



Nutrition Education Program

2017 Annual Report: Muhlenberg 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 6,368 Muhlenberg County residents lived in poverty, and 1,898 of them were children. This is a 6.5% increase in total poverty and 8.1% 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, 5,174 Muhlenberg County residents received SNAP benefits, a 30.3% 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, 9,019 Muhlenberg County residents were considered obese, representing 37.8% (32.2%-43.2%) 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, 17,919 Muhlenberg County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MUHLENBERG COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, 92% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 79% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 59% 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 81% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Helping kids get a jump start on healthy habits

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than a third of American children are overweight or obese. The Muhlenberg County agents for agriculture and natural resources, FCS and 4-H youth development, along with the NEP Assistant, partnered to provide Spring Into Healthy Habits for 74 kindergarten students. They learned about proper hand washing, healthy beverage choices, good oral health, the importance of physical activity, food origins and healthy food choices. In program evaluations, students in two of four kindergarten classes better understood when they should wash their hands. In all four classrooms, children were better able to identify vegetables. In two of four classrooms all students became more physically active. Comments from the students and teachers included, “I did not know soda had that much sugar!” “I love eating vegetables,” “I’ll ask for tomatoes at home” and “Great program. I hope Extension can provide this again!” Based on the positive first-year evaluations, the program will be offered in additional schools.



University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

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

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.



KYNEP.ca.uky.edu



Facebook.com/KYNEP