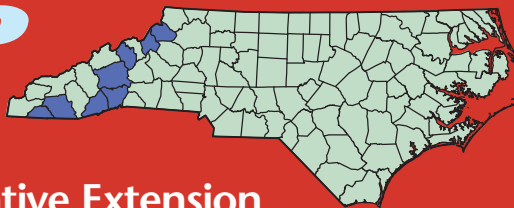




EFNEP



Serving Avery,
Buncombe,
Clay
Henderson,
Macon,
Transylvania,
Watauga and
Yancey
counties

2007 NC Cooperative Extension West 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.

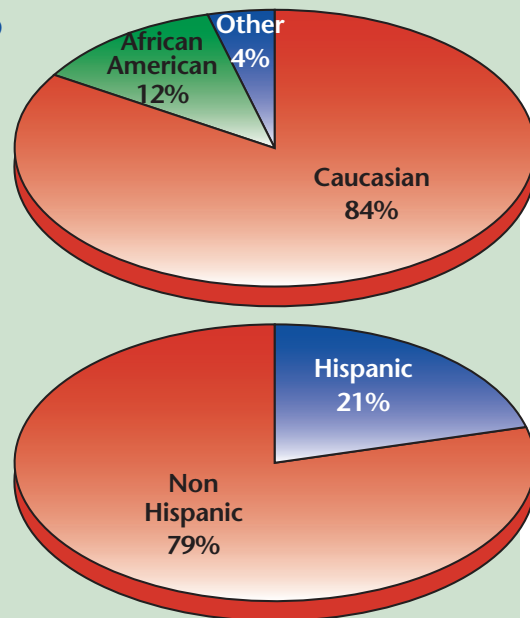
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2007, 168 adults and youth donated 2,912 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$18.77 per hour this is equivalent to \$54,658. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2007,

- 294 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 1,277 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 67% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 90% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



In 2007, the Western District EFNEP programs obtained over \$8,000 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:

- 82% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 76% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 94% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 47% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 95% of participants improved their diet
 - 63% increased fruit consumption
 - 54% increased vegetable consumption
 - 53% 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, 69% 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:

- 75% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 81% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 77% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 36% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Overweight and obesity are a major health concern and are directly related to increased consumption of high fat, high calories, lack of exercise, and increased television viewing. To help address the situation for limited resource families with limited access to programs for healthy eating and physical activity, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) offered a series of classes in a rural Watauga County community. During the classes, participating families were taught how to plan and prepare healthy meals and the importance of including physical activity in their daily routine. At the end of the EFNEP series, one homemaker wrote that she had begun cooking healthy meals including fruits and vegetables for her children. She eliminated fast food from their diets and limited television time by encouraging them to play outside. By practicing these and other EFNEP recommendations for improved eating and physical fitness behaviors, this family should reduce their risk of being overweight or obese.

The Economic Research Service reports a continuous increase in the number of meals eaten away from home. In 2006, food purchased away from home averaged 41.8% of a family's total food expenditures with lunch being the meal eaten out most often. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Henderson County taught a single mother of two about the monetary and nutritional consequences of eating out. Impressed by the concept of the lesson, 'Fix It Fast, Eat At Home', the mother began using a grocery list, reading labels and comparing prices when shopping for ingredients to prepare easy and nutritious EFNEP recipes at home. She also started taking her lunch to work three times a week. As a result of her efforts, she was able to provide healthier meals for her children and reported a savings of \$72.00 in lunch costs alone each month.

Intergenerational teaching can have a positive impact on a family's overall health. In Yancey County, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches nutrition to both limited resource adults and school-age children. Using this approach, the impacts are multiplied when families come together in the home. Adults and children in the family share what they have learned from EFNEP and encourage each other to practice the recommended eating behaviors taught by the program. Recently, a mother and her nine-year old daughter had completed their respective EFNEP lessons. The mother told the program assistant that as a result of what they learned, her daughter was now actively involved in the family's meal planning and grocery shopping. Additionally, the two had agreed to eat less fast food, more fruits and vegetables, and follow other MyPyramid guidelines. The mother also stated that since practicing healthier eating habits she had lost 13 pounds and both she and her daughter felt healthier overall.

