



NC Cooperative Extension 2022 REPORT

Union 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



96% of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.



87% practice better food resource management.



65% have improved their food safety habits.



50% now practice daily physical activity.



Union County EFNEP Enrollment



344 family and youth participants were reached through direct programming.

Union County EFNEP programs obtained **\$16,827** in funding and support from local efforts.

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EFNEP SUCCESS



EFNEP Extends Its Reach to Union County Youth

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program educator partnered with the Union County Boys & Girls Club to deliver free nutrition education to sites located throughout the county.

During the first lesson, the EFNEP educator passed out pre-evaluation forms to see what the students knew about the food groups and food safety. Based on the responses, it was clear that students had little knowledge on food safety and needed help categorizing their foods. When it came time to discuss food safety, students were shocked to learn that leaving food out overnight was not safe. One student mentioned, "My momma never puts the food away." While the parents might not enjoy being scolded by their child, it's great to know the students will remember this habit for the future.

By the end of the program, students were able to identify foods from all food groups in MyPlate. Since the EFNEP educator knew this was an area of struggle for the group, she made sure students categorized the foods in their recipes for each class. She also made sure to bring visuals and incorporated games into the lessons to make learning fun and engaging. As a result of EFNEP, 91% of the students improved their ability to choose foods according to the Federal Dietary recommendations.



New Partnership Allows Parents and Children to Learn Together

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with a local community center to reach Union County youth. EFNEP offers free nutrition education classes for low-income populations to help families and youth cook healthy meals at home, be more active, save money on food costs, and handle food safety.

Students thoroughly enjoyed learning about nutrition with the EFNEP program. One of the goals with all of the lessons is to ensure students had fun while learning about nutrition and food safety. This was done by incorporating games and hands-on cooking demonstrations for each lesson. Students received individual food kits to avoid sharing of materials.

In a surprising turn of events, the community center director shared that the students shared their positive experiences with their parents who are now interested in enrolling in EFNEP. They wanted to support what their children were learning by cooking healthier meals. Thus, the EFNEP educator enrolled the parents in EFNEP's Families Eating Smart and Moving More.

During the adult lessons, parents were encouraged to prepare and eat more meals at home, include their children in the cooking process, and find ways to include movement into their everyday routine. The EFNEP educator demonstrated exercises that can be done at home and reminded them that small habits lead to big changes. Parents also participated in hands-on cooking demonstrations. By the end of the program, parents had incorporated some of the EFNEP recipes they learned into their weekly food plan.

As a result of EFNEP, parents alongside their children improved their dietary intake and physical activity practices.

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