



## 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 **1,152** Lyon County residents lived in poverty, and **264** of those were children under 18. This represents a **5.1%** increase in total poverty and **14.8%** increase 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, **33.2%** of Lyon 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, 4,311 Lyon 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

### LEAP(ing) for health

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 60% of children ages 2-18 do not meet the recommendations for the daily fruit and vegetable intake.

In order to overcome obstacles associated with this deficit, the Lyon County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent worked closely with the Lyon County Preschool and Head Start program to offer monthly nutrition education for all children enrolled in their classes. Using LEAP programming, each month the children hear a book about the benefits of good nutrition and exercise as well as getting the opportunity to taste a fruit, vegetable or dish that they may have never tried before. Some of the most well-received fruits and veggies by the children were blueberries, beets, and star fruit. When hummus was introduced to the students they were asked to place a sticker under the smiley face on a flip chart if they liked the bean dip, or under the frown face if they did not. 79% of the children reported they liked the hummus and wanted their parents to make this dish for them to eat at home. In addition to being introduced to new foods, the children worked each month with MyPlate to better understand the correlation between the foods they eat and how those foods fit into the food groups represented on my Plate (or how certain foods don't fit the guidelines). Because of the success of this partnership, classes will continue to be offered monthly.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

#### 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.



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

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.

