



## 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 **4,115** McCreary County residents lived in poverty, and **1,048** of those were children under 18. This represents a **0.9%** increase in total poverty and **20.1%** 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, **40.5%** of McCreary 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, 5,750 McCreary County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN MCCREARY COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 75% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 71% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 86% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 75% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 88% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

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

According to the Nutrition Education Program 2016 Annual Report there are approximately 6,000 McCreary County residents receiving SNAP benefits. That is an increase of 13.7% since 2007. The Nutrition Education Program assistant taught individuals how to meal prep, prepare healthy meals on a budget, food safety, and physical activity tips using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. One participant shared how the group discussions had helped her be aware of how important eating healthy, drinking water and getting exercise is to her overall health. She stated that listening and sharing ideas about how to increase your water intake had helped her to give up sodas and incorporate water into her daily life. She now walks daily instead of occasionally, often with other members from the program. Collectively, 99% of the participants made a positive change in food group choices; 55% of the participants began to plan meals in advance more often; 56% used the "Nutrition Facts" on food labels more often, and 79% showed improvement in food safety practices.



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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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