



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 **3,716** Meade County residents lived in poverty, and **1,153** of those were children under 18. This represents a **8.4%** increase in total poverty and **0.9%** 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, **37.7%** of Meade 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, **6,829** Meade County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN MEADE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **99%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **97%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **99%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **82%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **93%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Families bond over cooking healthy meals together

Families may often choose fast food or processed foods when time is limited. To address this issue, Meade County Cooperative Extension Service and Ekron Elementary School partnered to offer a summer program for parents and guardians and their children. The Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum was used by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program assistant. The group met at the school once a week for seven weeks. Six families, consisting of six adults, five boys and two girls, learned about nutrition, food budgeting, food safety, meal planning and the importance of physical activity. After the weekly lesson, each family prepared a recipe from beginning to end. The parents or grandparents worked side by side with their children. When they were finished cooking, they all sat down to sample their creations. They were also able to take home leftovers to share with other family members. The program showed great results. The majority (83%) showed improvement in their physical activity behaviors. Over half (67%) increased their daily fruit intake. The group as a whole (100%) increased the amount of meals they cooked at home weekly. This program was such a success, it will be offered at two schools next summer.



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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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