



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 **2,244** Metcalfe County residents lived in poverty, and **860** of those were children under 18. This represents a **1.1%** decrease in total poverty and **5%** 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 Metcalfe 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, 5,077 Metcalfe County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN METCALFE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 91% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 95% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 86% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 84% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Metcalfe families cook their way to a healthy lifestyle

According to Kentucky Health Facts, only 19-23 % of residents in Metcalfe County consume the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables daily. The Metcalfe County Nutrition Education Program Assistant and Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent, partnered with the Metcalfe County Library Summer Reading Program, to offer a hands on cooking series for families. Six sessions, with two different groups of participants with children ranging in age from two to ten years, were offered during the summer. Each session was paired with a basic nutrition education lesson that included food safety concepts, healthy eating, MyPlate guidelines and food resource management.

Youth, assisted by their accompanying adult, prepared recipe ingredients. Essential food preparation skills such as hand washing, food safety, ingredient measuring, and knife skills are taught, demonstrated and then practiced. During the program, youth participants were encouraged to try the fresh fruit and vegetable ingredients as well as the recipes. Four parent participants who have children they consider "picky eaters" have reported that their children are more open minded about trying new foods, in particular fruits and vegetables when they prepare them on their own. In general, the majority of parent participants have reported being happily surprised at how much their children are able to do unassisted and how much the youth have liked these healthy, fruit and vegetable based, kid friendly recipes.



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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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