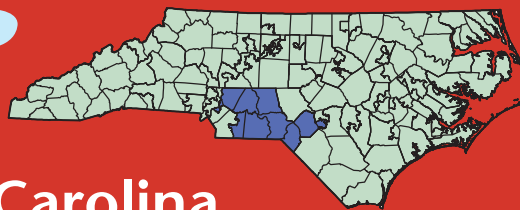




EFNEP



Serving
Cabarrus,
Cumberland
and
Scotland
counties

2008 North Carolina Congressional District 8 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.

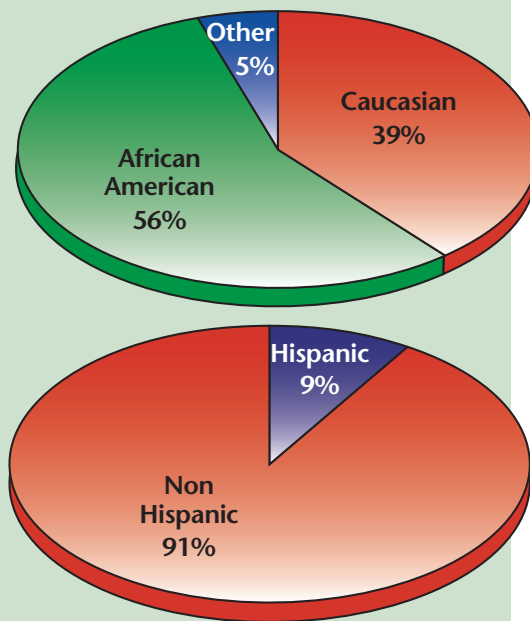
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 116 adults and youth donated 1,040 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$20,290. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 64 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 1496 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 30% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 67% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The 8th Congressional District EFNEP programs obtained over \$25,520 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:

- 96% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 96% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 88% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 88% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 47% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 96% of participants improved their diet
 - 57% increased fruit consumption
 - 47% increased vegetable consumption
 - 61% 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, 41% 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:

- 79% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 79% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 88% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 66% improved practices in food preparation and safety

More than 12.5 million children and adolescents are overweight with 17.1% between the ages 2 to 19. Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to develop risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease, such as: high blood pressure; high cholesterol; and Type 2 diabetes. Teaching children the importance of eating well and being physically active at a young age is crucial to reversing this trend.

The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) collaborated with 4 kindergarten classes at Covington Street School to conduct classes on the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.

Students were taught how to identify healthy foods and the importance of consuming them. They were also taught the importance of incorporating physical activity into their day for increased health benefits.

Before attending the classes many students could not identify healthy foods and were not physically active. After receiving lessons, 100% of the students have improved their diets by selecting healthier food choices and have increased their daily physical activity.

Obesity rates doubled over the last decade among American children. Local health care providers are reporting that the situation is reaching epidemic proportions in Cabarrus County with one in four children being overweight. The University of North Carolina Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention chose Cabarrus County Pediatric Clinic as one of the sites in North Carolina for their study on effective educational approaches for preventing childhood overweight and obesity in children 3 to 10 years of age. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is the community education component of the study. As a part of the study, EFNEP conducts a series of nutrition education classes with study participants to teach parents how to choose, purchase and prepare healthier food for their children on a limited budget. During a review of a previous lesson, one mother indicated how learning about eating more fruits and vegetables and preparing one of the recipes was really helping her to make the changes in her home. Diabetes run on both sides of her family, so not only is she concerned about the effects of overweight and obesity on her children's health, she is interested in learning healthy eating habits that can help prevent this disease. She stated that her family has really started to enjoy the addition of more fruits and vegetables and that they really like the recipes from the EFNEP curriculum. The mother shared she planned to make these changes permanent.

