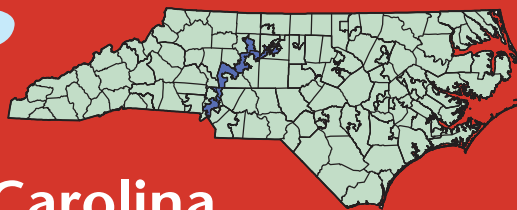




EFNEP



Serving
Cabarrus,
Forsyth,
Guilford
and Rowan
counties

2008 North Carolina Congressional District 12 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 2008, 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.

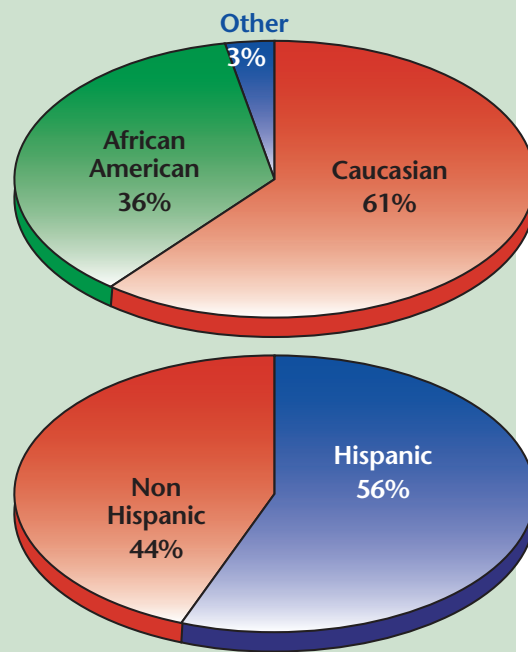
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 176 adults and youth donated 5824 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$113,626. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 436 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 947 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.



The 12th Congressional District EFNEP program obtained over \$93,444 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:

- 92% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 100% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 93% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 99% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 67% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 100% of participants improved their diet
 - 79% increased fruit consumption
 - 66% increased vegetable consumption
 - 73% 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, 91% 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:

- 61% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 71% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 81% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 34% 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:

- 82% of pregnant teens improved food safety practices
- 89% used food labels to make food choices
- 100% improved their diet
 - 73% increased fruit consumption
 - 47% increased vegetable consumption
 - 56% increased consumption of calcium-rich foods

Limited resource families often find it difficult to include a variety of fruits and vegetables as a regular part of their diet. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches families skills in planning and shopping that help them manage tight budgets and still provide nutritious meals including fruits and vegetables everyday. A recent graduate of the program shared that his family had made many positive changes since his participation in the program. He stated that every day his family has at least three vegetables and two fruits and that he is able to prepare these foods for them. He stated that prior to EFNEP his family did not eat many fruits or vegetables. He is pleased that EFNEP taught him how to make small changes that have made a big difference in his ability to provide healthy choices for his family.

Poor nutrition during pregnancy can cause birth complications. For pregnant teens, poor nutrition can pose an even greater risk. A 24-hour food recall from one recent pregnant teen participant in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) showed that this pregnant teen had been drinking several regular sodas and eating quite a bit of junk food. The teen participant stated that the food recall was representative of her typical daily diet. A series of classes help the pregnant teen learn the importance of low-fat milk consumption, choosing a variety of healthy foods and limiting high sugar intake to herself and her unborn baby. Following the conclusion of the program, this teen shared she started to increase her low fat milk intake and is now choosing healthy foods and beverages rather than soda and junk food. She shared she feels what she learned in EFNEP will help her to have a healthy baby and raise a healthy family.

The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Cabarrus County through the Professor Popcorn curriculum teaches children how to use MyPyramid as a guide to healthy eating and physical activity. During one group discussion, a student asked why adults worry about how much food they eat during the holidays. This led to a discussion of using MyPyramid to choose a variety of foods, choosing the majority of foods from the pyramid's base while limiting foods at the top, controlling portion sizes and being physically active everyday. The discussion concluded with students learning that when you choose healthy foods, control portion sizes and are physically active every day, you will be healthier. At the next class, the student who had begun the discussion told me he had shared what he learned with his family. He stated that he and his father are now walking every night after dinner and are trying to eat more healthy foods using MyPyramid as a guide.

