

## 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**.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky has high rates of poverty and food insecurity when compared to the United States as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

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

In 2014, an estimated **1,823** Crittenden County residents lived in poverty, and **642** of them were children. This is a **1.0%** increase in total poverty and **9.0%** increase in child poverty since 2007.<sup>2</sup>

#### 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.<sup>1</sup>

In 2015, **1,128** Crittenden County residents received SNAP benefits, a **10.3%** increase since 2007.<sup>3</sup>

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>SNAP Participation</b>	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.<sup>4</sup> Kentucky has a high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, ranking in the top 10 when compared to other states.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

In 2013, **2,356** Crittenden County residents were considered obese, representing **33.8% (41.8%-26.7%)** of the county's population.<sup>6</sup>

## 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, **3,100** Crittenden County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN CRITTENDEN COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **70%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **73%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **74%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **74%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## OUR SUCCESS

### Windowsill garden creates interest in vegetables

According to the Kids Count Data Center, early childhood obesity in Crittenden County has increased from 8.4% to 12% in four years. To help address this, the Crittenden County EFNEP assistant teaches elementary school students about better nutrition and how to make healthier food choices throughout the school year. This year, the 4-H youth development agent was asked by a second-grade teacher to include a hands-on lesson in gardening in conjunction with the nutrition lessons.

Students were taught how seeds sprout and grow and were provided hands-on learning by planting a salad garden in their classroom windowsill. The students planted leaf lettuce, beets, and carrots in recycled containers. The teacher was delighted that not only were kids able to learn about plants, but they

were also able to apply math skills by measuring the plants each day. They also learned about the water cycle as a result of using recycled gardening containers. After the plants matured, the students were excited to taste the produce they had grown. Other purchased vegetables supplemented the homegrown produce to prepare salads.

Of the 17 students who participated, 29% had never tried lettuce before; 76% tried a new vegetable as a result of the garden. The project also resulted in 82% of the students indicating that they plan to continue to eat salad and 88% wanting to plant vegetable plants at their house. Students also learned that you do not have to have a large area to grow vegetables and that you can use containers to grow a few things and still have healthy vegetables to eat.



#### SOURCES:

1. [Frac.org/reports-and-resources/national-and-state-program-data-2](http://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](http://Stateofobesity.org), accessed September 2016
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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