

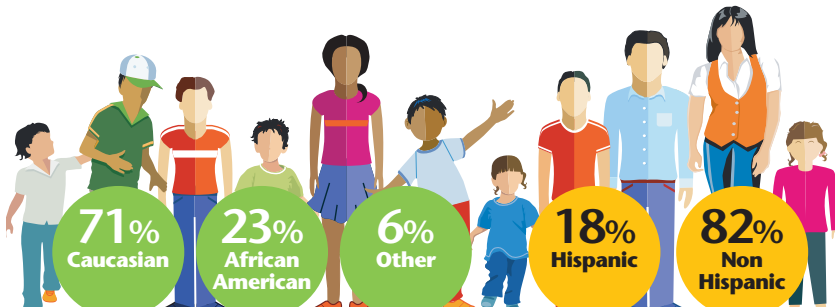
NC Cooperative Extension 2019 REPORT

Cabarrus County

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 2019: **734** youth participated in 4-H EFNEP in Cabarrus County

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.

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 2019, 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 x County

- 90%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
- 64%** now practice daily physical activity.
- 37%** practice better food resource management.
- 51%** have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2019, **13** adults and youth donated time to EFNEP, making a difference in their own communities and contributing to EFNEP's ongoing success.



2019 NC Cooperative Extension Cabarrus County Report

Cabarrus County
EFNEP programs obtained

\$15,558

in funding and support
from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



Partnership Camp Teaches Farm to Table Concepts

With the desire to educate children of Cabarrus County about where their food comes from and to help youth adopt healthy eating practices, the EFNEP Educator, along with the County Extension Horticulture Agent, collaborated on *Fun with Foods 4-H Camp*. The campers went on a field trip to NC State University's commercial research farm so they could see diverse aspects of agriculture. They saw cows being milked, how food was made for the cows from silage, farm equipment, row crops including soybeans, horticultural crops including strawberries, blackberries, sunflowers and tomatoes. Additionally, they visited a farm's produce stand to select and purchase fresh local foods to prepare the following day.

One of the items purchased was spaghetti squash. Only two of the 12 students had tasted spaghetti squash prior to the *Fun with Foods 4-H Camp*. Before the food preparation activity began, campers learned about the importance of eating vegetables as part of a healthy diet. Campers learned through hands-on food preparation how to cook the spaghetti squash and prepare it multiple ways. Three recipes using spaghetti squash were prepared for the children to cook and taste.

Because research shows that when youth from kindergarten to sixth grade are involved in preparing and cooking their own food, they are more likely to eat that food, it was important to include a nutrition education component into the camp curricula. Of the 12 campers, eight of them tried all three versions of spaghetti squash and said they would request their families fix these recipes at home.



Reduced Screen Time Increases Physical Activity, More Time for Breakfasts

More than half of U.S. children are not getting the recommended amount of weekly physical activity, states the American Academy of Pediatrics. Daily physical activity can have an impact on cognitive skills such as concentration and attention and it also enhances classroom attitudes and behaviors, all of which are important components of improved academic performance.

According to Pew Research, 54% of U.S. teens say they spend too much time on their cellphones, and two-thirds of parents express concern over their teen's screen time. Not only is screen time interfering with students eating breakfast and the amount of sleep they are getting, but also in the amount of time they spend outside participating in physical activity.

One of the questions on the EFNEP pre and post evaluations asks students how many hours they spend on electronic devices apart from doing homework. Knowing this information, the EFNEP Educator always makes a point to discuss this question during class time because consistently in each class, the amount of time students are on their devices is high. In discussing this question, students also share that they are not eating breakfast or getting the recommended hours of sleep for their age due to time on electronic devices.

Understanding the importance of physical activity for the overall health and well-being of the students, the educator also teaches them the importance of being physically active.

As a result of the series of lessons, 64% have improved their physical activity, and many students report eating breakfast most mornings before school. One student shared that she was making more of an effort to wake up early on school mornings to eat breakfast, even preparing a recipe the night before, so she would have something ready to eat.

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