



**Family and Consumer Sciences Extension**  
***Expanded Foods & Nutrition Education Program 2010***  
The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

**Learning** *for* **Life**

**GEORGIA EFNEP Childhood Overweight Prevention Project Impact Statement**

**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 (n=104) were selected to be a part of the EFNEP Childhood Overweight Prevention Project (COPP) in Georgia. The staff taught a series of four lessons to students using the Georgia 4-H Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles curriculum and/or USDA's The Power of Choice. The focus was on healthy lifestyles and making good decisions regarding food choices. Topics included: Eating a balanced diet and including a variety of foods using MyPyramid as a guide, right -sized portions, Increasing fruit and vegetable intake, increasing physical activity, and decreasing consumption of high-sugar beverages. All of these are important in the primary prevention of childhood overweight.

**IMPACT:** A total of 16,260 students from Georgia participated in the EFNEP Childhood Overweight Prevention Project. From the evaluations at the conclusion of the healthy lifestyles lessons:

- 50% of 10,874 youth increased their nutrition knowledge.
- 44% of 10,765 youth reported eating more fruit.
- 29% of 10,717 reported eating more vegetables.
- 39% of 10,602 youth were more likely to eat foods from all of the food groups of MyPyramid each day.
- 44% of 10,736 youth increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods.
- 31% of 10,206 youth decreased their consumption of high-sugar beverages.
- 31% of 10,143 youth improved their food preparation and safety practices.
- 26% of 10,687 students increased their physical activity.

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**Contact**

Gail M. Hanula, PhD, RD, LD. EFNEP Coordinator, [ghanula@uga.edu](mailto:ghanula@uga.edu)  
College of Family and Consumer Sciences, UGA  
or your local Cooperative Extension office.