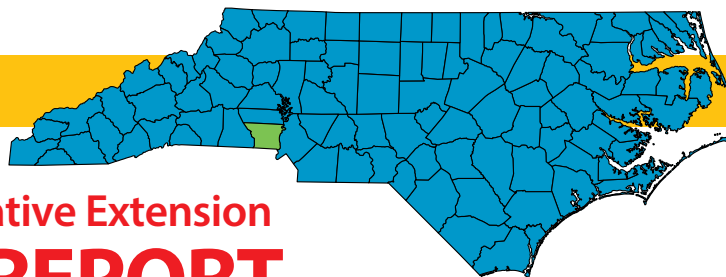




NC Cooperative Extension 2022 REPORT



Gaston 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.



84% practice better food resource management.



100% have improved their food safety habits.



33% now practice daily physical activity.

444

family and youth participants were reached through direct programming.



Gaston County EFNEP Enrollment

23%
Caucasian

56%
African American

21%
Other

14%
Hispanic

86%
Non Hispanic

Gaston County EFNEP programs obtained
\$13,940 in funding and support from local efforts.

2022 NC Cooperative Extension Gaston County Report

EFNEP SUCCESS



EFNEP Partners with the Boys & Girls Club of Gastonia

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Gaston to teach youth about healthy nutrition, physical activity, and food safety. One of the lessons taught in the Teen Cuisine series is Eat Smart. During this lesson, the EFNEP educator taught the teens about MyPlate food groups, knife safety skills, and how to measure ingredients for a recipe. Each teen was provided a workbook with various activities to complete and recipes to prepare.

The educator discussed how fruit fits into the food groups of MyPlate and gave the participants an opportunity to practice cutting fresh fruit with a knife. During the activity, one young man stated he had difficulty eating fruit because he felt they tasted “bland.” He never ate fruit unless it was in a milkshake, smoothie, or pie. He disliked eating plain fruit.

Once the class made the recipe of the day, Fruit with Yogurt Dip, the young man decided he indeed liked fresh fruit. He was eager to make it at home for himself and his siblings so he asked the educator, “Will we be able to take our Teen Cuisine workbooks home? I really want the recipe so I can make it for my entire family!”

The mission of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Gaston is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need them the most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. EFNEP is able to aid in their mission by teaching teens how to care for themselves so they can care for others, and to learn skills to become self-confident in their ability to do so.



EFNEP Participant Goes Green

The Gaston County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with a faith-based program for women struggling with substance abuse/alcoholism and other life-threatening issues. A class series entitled “Eating Smart and Moving More” was taught to the group and covered topics such

as healthy nutrition, physical activity, food safety, and food resource management.

During one of the lessons, the focus was on eating more fruits and vegetables. Participants were taught to choose a “rainbow of colors” when eating produce. The EFNEP educator discussed the nutrients and health benefits of each color. She also taught the women how to stretch their food dollars by purchasing in-season fruits and vegetables.

In addition, the educator conducted a food demonstration of a smoothie recipe that included a combination of fruits and vegetables, including spinach. The hands-on activity was made fun and educational by allowing the women to participate in preparing the fruits and vegetables, measuring the ingredients, and blending them together.

One participant was reluctant to try the smoothie, stating that she “hated spinach.” The EFNEP educator and her fellow classmates all encouraged her to try at least one sip. She finally agreed to do so and ended up drinking three servings! She was so grateful for being introduced to a new food. She loved the smoothie so much that she now regularly makes it for her and her children. She shared that her children love the smoothie, and they have no idea they’re eating vegetables. After being introduced to a new vegetable during the EFNEP class, it prompted her to try other dishes such as stir fry, rice and broccoli, and other vegetables. She thanked the educator for the class stating, “This is a great way for myself and my kids to get more green vegetables into our diets!”

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