

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 **2,558** Wolfe County residents lived in poverty, and **831** of them were children. This is a **1.3%** increase in total poverty and **-12.3%** decrease 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, **2,662** Wolfe County residents received SNAP benefits, a **8.0%** 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, **1,746** Wolfe County residents were considered obese, representing **32.3% (38.3%-26.8%)** 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, **16,566** Wolfe County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN WOLFE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **78%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **93%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **90%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **90%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

Backpack program benefits limited-resource children

According to the U.S. Census Bureau: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, the poverty level for youth, age 18 and younger, in Wolfe County is 50.3%. In response to the number of hungry children in the county, the Wolfe County Extension Office began a backpack food program. The goal of the program was to provide access to nutritious, nonperishable foods to students at three local elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school.

The Wolfe County Extension Office partnered with the Wolfe County Homemakers, Community Education, Family Resource Center, Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd, and the Torrent Church of God to launch the backpack program. Each weekend a bag containing items for two breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks is sent home with children in need.

The program began with 68 children from the five schools in the county. At the end of the school year the number had risen to 94. One participant shared how this program impacted them. “Without receiving these bags every week, my three sisters and I would not have anything to eat until we went back to school on Monday.” Teachers have reported seeing changes in students who receive a backpack. One shared, “They are more focused during class and grades have gone up as well. The backpack program is a wonderful resource for our community’s children.”



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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