

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR FOCUS

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program works in all 120 counties to improve the lives of limited-resource Kentuckians through education and changes in behavior and in community. Through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service has agents and nutrition assistants across the state who are dedicated to improving lives in their communities.



OUR CHALLENGE

Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is **\$45,215**, which is much lower than the U.S. median of **\$55,775**.¹ Kentucky has high rates of poverty and food insecurity when compared to the United States as a whole.¹

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty	18.5%	14.7%
Child Poverty	25.9%	20.7%
Food Insecurity	17.6%	13.7%
Very Low Food Secure	7.3%	5.4%

In 2014, an estimated **8,247** Barren County residents lived in poverty, and **2,892** of them were children. This is a **15.1%** increase in total poverty and **22.3%** increase in child poverty since 2007.²

SNAP benefits

Participation in the SNAP program among those who are eligible for its benefits is higher in Kentucky than in the U.S. as a whole.¹

In 2015, **6,932** Barren County residents received SNAP benefits, a **45.0%** increase since 2007.³

	Kentucky	U.S.
SNAP Participation	91%	83%



Obesity

Nearly half of all American adults experience one or more preventable, diet-related chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.⁴ Kentucky has a high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, ranking in the top 10 when compared to other states.⁵ A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.⁴

In 2013, **9,856** Barren County residents were considered obese, representing **31.0% (36.0%-26.4%)** of the county's population.⁶

OUR SOLUTION

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2016, **10,189** Barren County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN BARREN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **92%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **92%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **50%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **58%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **58%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

YMCA Youth Garden

Over 20% of Kentucky children face hunger and food insecurity, and nearly half consume fruits less than once a day. With these figures in mind, the Barren County Extension EFNEP assistant partnered with the local YMCA to develop a summer Square Foot Garden project. Located at the YMCA summer camp, the garden gave children age 5-11 a chance to start eating healthier from the “ground up.” With plants donated by a local nursery and garden frames made by YMCA employees and volunteers, four new garden beds were filled with soil and amendments. Children planted vegetables and cared for their gardens throughout the summer. The campers learned responsibility, how to work as a team, and the importance of physical activity, as well as the benefits of eating nutritious fruits and vegetables. Nearly all of the children tasted at least one new vegetable or fruit from their YMCA garden. Food demonstrations conducted by the EFNEP assistant included a vegetable stir fry, which was a big hit with all the kids. This was the first time many of the children had experienced growing their own food, and they are already planning improvements to next year’s garden.



SOURCES:

1. Frac.org/reports-and-resources/national-and-state-program-data-2, accessed December 2016
2. U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
3. Kentucky Department for Public Health, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Statewide Summaries, December 2007, 2013, 2015
4. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
5. Stateofobesity.org, accessed September 2016
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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