



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 their 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 where they live.

Our Challenge

Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2016, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$46,610**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$57,617**.¹ Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimate for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty	17.2%	12.3%
Child Poverty	24.4%	19.5%
Food Insecurity	14.7%	11.8%

In 2016, an estimated **3,790** Allen County residents lived in poverty, and **1,353** of those were children under 18. This represents a **4.8%** increase in total poverty and **10.4%** increase in child poverty since 2008.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet.² These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke which are often associated with obesity.



In 2017, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **34.3%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**12.9%**) and adults with hypertension (**39.4%**).³ 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.²

In 2014, **35.6%** of Allen County's adult population were considered obese.⁴

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 2018, 4,928 Allen County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN ALLEN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 98% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 72% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 89% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 88% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Families learn about healthy foods, budgeting and meal planning

The Allen County NEP paraprofessional taught 64 limited resource families how to serve more nutritious meals, to keep foods safe, and to utilize local food resources effectively. As a result of the program taught by the NEP assistant using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum, 98% of NEP families made an improvement in the nutritional quality of their diet. 72% of families increased the frequency of moderate physical activity for 30 minutes per day; 65% of families demonstrated an improvement in safe food handling practices and hand washing behavior; 70% of families learned to plan meals ahead of time and use a grocery list to guide food selections. Additionally, there were 52% fewer families who could not afford to eat properly and 50% of families were able to use community food resources, such as food pantries, less often due to increased skill at food resource management.



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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3. The State of Obesity Report 2018
4. 2018 County Health Rankings & Roadmap

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