



NC Cooperative Extension **2022 REPORT**

McDowell 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



88% of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.



100% practice better food resource management.



72% have improved their food safety habits.



62% now practice daily physical activity.



McDowell County EFNEP Enrollment



604 family and youth participants were reached through direct programming.

McDowell County EFNEP programs obtained in funding and support from local efforts.
\$23,174

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EFNEP SUCCESS



EFNEP Partners with the B.E.A.R. Closet to Reach Families in Need

The B.E.A.R. Closet is a non-profit organization that provides families with basic supplies needed to care for their newborns and small children. They also serve to connect families to community resources that can improve their quality of life including the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP) program. McDowell County's EFNEP educator partnered with the B.E.A.R. to teach participants how to plan and prepare quick, nutritious meals.

One mom had a very busy schedule with her children's activities. She expressed concern that she had no time to cook healthy meals and was always going through a fast food drive thru. She stated she felt guilty for not providing home cooked meals and having her children eat fast food that was "full of fat."

During the lesson on meal planning, the EFNEP educator sat with the mother after class, looked at her schedule, and worked with her to plan meals to prepare for the upcoming week. As a result, the participant is now setting aside some time at the beginning of every week to go through her schedule and make a meal plan. She is getting things prepped ahead of time and is no longer relying on fast food to feed her children. She stated she has saved money by not eating out, and she is enjoying sitting down to meals with her family. They also have more time to take walks together in the evenings. She proudly told the EFNEP educator, "This meal planning really isn't that hard. You just have to make time for it!"



EFNEP Teaches Youth Food Resource Management Skills for Independent Living

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) of McDowell County worked with McDowell Technical Community College's Adult High School program to teach students about healthy eating, physical activity, food safety, and food resource management through their Teen Cuisine series. The students in the Adult High School program are teens who reside in a local youth group home, and who have left the traditional school setting. Once the students obtain their high school diploma, they generally move out of the group home and secure independent living.

During the Teen Cuisine series of lessons, the EFNEP educator taught students how to stretch their food budget and how to locate additional resources within the community. She took a donated food box from the local food hub and demonstrated to the class how to create meals out of all the ingredients.

One of the students indicated he had obtained his diploma and was ready to move into an apartment. When discussing healthy snack options, he asked the EFNEP educator how to make healthy choices when his options were limited. He explained to the EFNEP educator that he did not have the means to consistently obtain basic food staples for his new apartment. The educator worked with the student to help him sign up for a weekly delivery of food from the food hub. She was also able to teach him how to plan out his meals for a week at a time.

This student is now confident that he doesn't have to worry about having enough food to eat. He has learned how to take the items and make different meals from the food boxes he receives. He was so appreciative of the life long skills he learned during the EFNEP classes.

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