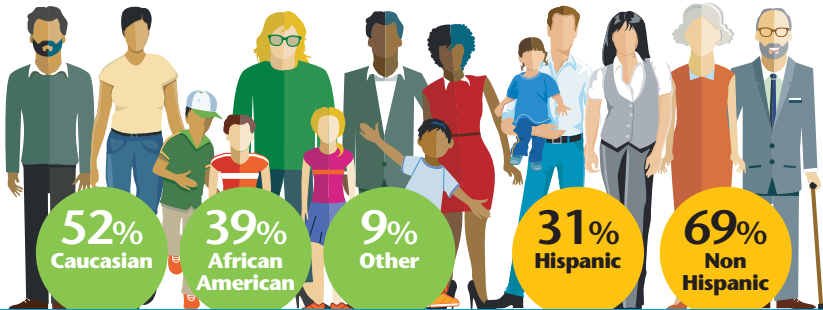


# NC Cooperative Extension 2020 REPORT

## 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



### North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2020:

**2,053** families enrolled in EFNEP    **10,731** participated in 4-H EFNEP

**85%** 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 2020, 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

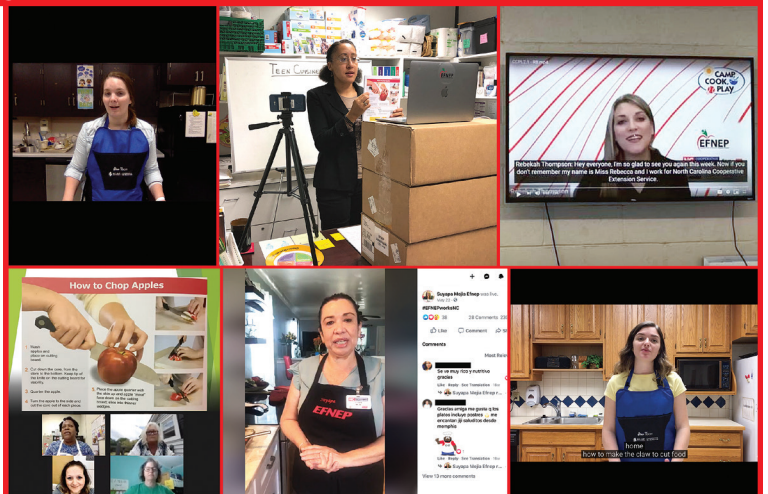
- 92%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
- 51%** now practice daily physical activity.
- 90%** practice better food resource management.
- 91%** have improved their food safety habits.

## EFNEP Adapts to Reach Participants During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A collaboration between NC State's SNAP-Ed/Steps to Health, Local Foods and EFNEP resulted in **102,000** families receiving nutrition and food safety information through **264** emergency food distribution sites across the state.

**3,177** low-income families and youth participated in the program using live remote and pre-recorded online lessons.

**65,140** individuals viewed nutrition information via EFNEP state and county social media pages.



# 2020 NC Cooperative Extension Gaston County Report

In Gaston County, **627** individuals were reached through direct programming. An additional **7,381** low-income individuals were reached through supplemental outreach efforts.

Gaston County EFNEP programs obtained **\$12,730** in funding and support from local efforts.

## EFNEP SUCCESS



### EFNEP Valued by New School Partner for Improving Student's Choice of Healthy Foods

In December of 2019, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) of Gaston County partnered with Robinson Elementary, for the first time ever, to deliver nutrition lessons. Robinson Elementary is a Title I school in Gaston County with a mission to help their students learn and grow as much as possible. The EFNEP educator came in once a week, for six weeks to deliver high-quality, interactive lessons to grades K, 1, 2, 3 and 4. This included the following curricula: *Adventures in Nutrition*, *Fun with Food and Fitness*, *Food Group Express*, *Building My Body*, and *Choosing Foods for Me*. Although each curriculum is for a different age group, each covers the basics: MyPlate and the five food groups, proper food safety practices, handwashing, and the importance of physical activity. Students also had the opportunity to sample new, healthy recipes.

The EFNEP educator reached out via email to the principal, assistant principal and school improvement team describing the EFNEP program and set-up a meeting. Two days later the guidance counselor, Fran Ellis, responded to the EFNEP educator expressing interest in the program. During the meeting, the EFNEP educator described the program in more detail and the guidance counselor was in absolute shock that she had never heard about the program, especially since she had been teaching for over 20 years. The guidance

counselor was ecstatic to partner with EFNEP and begin the program the following week.

Unfortunately, after just two lessons the guidance counselor fell ill and was unable to continue for the rest of the school year. This left the EFNEP educator wondering what would happen to all the classes. Would that mean she would no longer be able to continue with the students? Fortunately, the answer was no. The guidance counselor had spoken to the principal of Robinson Elementary before leaving and expressed how beneficial and fun the EFNEP program had been for her students. The principal allowed the EFNEP educator to continue teaching the lessons in the guidance counselor's room, which had access to a kitchen to refrigerate foods when needed.

During the EFNEP educator's lessons, teachers would observe and help when it came time to do the food tastings. Many teachers expressed how much they loved the program and also could not believe they did not know about the EFNEP program sooner. Teachers also expressed they had seen noticeable improvements in some of their students eating behaviors. A kindergarten teacher stated, "More fruits and vegetables are eaten at lunch." Students also felt more encouraged to try new foods. A second-grade teacher stated, "One of my students tried a bite of a chicken sandwich and ate broccoli; that never would've tried something new." Teachers also praised the EFNEP educator expressing, "Ms. Garcia was wonderful! Her love for her job is evident! Her planning was exceptional!" The principal of Robinson Elementary asked the EFNEP educator to come back to do more groups in the future.

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