



## 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 **5,178** Shelby County residents lived in poverty, and **1,711** of those were children under 18. This represents a **12.5%** increase in total poverty and **6.7%** increase 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, **34%** of Shelby 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, **8,761** Shelby County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN SHELBY COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **83%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **77%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **73%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **25%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Kids improve educational skills outside of the classroom

**W**orking with young people in the kitchen is a great way to develop their self-confidence and build skills such as reading, math and following instructions while also teaching about nutrition, handwashing and safety. The Kids in the Kitchen program combines all these elements in a fun, two-hour event for Shelby County youth. The Shelby County Family and Consumer Sciences agent and NEP program assistants coordinated two sessions of Kids in the Kitchen. Sixty-four elementary-age youth participated in hands-on activities in cooking, nutrition and food safety. Special emphasis was placed on handwashing, with students being prompted to wash their hands throughout the program. End-of-session surveys completed by 61 participants revealed the following: 95% practiced correct measuring techniques; 80% learned the importance of dairy foods for calcium; and 90% gained valuable MyPlate nutrition information. After making six different recipes, 97% of the youth planned to make three or more of the healthy snacks at home for their families. When asked an open response question about the most important thing they learned, 21 wrote "handwashing" in their answers. The three teen volunteers were youth who had participated in Kids in the Kitchen for several years during elementary school. The teens believed the program was so beneficial to them that they wanted to share the skills they had learned with others.



University of Kentucky  
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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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