** have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2018, **33** 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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Halifax County
EFNEP programs obtained

\$4,250

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



Youth Choose Fruits and Vegetables as a Result of EFNEP

Good nutrition during the school years is vitally important for helping children grow strong and succeed in school. Recent data show that only 39% of children eat enough fruits and vegetables.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) offered a series of classes to Kindergarten through second grade youth on the importance of eating healthy foods and physical activity. Children were taught why it is so important to eat fruits and vegetables and were given the opportunity to taste fresh fruits and vegetables in the classroom.



Following the program, a first-grade teacher told the EFNEP Educator that she received a note from a parent that her child had never eaten broccoli before, but came home excited about the EFNEP class and asked the mom to purchase some so they could eat it raw.

Another teacher stated that a child who had only packed potato chips for a snack prior to EFNEP was now bringing fruit every day for snack.

Youth were given pre and post evaluations for the program. At the time of this success, 267 kindergarten through second grade youth had completed the program including the pre and post evaluation. The percentage of children eating vegetables went from 31% to 90% and the percentage of children eating fruits jumped from 29% to 98%. As a result of EFNEP, this group of children learned to eat new fruits and vegetables at school and went home and asked for them. Success!



Let's Get Physical

Halifax County youth are ranked 99th in the state for childhood obesity. EFNEP educates youth on the importance of physical activity. Low-income schools face many challenges and physical education usually ranks low on the list of priorities. Children in Halifax County are at a higher risk for inactivity, obesity, and diabetes. Teaching children strategies to be active is a key part of each EFNEP lesson.

A \$4,000 grant to EFNEP through the Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative provided jump ropes, flying discs, water bottles, and balls to 179 children enrolled



in the program at Aurelian Springs Elementary. Prior to the program, teachers reported that children sat around and talked when they went to the playground for recess. The teachers in all of the EFNEP classes reported that the children actually play on the playground now because of the information and games they learned to play in EFNEP. Parents have also shared that their children are more active at home using the tools provided by the grant.

Youth were given pre and post evaluations for the program. Kindergarten through second grade youth showed a 94% increase in physical activity and third grade youth improved by 65%.

Beyond behavior change, the school environment was also influenced. Forty-six third graders received pedometers. The school nurse partnered with EFNEP to set up a walking competition that lasted for a month. Because it was so well received, the school has decided to include more physical activity events in the future. In addition, the school decided to make physical activity a part of their daily classroom routine because of EFNEP's positive outcomes.

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