



NC Cooperative Extension 2022 REPORT

Avery County

Supporting North Carolina's Families with Greatest Needs

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

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 2022, EFNEP served 40 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

- 100%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
- 95%** practice better food resource management.
- 100%** have improved their food safety habits.
- 50%** now practice daily physical activity.

470 family and youth participants were reached through direct programming.



Avery County EFNEP Enrollment



Avery County EFNEP programs obtained **\$11,590** in funding and support from local efforts.

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EFNEP SUCCESS



Cooking as a Family

Statistics show that North Carolina children are not eating enough vegetables and fruit. According to Eat Smart, Move More NC's Overweight and Obesity in North Carolina 2020 Update, 41% of children eat one serving or less of vegetables per day while 30% eat one serving or less of fruit per day. Thus indicating the need to help parents/caregivers learn the importance of making healthy food choices especially for their children.

To assist with this issue, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Avery County partnered with the Intermountain Children's Services Head Start Program that serves low-income families with children under 5 years old. Head Start contacted the EFNEP educator to seek ideas that could be used to inspire families to start cooking together with their children. Together, the programs provided a teaching video that was sent to Head Start Centers across the area. The video demonstrated a simple fruit salad recipe that children could make with their parents. The Head Start sites also provided the parents with all the ingredients they needed to make the recipe at home.

Most of the families made the recipe at home with their children. Parents shared that because the children had assisted in making the fruit salad, they were much more willing to eat it.



Healthy Home Cooking

Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control shows that more than one-third of adults ate fast food on any given day. Unfortunately, these meals often contain fewer fruits and vegetables and more sodium and fat than meals prepared at home. In Avery County, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches adults how to choose and cook healthy food on a budget.

During one class series, the topic of eating out came up. One participant said, "In Avery County, where would you go to find healthy food anyway?" The EFNEP educator used this as a teachable moment to demonstrate how cooking at home is a cheaper and healthier alternative than eating out. EFNEP uses recipes that are quick to prepare with inexpensive ingredients available in local grocery stores. A recipe was demonstrated after each lesson and participants were given an opportunity to help prepare it. After each class, they were challenged to make a healthy behavior change including preparing as many of the EFNEP recipes using the skills they learned.

By the end of the class series, a participant shared that "...there are no places that are healthier than food I can cook at home...". Based on evaluations, 100% of adult participants made at least one improvement in dietary intake and most reported that they had cooked at least one of the EFNEP recipes at home.

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