



## 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**.<sup>1</sup> 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.
<b>Total Poverty</b>	17.2%	12.3%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	24.4%	19.5%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	14.7%	11.8%

In 2016, an estimated **1,238** Gallatin County residents lived in poverty, and **493** of those were children under 18. This represents a **8%** decrease in total poverty and **7.3%** decrease in child poverty since 2008.<sup>1</sup>

### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet.<sup>2</sup> 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%**).<sup>3</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>2</sup>

In 2014, **36.5%** of Gallatin County's adult population were considered obese.<sup>4</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 2018, 4,295 Gallatin County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN GALLATIN COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 95% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 98% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 100% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 00% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Students learn about healthy foods

The Gallatin County Nutrition Education Program assistant made monthly visits to Gallatin County Elementary School and presented MyPlate's Organ Wise Guys curriculum to five second-grade classrooms. This fun and informative curriculum brings to life the Organ Wise Guys characters, which are used to personify the major body organs and to teach four healthy eating messages – low fat, high fiber, lots of water and plenty of exercise. The USDA's MyPlate is used as a guide to teach the food groups and how they fit with the four healthy eating messages. Most of the students were knowledgeable as to which foods belonged to the fruit and vegetable groups, but they had difficulty placing foods such as fish, nuts, eggs and yogurt into the dairy and protein groups. Because of this, importance was placed on students becoming more knowledgeable about these two food groups. Students learned that eggs fit into the protein group and are a nutritious, inexpensive food that can be used for any meal or snack. Evaluation results showed the students' healthy snacks knowledge increased from 26% to 32% and dairy foods knowledge increased from 57% to 70%. As a result of this increased knowledge, the students have learned which foods include dairy and protein to make their meals and snacks fit the four healthy MyPlate Organ Wise Guys messages.



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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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