



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 **9,397** Barren County residents lived in poverty, and **3,075** of those were children under 18. This represents a **29.2%** increase in total poverty and **26.5%** 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, **31.8%** of Barren 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, **11,833** Barren County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **91%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **90%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **83%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Super Star Chef camp helps kids shine in the kitchen

Barren County residents face the challenges of a large portion of the population being overweight (62%). Families often rely on fast food and convenience foods which are high in calories, sugar, fat, and sodium. To combat this health issue, Barren County Cooperative Extension Agent for Horticulture partnered with the Nutrition Education Program to conduct a three-day Super Star Chef Camp.

During the camp, youth learned about nutrition and prepared healthy recipes that require minimal or no adult supervision. They demonstrated food safety (proper hand washing and avoiding cross contamination), correct knife skills, and proper use of measuring tools as they read and followed directions. Youth increased their nutrition knowledge of MyPlate food groups by matching foods to food groups and describing recommended serving sizes for food groups. They were also able to interpret a food label and rank which foods are healthier options.

Ninety-five percent (95%) of the youth plan to eat more fruits and vegetables after participating in the program. Choosing fruits and vegetables are healthier options from fast food and convenience foods and can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Additionally 95% of the participants learned about how germs can be transferred to food; and how to measure ingredients.

Several parents commented that because of Super Star Chef, their children now offered to help in the kitchen and with meals.



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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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