



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 **1,376** Nicholas County residents lived in poverty, and **496** of those were children under 18. This represents a **18.7%** increase in total poverty and **26.5%** 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%** of Nicholas 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, 466 Nicholas County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

Our Results

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 91% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 90% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 83% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 83% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Food preservation class teaches how to save money, eat healthier

The Nicholas County Cooperative Extension Office offered the Food Preservation Program. Aimed at teaching participants how to preserve food safely, saving money and preserving seasonal produce, the program covers the use of pressure canning, water bath canning, freezing and drying methods of food preservation. Over half (60%) of the participants reported using food preservation methods sometimes and 40% reported using food preservation methods never or rarely prior to the program. Over half (60%) of the participants chose to attend the program because of a desire to learn, an interest in heritage skills and for personal accomplishment. Other reasons cited by some included improving preservation skills, teaching preservation skills, interacting with others, eating healthier foods and saving money. The end of program evaluation results indicate an increase in food preservation skills. All participants (100%) strongly agreed or agreed they had better skills in home food preservation methods, could identify research-based methods of home food preservation, could identify the necessary equipment for home food preservation methods, could identify the correct method of canning for low acid and high acid foods and could identify spoilage in home preserved products after the program. Over half (60%) of the participants reported growing a garden this year.



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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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