



EFNEP COPP Impact Statement 2011

SITUATION: Childhood overweight is one of the most pressing child health issues in Georgia and in the nation, and children in the lowest income brackets are at particular risk. The national prevalence of overweight (BMI greater than 95%) has tripled among older children and adolescents in the last 20-30 years (Freedman, Khan, Serdula, Ogden and Dietz, 2006). The Bogalusa Heart Study found that approximately 60% of overweight children 5-10 years of age already had one cardiovascular disease factor, such as high blood pressure (Freedman, Dietz, Srinivasan and Berenson, 1999). The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension can play an important role in the primary prevention of childhood overweight by providing nutrition education to school age youth.

RESPONSE: County Extension Agents and 4-H Program Assistants were selected to be a part of the EFNEP Childhood Overweight Prevention Project (COPP) in Georgia. The staff taught a series of lessons to children using the Georgia 4-H Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum. The lessons focused on five topics: eating a balanced diet, including a variety of foods (MyPyramid); right-sized portions; increasing fruit and vegetable intake; increasing physical activity; and decreasing consumption of high-sugar beverages. Nutrition classes were also held during summer programs and focused on healthy lifestyles and making good decisions regarding food choices.

IMPACT: A total of 20,300 Georgia students participated in the EFNEP Childhood Overweight Prevention Project (COPP). From the evaluations at the conclusion of the Healthy Lifestyles lessons:

35% of 14,165 youth were more likely to try to eat foods from all food groups every day.

28% of 14,655 youth increased the amount of fruits and fruit juice consumed daily.

27% of 14,668 youth increased the amount of vegetables consumed daily.

43% of 14,678 youth gained knowledge about serving sizes of foods.

49% of 14,557 youth gained knowledge on the nutrient density of foods.

35% of 13,866 youth have a greater understanding of how to eat a healthy diet.

39% of 14,407 youth gained knowledge on how to read food labels to compare fat and calories.

16% of 14,632 youth reported they decreased the amount of high-sugar beverages consumed.

22% of 14,386 youth increased their exercise and physical activity.