



## Helping North Carolina Youth Eat Smart and Move More: 2006 Program Successes for Transylvania County

### Results of the 484 youth participating in EFNEP:

- 74%** now eat a variety of foods.
- 74%** increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods.
- 65%** increased their knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition.
- 56%** improved practices in food preparation and safety.

### 4-H EFNEP Success

An insight shared by a 4-H EFNEP volunteer summed up the nutrition paradox we face in the country today, "It is not hard to look around and see that people are extremely well (and over) fed, but many are 'starving' for information about how to make food their friend and not their bitter enemy." Through EFNEP, the girls in Troop 177 have learned just that.

Supported by the 4-H EFNEP program assistant, this volunteer taught nutrition to 19 third through fifth grade members of Junior Girl Scout Troop 177 this year. The troop's knowledge of nutrition varied from those knowing very little about healthy eating to those knowing enough to be aware that they (and their family members) did not always eat right. They wanted to learn how to improve their nutritional habits. Given this challenge and the wide range of knowledge, the volunteer selected to focus on MyPyramid, reading the food label, low-fat dairy products, sugar content of drinks, and healthy school lunch menus. She ended the series with a grocery store tour and a cooking project.

The impacts realized surprised her. The girls displayed a resounding interest in nutrition and actually started living what they were learning. They were trying new foods like edamamae, spaghetti squash and papaya, and including nutrition in fun activities - like sleepovers where they cooked instead of made crafts. Mothers were so excited about their daughters' new interest in nutrition at home, they began helping with the 4-H EFNEP sessions.

Maybe the most surprising of all impacts was that the troop leader took to heart the information shared during the five-week series. She started walking on a treadmill for one hour every night, reading food labels with her daughter making a conscious effort to improve her family's diet. From series beginning to end, she lost 10 pounds.

A second grade teacher asked the 4-H EFNEP Program Assistant to talk to her students about the importance of drinking water. The teacher was concerned that students were bringing lunches and snacks from home that contained sugar sweetened beverages and no water. Even when drinking from the water fountain the students only took a sip.

A week after teaching the students that water is the most critical nutrient for the health, growth and development of their bodies, the Nutrition Program Assistant returned to find water bottles at their desks. The teacher explained that after the lesson, she decided to allow the students to bring only bottled water into the classroom during the day. She stated that as a result of the lesson and easy access to water, the students were now drinking at least two bottles a day.

