

# 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 **5,817** Johnson County residents lived in poverty, and **1,626** of them were children. This is a **0.6%** increase in total poverty and **-6.4%** decrease 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, **6,349** Johnson County residents received SNAP benefits, a **27.6%** 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, **6,565** Johnson County residents were considered obese, representing **37.2%** (**42.6%-31.9%**) 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, 4,079 Johnson County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN JOHNSON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **91%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **85%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **78%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **98%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **98%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## OUR SUCCESS

### Nutrition curriculum taught at Highland Elementary

**R**ising obesity rates and inactivity are prevalent concerns for Kentucky and Johnson County. To address this issue, Family and Consumer Sciences and County Extension Councils have recommended youth education programs in hopes of deterring unhealthy diet and physical activity habits. For the past five years, FCS Extension volunteers have trained students and staff alike regarding good nutrition and physical activity.

Last year, the Literacy, Eating and Activity for Primary (LEAP) Program was introduced at Highland Elementary. As a result, 59% of the students in the third grade increased their knowledge about the necessary amounts of vegetables needed for a healthy diet for their

age group and 69% (167 students out of the 240 evaluated) of all K-3 students were able to label the components of MyPlate accurately. There have also been reports of children choosing more fruits and vegetables from the school lunch service after participating in the LEAP program. A substitute teacher, who was also an FCS volunteer with the program, said, “You know the program has been effective when you see kindergartners, first-graders and second-graders pick up optional salads and fresh broccoli available in the lunch line — and eating them!”

The Highland Elementary Nutrition program is now integrated into the curriculum for all of K-3 as a result of Family and Consumer Sciences Extension efforts.



#### 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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