



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 **3,750** Mason County residents lived in poverty, and **1,239** of those were children under 18. This represents a **6.3%** increase in total poverty and **17.8%** 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, **32.2%** of Mason 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, **11,349** Mason County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MASON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **91%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **80%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **70%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **38%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Extension partners with local recovery center to provide nutrition education

The Journal of the American Dietetic Association conducted a study of the correlation between substance abuse and nutrition. Findings support the position that nutrition education is an essential component of substance abuse treatment programs and can enhance substance abuse treatment outcomes. The research also stated that the inclusion of nutrition education into substance abuse treatment programs should be promoted and encouraged.

The Mason County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) assistant collaborated with the local Comprehend, Inc. Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) instructor to offer a class to the participants in IOP. The EFNEP assistant taught lessons from the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. Participants observed cooking demos, tasted healthy recipes, and learned about MyPlate, overall nutrition, food safety and the importance of being physically active. The IOP participants improved their vegetable intake by seventy-five percent (75%); dairy by fifty percent (50%); and reduced solid fats and added sugars by fifty percent (50%) - just by significantly cutting back on pop and candy intake.

One participant stated that she didn't think she would like the recipes, but she did. She now uses the recipes to feed her family.



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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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