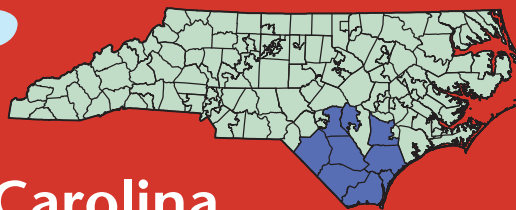




EFNEP



Serving Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin and Sampson counties

2008 North Carolina Congressional District 7 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.

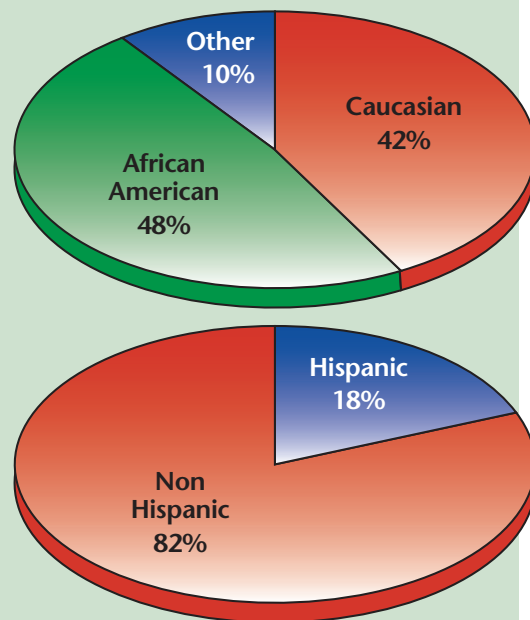
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 147 adults and youth donated 4,160 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$81,162. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 595 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 138 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 54% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 81% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The 7th Congressional District EFNEP program obtained over \$35,429 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:

- 86% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 97% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 83% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 96% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 38% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 97% of participants improved their diet
 - 65% 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, 59% of families more often ate together. EFNEP makes a difference in 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.

Because EFNEP made such a big difference in her life, a former Brunswick County participant visited the Brunswick County Extension office to express her thanks. This participant had been a part of a court-ordered parent education program and had enrolled in EFNEP to learn better skills for feeding her children. During the visit, she shared how she continues to follow the guidelines she learned to feed her family healthy meals and snacks on a limited budget. She also shared that her children were trying, choosing and eating healthier foods. In addition to these health benefits, she also shared personal successes including regaining custody of her children, getting a job, buying a car and a house. She attributes her successes to the confidence she gained while participating in EFNEP. She stated that not only did she become a better manager of her food dollar, but she became a better manager of her overall budget as well. Participation in EFNEP was a real turning point in her life.

