

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 **24,923** Kenton County residents lived in poverty, and **8,735** of them were children. This is a **25.3%** increase in total poverty and **32.2%** 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, **18,382** Kenton County residents received SNAP benefits, a **42.2%** 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, **34,061** Kenton County residents were considered obese, representing **28.5%** (**31.2%-25.7%**) 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, **6,001** Kenton County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **71%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **52%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **65%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **65%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

Healthy meals are a SNAP

A volunteer from St. Vincent de Paul of Northern Kentucky was hearing the same complaint over and over from clients: They didn't know how to cook. The Kenton County Extension Nutrition Education assistant for SNAP-Ed teamed up with the volunteer from St. Vincent de Paul to offer a Healthy Cooking on a Budget class at an apartment complex for disabled adults. Ten adults participated in the six-session series.

During the class, the SNAP-Ed Nutrition assistant taught the adults the importance of good nutrition, food safety, and making healthy food choices. The assistant taught participants how to compare prices when shopping to stretch their food dollars and also how to read food labels to select the most nutritious foods. Classes included cooking demonstrations that featured how to

prepare healthy meals, quick and easy nutritious recipes, and the opportunity to try the foods demonstrated. Several of the class participants told the assistant they had tried the recipes at home. As a result of the class, all participants reported eating more healthy foods, 60% are now reading food labels to make better food choices, and 50% reported comparing food prices before buying groceries. St. Vincent de Paul offered class participants free vouchers to the local farmers market where they could purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

Plans have been made to conduct more classes so participants can continue to learn how to prepare easy nutritious meals, and St. Vincent de Paul will continue to provide farmers market vouchers so class participants can access fresh local produce.



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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