



# Nutrition Education Program

## 2017 Annual Report: Union 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 2,832 Union County residents lived in poverty, and 678 of them were children. This is a -17.2% decrease in total poverty and -23.5% 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, 1,838 Union County residents received SNAP benefits, a 38.4% 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, 3,415 Union County residents were considered obese, representing 30.7% (25.2%-37.4%) 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, **3,220** Union 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.

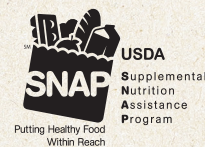
## Our Success

### LEAP(ing) into health

**B**ad habits like eating unhealthy foods and being inactive can start early in life. A natural link exists between nutrition, physical activity and reading. Reading books that focus on preparing and eating healthy foods and being physically active may motivate children to adopt positive food and physical activity behaviors that last a lifetime. The Cooperative Extension Service FCS agent used the LEAP curriculum to inspire 3-year-old and 4-year-old Head Start students at three schools. The program was held three times beginning in October to introduce nutritious foods and ideas for staying healthy and being physically active. About 120 preschoolers participated and parent newsletters were sent home after every lesson to help inspire the parents. Preschool teachers surveyed reported the children were excited about the program. The teachers said it was nice to have the support of the community to reinforce what they talk about daily. They also said the children were more likely to try different vegetables.



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](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

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](http://KYNEP.ca.uky.edu)



[Facebook.com/KYNEP](https://Facebook.com/KYNEP)