



# EFNEP

## 2008 North Carolina Annual 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 45 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.

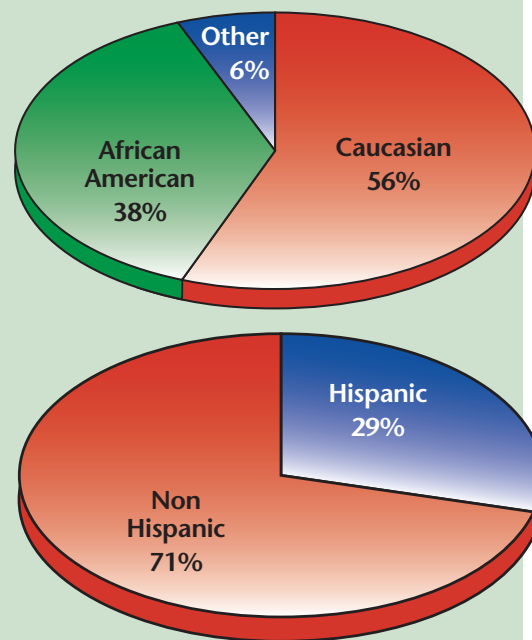
### *Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP*

In 2008, 1859 adults and youth donated 35,568 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$20.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$729,500. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

### *North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences*

In 2008,

- 4,928 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 10,339 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 65% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 90% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



*The North Carolina EFNEP programs obtained over \$444,742 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:

- 79% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 72% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 93% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 45% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 98% of participants improved their diet
  - 63% increased fruit consumption
  - 53% increased vegetable consumption
  - 59% 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 2008 clients were asked "How often do you eat meals or snacks with one or more family members?" After EFNEP participation, 62% 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:

- 77% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 82% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 87% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 56% improved practices in food preparation and safety

## EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Pregnant Teens

EFNEP encourages pregnant teens to make healthy food choices, seek professional prenatal care, and achieve their educational goals. Pregnant teenagers that take part in our hands-on program use the knowledge they gain to make positive choices in their diet, which results in reduced risk of low-birth-weight infants. Society at large benefits from reduced infant mortality, lowered health care cost and the increased economic stability of families. As a result of participation in EFNEP:

- 86% of pregnant teens improved food safety practices
- 82% used food labels to make food choices
- 100% improved their diet
  - 62% increased fruit consumption
  - 52% increased vegetable consumption
  - 57% increased consumption of calcium-rich foods



As grocery prices rise, participants in the Carteret County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)'s Families Eating Smart and Moving More classes are quick to apply what they are learning in class to their daily lives. During the series of classes, participants learn to use planning, comparison-shopping, and money-saving tips such as buying fresh fruits and vegetables in season and using coupons and store specials to reduce their total grocery bill. Participants report planning meals, making grocery lists, and buying store brands when they are less expensive. They report purchasing healthy foods for their families and saving a minimum of \$60 per month on their grocery bills. As a result, these participants have more money for other necessities for their families.

National statistics indicate that approximately 50% of children do not engage in enough vigorous physical activity to maintain health. In Scotland County alone, 27% of youth are not reaching the recommended daily levels of physical activity (Eating Smart and Moving More Scotland County profile). Prolonged unhealthy eating and physical inactivity contribute to chronic diseases and obesity.

The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) collaborated with the Save Our Students (SOS) program to implement a program titled, "Walk to the Capital." Students participated in a series of classes focusing on healthy eating with special emphasis on the importance of increasing physical activity to 60 minutes per day.

Students and their teachers kept daily logs of their physical activity and received special awards for walking up to 10,000 steps per day. Educational reinforcements such as pedometers, water bottles, pencils and Frisbee-like foldable flyers were provided to encourage the students to continue making healthy lifestyle changes.

Twenty-five students and teachers in grades 3rd – 5th walked 4,860,000 steps.

According to a study by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, African American teens are twice as likely to deliver low birth-weight babies and 1.5 times more likely to have premature babies than are white teen mothers. The toll of caring for premature babies in North Carolina during 2003 was more than \$18 billion dollars, according to March of Dimes officials. Low birth-weight babies have twice as many doctor visits in the first year than healthy weight babies and the mothers miss two times as many days from work. Greene County ranks 55th in the state for pregnant teens of all races, despite its small population. North Carolina Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) targeting first time pregnant and parenting teens, began classes at Greene County's Adolescent Parenting Program (APP) in the fall of 2007. Students learned valuable lessons on nutrition in pregnancy, the value of breastfeeding, introducing solids to infants and making healthy choices for themselves and their children from Shirley Howard, Extension EFNEP Program Assistant. Participants were surprised to learn how small a newborn's stomach is and the potential choking hazard for introducing solids before the baby is developmentally ready. Students reported choosing more healthy foods for themselves and their infants following the EFNEP classes.