



# Nutrition Education Program

## 2017 Annual Report: Breathitt County

### Our Focus

The 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.



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

### Our Challenge

#### Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is \$46,659, which is much lower than the U.S. median of \$57,617.<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%	14.4%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	25%	19.8%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	17.3%	13%
<b>Very Low Food Secure</b>	7.4%	5.2%

In 2014, an estimated 4,340 Breathitt County residents lived in poverty, and 1,187 of them were children. This is a -4.9% decrease in total poverty and -21.5% 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, 5,383 Breathitt County residents received SNAP benefits, a 15.2% 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, 4,297 Breathitt County residents were considered obese, representing 41.6% (36.0%-46.9%) 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 2017, 7,638 Breathitt County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN BREATHITT COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 70% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 70% began to plan meals in advance more often and 75% used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 80% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Every step counts!

Because a high number of adults in Breathitt County have diabetes (15.8 percent) and are obese (30.9 percent), the FCS Extension Agent partnered in 2017 with the public library to offer an eight-week Weigh, Walk and Go program to teach participants the importance of healthy diet and exercise. Participants could walk during program time and also were encouraged to track their weekly steps. More than 100 Breathitt County citizens participated by being more physically active, tracking their activity and trying to make healthier eating choices. Evaluations showed that 98% of participants were more aware and had a better understanding of their diet and exercise needs. Nearly all participants said they planned to continue regular physical activities such as walking. Physical activity programs such as Weigh, Walk & Go encourage adults to make healthy lifestyle choices. They are then able to better manage chronic diseases and weight.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
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**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 2017; 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 December 2017; 6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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