



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 **20,493** Kenton County residents lived in poverty, and **7,060** of those were children under 18. This represents a **19.5%** increase in total poverty and **13.9%** 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, **29.9%** of Kenton 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, **12,078** Kenton County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN KENTON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **88%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **86%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **82%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **66%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **80%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Inspiring healthy changes

According to the 2018 County Health Rankings study, 38% of children in Kenton County, Kentucky, live in single-parent homes. In order to provide a needed service to students, a Community Resource Success Coach for Gateway Community and Technical College contacted the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Assistant from the Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service to offer a basic cooking/nutrition class. The NEP Assistant offered the Healthy Choices for Every Body class as a seven-part series which met every other week. Almost all of the participants were single working moms (80%) who were also attending college. Another participant was a

grandmother who was helping to raise her grandchildren. During the series, the NEP Assistant taught the participants the importance of being a good role model for their children. If they wanted their children to eat healthier, they must make better food and beverage choices. The NEP Assistant taught the importance of meal planning and shopping with a grocery list to save money at the grocery store. After the participants learned to read food labels, they realized some of the items they had at home in their cupboards were not healthy for them or their children. After the participants helped to prepare healthy recipes in class, they were challenged to make those same healthy recipes at home. The participants began to make healthier



choices for themselves and their children. At the end of the series almost all of the participants (80%) had increased their consumption of vegetables each day. All of the participants (100%) had increased their usage of a meat thermometer, and in planning their meals before shopping. As a result of the class, the participants were able to make healthier recipes for themselves and their children. Plans are being made to offer the series to more students at Gateway Community and Technical College to help future generations learn how to be a good role model.

University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education 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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