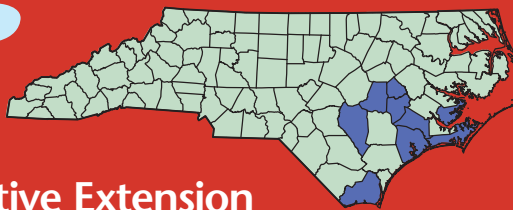




EFNEP



Serving Brunswick, Carteret, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, Sampson and Wayne counties

2007 NC Cooperative Extension Southeast District Report

EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (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. Using "hands-on" experiences, participants are taught to: make wise choices with their food dollars, improve eating habits, and practice food safety principles.

EFNEP is offered through North Carolina Cooperative Extension as a part of university outreach at NC State University and NC A&T State University. In 2007, North Carolina EFNEP served 43 counties.

EFNEP's mission is to assist families and youth with limited resources in making simple changes in eating behaviors and daily physical activity so that, over time, healthy choices become healthy habits.

Supporting North Carolina's Families with Greatest Needs Since 1969

EFNEP helps families and youth with limited resources—those most at risk to suffer from hunger, food insecurity and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical nutrition information, food preparation, food resource management and food safety education in settings convenient for the participants. EFNEP graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits.

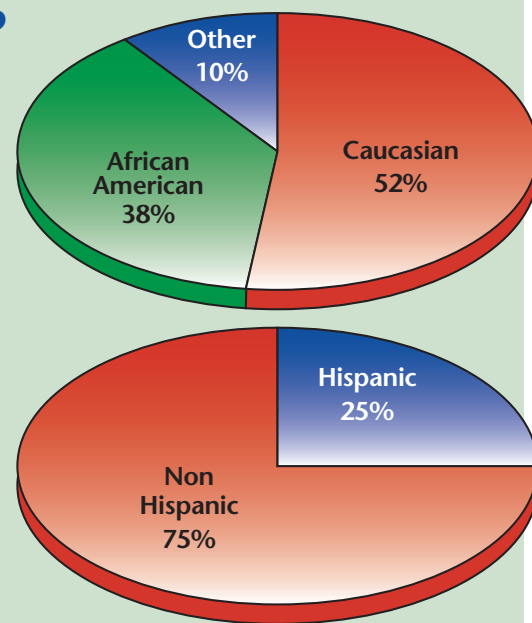
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2007, 339 adults and youth donated 5,200 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$18.77 per hour this is equivalent to \$97,604. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2007,

- 1,035 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 2,195 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 62% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 90% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



In 2007, the Southeast District EFNEP programs obtained over \$12,000 in funding and support from local efforts.

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Adults

Participants completing the series of lessons improved nutrition, food behavior and food safety practices. As a result of participation in EFNEP:

- 80% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 82% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 94% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 42% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 97% of participants improved their diet
 - 60% increased fruit consumption
 - 56% increased vegetable consumption
 - 60% increased consumption of calcium-rich foods

Recent research shows the positive effects of families eating together. In North Carolina, we track meals eaten together as an indicator of participant families' well being. In 2007 clients were asked "How often do you eat meals or snacks with one or more family members?" After EFNEP participation, 74% of families more often ate together. EFNEP makes a difference in families!

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Youth

Through a series of classes, 4-H EFNEP participants learn basic nutrition, the importance of daily physical activity, how to make healthy food choices, and food safety in preparation and storage. Evaluation data shows the following:

- 68% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 78% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 73% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 84% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Childhood health problems among limited-resource families are often linked to poor eating habits. Child Protective Services in Sampson County referred a young family to the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). The mother of an extremely underweight child shared that her child ate potato chips, cookies, and consumed soft drinks on a regular basis for snacks. The mother said these were the only foods her daughter would eat and she could not get her child to eat regular meals. The first lesson shared was the importance of healthy snacks. During this lesson, both mother and daughter were encouraged to participate in a "hands-on" food preparation activity. The daughter seemed reluctant to try the healthy foods, but after she tried the broccoli with cheese, she was very accepting. Additional recipes were tried and after four weeks, the child had gained four pounds. She began to learn to eat more fruits and vegetables and her mother began to prepare healthier foods. The child's pediatrician and social worker attribute the success to the family's participation in EFNEP.

Food Safety is a major educational focus with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) participants. In a recent Wayne County prenatal class many of the young pregnant participants were not aware of the added dangers of food borne illness during pregnancy. Following the class, several participants commented on changes they made. The change most often mentioned was heating cold cuts before they make a sandwich. During the lesson, the participants learned the potential danger of listeriosis from pre-packaged cold foods. The next most common change was washing their hands properly and more often. During the lesson, a hands-on black light activity was used to demonstrate how germs spread. This really impressed them. These changes in behavior will help to ensure a healthier mom and baby.

Wayne County 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partners with the public school system to offer lessons on nutrition and food safety to elementary children. A focus of the program is teaching the children food safety practices, particularly proper hand-washing. One of the primary ways that germs, viruses and bacteria are spread is by the human hand. Students in the program were excited about the lesson they were taught on sanitation. They were especially interested in the hand washing demonstration that allowed them to see how germs are spread and how to properly wash their hands. The children learned that when they touch their face, glasses, clothes, and other surfaces even when they don't realize it, they could be picking up or spreading germs. When the students returned the next week; they demonstrated how they washed their hands using warm water and soap while singing the ABC song. As a result, the students are helping to decrease the spread of harmful bacteria and viruses.

