



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 **1,619** Marion County residents lived in poverty, and **518** of those were children under 18. This represents a **3.3%** decrease in total poverty and **2.3%** 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, **38.8%** of Marion 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, 2,709 Marion County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MARION COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 93% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 91% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 79% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 79% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Families learn to cook healthy foods together

Marion County Cooperative Extension office Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) paraprofessional partnered with a local elementary school for a nutrition and cooking demonstration class for students and their parents. The Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum was used during the seven-week class.

The basis of the nutrition and cooking classes was to teach parents and youth important nutrition information, cooking skills and having fun in the kitchen. The class benefitted by learning about nutrition, cooking skills, meal planning, budgeting and grocery shopping. The families noted that without the help of the Expanded Food and Nutrition program that they would not have had the learning experience with their child and how much fun they had with the time that they spent. Each family was always excited to be at the class. One participant had never cooked, planned a meal or even grocery shopped. But during the course of our seven weeks, the participant, along with the other families, were really enjoying the class and learning the importance of healthy choices.



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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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