



Nutrition Education Program

2017 Annual Report: McCracken 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.



Our Challenge

Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is \$46,659, which is much lower than the U.S. median of \$57,617.¹ 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%	14.4%
Child Poverty	25%	19.8%
Food Insecurity	17.3%	13%
Very Low Food Secure	7.4%	5.2%

In 2014, an estimated 11,214 McCracken County residents lived in poverty, and 3,628 of them were children. This is a 21.5% increase in total poverty and 13.3% 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, 9,270 McCracken County residents received SNAP benefits, a 31.9% 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, 16,760 McCracken County residents were considered obese, representing 33.7% (29.8%-38.0%) 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 2017, **23,322** McCracken County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MCCRACKEN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, **82%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **59%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **43%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **49%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **77%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Students learn kitchen skills that will last a lifetime

The McCracken County Cooperative Extension Service received requests for beginning cooking classes for middle-school students. The FCS program, 4-H and the SNAP-Ed program partnered to offer a Basics of Cooking series that used the Teen Cuisine Curriculum. Eleven students enrolled in the six-week program to learn food safety, portion sizes, reading labels and recipes, knife use and safety, how to measure and ways to be more physically active. In surveys, the students — the Middle School Master Chefs — showed great improvements in many areas. For example, 75% of the youth could better choose foods according to federal dietary recommendations, 63% added one or more habit to become more physically active, 63% practiced safe food handling, 50% gained the skill needed to prepare simple, nutritious and affordable meals and 50% started eating the right amount of vegetables each day.



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, 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, accessed December 2017; 6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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