



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 **5,814** Johnson County residents lived in poverty, and **1,619** of those were children under 18. This represents a **5.9%** decrease in total poverty and **13%** 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, **41.6%** of Johnson 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, 4,766 Johnson County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN JOHNSON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 99% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 97% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 99% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Reducing sodium, but keeping flavor leads to healthier lifestyles

The Kentucky Health Facts' most recent report states that the percentage of adults who have hypertension in Johnson County is 59%. Johnson County is among the top 10 counties in Kentucky for other health issues, as well. Because studies have shown that there is a natural link between nutrition, physical activity and behaviors toward healthy lifestyles, the Johnson County Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program education assistant held a ten week series of lessons that utilized the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. The eight participants talked about having high blood pressure and suffering from other health issues related to having hypertension, with a focus on portion control, salt and sodium, and physical activity. The group learned how to cut out hidden sodium from condiments and processed foods and talked about reducing and removing salt from recipes and purchasing lower-sodium products. They also gained knowledge about using herbs and spices that would enhance food's natural flavors. All the participants in the group used the methods shared in the meetings at home. Their goal was to reduce the need for blood pressure medications. By the end of the series, all eight participants stated that they had reduced their salt intake by 50%. One participant said that her doctor was going to lower the dose of medication she was taking if she kept up her healthy diet.



University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

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.



Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

