

2018 NC Cooperative Extension McDowell 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 McDowell County


In 2018: **22** families enrolled in EFNEP
14 participated in 4-H EFNEP
77% 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 McDowell County

 **100%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.

 **78%** now practice daily physical activity.

 **78%** practice better food resource management.

 **78%** 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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McDowell County
EFNEP programs obtained

\$15,276

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS

Cooking at Home Helps Family Stretch Food Dollars

Recent studies show the average American eats out between four and five times per week and it is costing them thousands of dollars per year. This fact coupled with the knowledge that over 18% of families in McDowell County live below the poverty line encouraged the EFNEP Educator, to offer classes that teach food preparation and ways to manage your food dollars.

One of the participants in a recently graduated EFNEP series shared a story about her fear of stoves, stemming from when she was a young girl. The family's stove exploded one evening while she was in the kitchen and she had been frightened of them ever since. The family didn't cook much and most of it was done by her husband or her daughters. They ate out many times during the week. While teaching the classes, the EFNEP educator used an electric skillet to prepare recipes. Because of this, she could learn to cook and did not have to depend on the stove that still frightened her. She was so happy with these recipes that she was the first to volunteer to help with them. Not only did she learn simple meal preparation that she was comfortable doing, she learned skills that helped her with planning and shopping for meals. By planning, shopping, cooking, and eating more meals at home, she was able to save her family significant dollars and prepare more nutritious meals. Now, following the skills she learned in EFNEP, the family has reduced the meals they eat out to once a week.



EFNEP Participant Makes Changes and Leads Others in Being Physically Active

Everyone knows that regular exercise is good for the body. But exercise is also an effective way to improve your mental health. "Regular exercise can relieve stress, improve memory, help you sleep better, and boost overall mood," according to a 2016 Harvard Health Publication.

A participant in an adult EFNEP series in McDowell county realized this when she started following the physical activity suggestions learned in the EFNEP classes. One of her favorite activities was the Leslie Sansone walking DVD provided by the program. Also, while attending an ESL class with several other women, she organized a group walk that met an hour before class. They would walk uptown and get their exercise while also having time for positive social interaction. They reported that on the days they walked, they all felt calm and rested and more alert to learn.

She is continuing these healthy lifestyle changes today. She has organized a few hikes for her class, as well as an activity where they distributed painted rocks in our downtown area. She credited the EFNEP lesson, "Choosing a Healthier You for Life" with her continued changes.



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