



# Nutrition Education Program

## 2017 Annual Report: Graves 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 6,550 Graves County residents lived in poverty, and 2,315 of them were children. This is a 8.2% increase in total poverty and 8.6% 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, 5,690 Graves County residents received SNAP benefits, a 35.3% 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, 8,253 Graves County residents were considered obese, representing 30.1% (25.8%-34.6%) 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, **3,680** Graves County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN GRAVES COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, **92%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **67%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **51%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **57%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **75%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

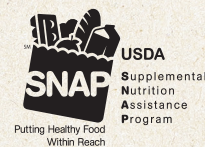
## Our Success

### Families make great strides in nutrition

According to the CDC in Kentucky “35.1% of adults were overweight. 31.6% of adults were classified or considered obese.” To help combat this health concern, the Graves County NEP assistant taught 65 limited-resource families how to serve more nutritious meals, food safety, and to utilize local food resources effectively. Overall 91% of the participating families made an improvement in the nutritional quality of their diet with 59% of graduate families consuming a better-quality diet because they planned meals using MyPlate, considered healthy choices, and used the “Nutrition Facts” label. 43% of families demonstrated an improvement in safe food handling practices and hand washing behavior and 49% of families learned to plan meals ahead of time and use a grocery list to guide food selections.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



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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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