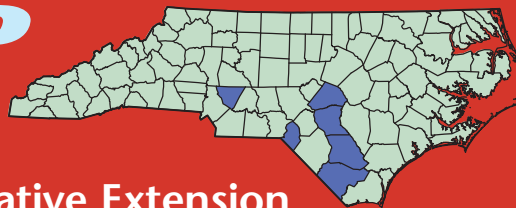




EFNEP



Serving Bladen, Cabarras, Columbus, Cumberland, Harnett and Scotland counties

2008 NC Cooperative Extension South Central 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 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.

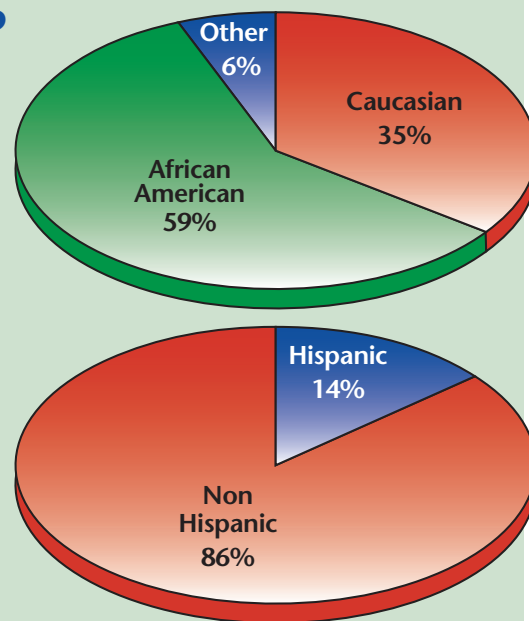
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 193 adults and youth donated 4,784 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$93,336. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 533 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 1634 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 54% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 82% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The South Central District EFNEP programs obtained over \$105,087 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:

- 85% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 95% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 83% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 90% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 39% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 96% of participants improved their diet
 - 58% increased fruit consumption
 - 46% increased vegetable consumption
 - 49% 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, 51% 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:

- 80% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 80% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 89% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 65% improved practices in food preparation and safety

A program assistant in Columbus County partnered with Southeastern Community College Family Literacy group to teach the MyPyramid lesson to 8 participants. The participants had little or no knowledge about MyPyramid and were consuming too many calories. As a result of high calorie consumption, participants were having difficulty controlling their weight.

Participants were taught the correct amounts of foods to consume from each food group. After completing sessions, they stated that they are now aware of the correct portions and amounts needed to maintain a healthy weight. One participant shared that she had lost 2 pounds in one week since learning the correct amounts of food to consume. EFNEP will continue to teach these classes to help Columbus County citizens 'Eat Smart and Move More'.

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.

