



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 **4,466** Breathitt County residents lived in poverty, and **1,184** of those were children under 18. This represents a 7.7% decrease in total poverty and 21.7% decrease 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, **40.7%** of Breathitt 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, 7,222 Breathitt County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN BREATHITT COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 100% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 95% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 95% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 99% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

LEAP(ing) for health

According to the 2017 Kentucky Kids Count data, 42.9% of children in Breathitt County live in poverty, while 16% of children in Breathitt County live in deep poverty. One way to fight poverty and cut down on food bills is growing and consuming one's own vegetables at home.

The Breathitt County SNAP-Ed Assistant, in partnership with the Breathitt County Public School System, taught the LEAP (Literacy, Eating, and Activity for Primary) Curriculum. During one visit with a Kindergarten class, the book, *How Groundhog's Garden Grew*, was read to 24 students. Students then completed activities where they learned about different vegetables, how to grow vegetables, and the importance of physical activity. As a part of this class, students learned the process of planting and harvesting vegetables. Students were then asked if they would have interest in growing their own produce at home. 100% of the students indicated that they would ask their parents to grow vegetables at home.



University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

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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College of Agriculture,
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