



## 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 **2,252** Wolfe County residents lived in poverty, and **701** of those were children under 18. This represents a **8.7%** decrease in total poverty and **26%** 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, **32.8%** of Wolfe 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, 12,162 Wolfe County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN WOLFE COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, 80% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 93% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 95% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 80% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 96% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Wolfe County residents preparing healthier, budget-friendly meals

According to Data USA, 43% of the population in Wolfe County lives below the poverty line, which is significantly higher than the national average of 14.7%. Often, limited-resource individuals must rely on food pantries for food. The University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program partnered with the Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd Food Pantry to offer a six-week course using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. This program aimed to help individuals acquire knowledge, develop skills and change behaviors that can lead to improved health and well-being. As part of the program, the Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd Food Pantry gives participants who attend each lesson a ticket to receive an extra food item. After completing the program, participants reported that they could prepare more low-cost, quick meals. They also improved the use of their food dollars. Twenty participants were enrolled in the program and at the end of the six weeks, 15 graduated. One participant stated, "I loved this program. I learned how to budget what money I do have so that I would not run out of food at the end of the month."



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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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