



Our Focus

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program, as part of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs utilize agents and assistants to provide educational opportunities for limited-resource individuals and families to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and change behaviors for improved health and well-being.

Our Challenge

Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2017, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$48,332**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$60,336**.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	17.1%	13.4%
Child Poverty	22.1%	18.4%
Food Insecurity	14.7%	12.3%

In 2017, an estimated **9,477** Barren County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **3,297** were children under 18.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.² These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke.



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. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **34.4%**, ranking it as the most physically inactive state in the nation. 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 2015, **32.6%** of Barren County's adult population were considered obese, and **32.6%** were considered physically inactive.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 2019, **11,833** contacts were made with Barren County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

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Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **97%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **83%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **92%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **90%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **87%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Successful Smart Grocery Shopping Tips Program

With an estimated 9,397 Barren County residents living in poverty and many others living as working poor, a substantial number of families make too little to afford basic living expenses. Promoting healthy financial behaviors is a priority. The Smart Shopping Tips program was presented twice (once with a hands-on meal planning and cooking activity) by the Barren County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences. The program educates residents on grocery shopping budgeting, meal planning, and food storage and freezing techniques. A total of 29 individuals attended. A written survey at the end of the presentation showed all participants thought the information was practical, and they gained some basic tips on saving money on groceries and meal planning. Participants provided feedback on what was most useful: “Budgeting and making out menus in advance.” “Refrigerator and freezer storage chart list is amazing.” “Don’t rinse chicken.” “Do not put frozen food in crock-pot.” One participant wrote she discovered strategies to more effectively use her \$200 monthly SNAP benefits. Participants also expressed interest in participating in additional meal planning and budgeting programs.



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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. World Health Organization Media Centre
3. The State of Obesity Report 2019
4. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

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