



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 **3,734** McCracken County residents lived in poverty, and **1,231** of those were children under 18. This represents a **1%** decrease in total poverty and **15%** 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, **33.5%** of McCracken 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, **34,849** McCracken County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MCCRACKEN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **96%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **90%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **79%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **76%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Recovery residents learn about gardening and preserving

The McCracken County Extension Service SNAP-Ed assistant partnered with CenterPoint, an intensive recovery substance abuse treatment program for men, to plant, grow and preserve fresh produce in an effort to impart healthy eating skills and help lower the food cost for the facility. Residents were able to help plant and care for the garden in addition to attending a food preservation class held at the McCracken County Extension Service.

The McCracken County SNAP-Ed Assistant partnered with the Lyon County FCS Agent and conducted a hands-on workshop on preserving a garden harvest. During the workshop the participants preserved carrots in a pressure canner, zucchini in a water bath canner, and made homemade jelly using grape juice. Participants were encouraged to go back to the facility to share what they learned from the program. One participant stated, "It was informative, and I am now able to share what I've learned with my parents and children." A second stated "I learned to do something I've always wanted to do! It has become a new hobby of mine."



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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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