



## 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 **3,993** Martin County residents lived in poverty, and **1,207** of those were children under 18. This represents a **11.8%** decrease in total poverty and **15.7%** 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, **36.3%** of Martin 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, 7,164 Martin County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN MARTIN COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 94% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 95% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 89% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 91% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 84% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Healthy Choices for Every Body makes a lasting impact

Due to a significant rise in pregnant, drug-addicted women in Martin County, the Nutrition Education Program partnered with Mountain Comprehensive Care's Serenity House to educate clients regarding healthier food options, food safety, and managing and saving money on food costs. NEP offered a seven-part required series called Healthy Choices for Every Body. As a result of this program, 100% of participants gained knowledge on such topics as properly reading nutrition labels and food safety protocols. All six participants significantly increased their fruit and vegetable consumption by eating more than one kind of each per day. Furthermore, a few comments were made, such as "you have ruined us because now every time we pick up a food package, we automatically flip it over to read the label to see the fat, sugar and salt." Although the seven required lessons were completed, the participants were willing and eager to continue their education with NEP, and additional lessons were taught.



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.

