



# Nutrition Education Program

## 2017 Annual Report: Nicholas 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 1,342 Nicholas County residents lived in poverty, and 460 of them were children. This is a 2.4% increase in total poverty and 12.5% 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, 1,422 Nicholas County residents received SNAP benefits, a 31.4% 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, 1,712 Nicholas County residents were considered obese, representing 32.5% (24.9%-41.4%) 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, 217 Nicholas County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN KENTUCKY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 81% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 71% began to plan meals in advance more often and 73% used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 85% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Food preservation helps families save money

This summer, retired Family and Consumer Science extension agents covered food preservation basics using the pressure canner, boiling water canner, dehydrator, and freezer to better the community, teach food safety and help food insecurity. They covered food acidity, how to determine the appropriate preservation method and the importance of using UK Extension USDA research-based information and recipes. The Food Preservation Workshop booklet was thoroughly covered. Participants canned green beans in the pressure canner, tomatoes and salsa in the boiling-water canner, dried apples in the dehydrator and made strawberry freezer jam. Cheryl Case demonstrated how to blanch and prepare corn for the freezer. Madison Showalter, the new FCS agent, conducted evaluations on information covered. She reviewed information to ensure participants understood new recommendations and proper methods of food preservation for different foods. Participants said they had learned a lot and felt more confident about using the pressure cooker and preserving foods safely. Participants will use their newly acquired skills to preserve high quality, safe foods for their families.



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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