



## 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 **111,467** Jefferson County residents lived in poverty, and **35,104** of those were children under 18. This represents a **9.2%** increase in total poverty and **4.3%** 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, **31.9%** of Jefferson 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, **21,510** Jefferson County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **92%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **94%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **85%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Helping recovery center residents live healthier lives

An adult group at a rehabilitation facility participated in a seven week program using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. The lessons were presented by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education Assistant through the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service. The participants are recovering from different types of addictions and are not always on the right track to eating correctly. The classes helped explain why it is so important for individuals to make half their plate fruits and vegetables due to the vitamins and nutrients that are in in these foods. After talking with several of the participants, they expressed that they don't eat many fruits and vegetables. At each lesson, participants prepared recipes which contained different vegetables or fruits. Some mentioned that they did not initially think they liked the vegetable used for the recipe, but after they had tried it, they realized they liked it.

The recipes used in the classes introduced participants to vegetables and fruits they had not tried before. As a result, 76% of the participants improved with eating more fruit each day and also 64% have improved in eating more dark green vegetables each week. Improvement was also seen in comparing food prices more often and planning meals before shopping. After completing the classes, the participants plan to feed themselves and their family's healthier meals while staying within a budget.



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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

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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