



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 **1,100** Hancock County residents lived in poverty, and **383** of those were children under 18. This represents a **2.7%** decrease in total poverty and **3.5%** 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, **36.8%** of Hancock 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, 1,033 Hancock 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

Empowering youth to make healthy lifestyle choices

Sauté, dice, chop, roast and whip! These are all cooking skills Hancock County youth learned through the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service's Super Star Chef camp. Over the course of the three days, the youth gained hands-on cooking experience and were introduced to new foods and recipes as they prepared healthy dishes like fresh salsa, fruity parfaits, and tasty veggie pizzas. They learned cooking skills and how to make healthy choices while tasting new recipes and gained confidence in the kitchen. These life skills lessons will help them grow into healthy adults. Teaching these skills is part of a plan to teach our youth to focus on healthy living and healthy food choices. This is of utmost importance because Kentucky has 14th highest rate of obese/overweight 10 to 17 year olds in the nation at 33.5%.

The Super Star Chef participants completed pre and posttest evaluations. Overall, pre-post comparisons of participant responses to the assessment instrument show that the program enhanced participant understanding of the nutrition concepts covered in the program. All the respondents (100%) agreed that they learned about the amount of fruits and vegetables they should have on their plates; how germs can be transferred to food; how to wash their hands to remove germs; how to read nutrition labels; how to measure ingredients; and how to hold a knife for cutting. Also, all the participants (100%) plan to eat more fruits and vegetables after participating in the program.



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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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