



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 **2,812** Bath County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,049** 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, **37.1%** of Bath County's adult population were considered obese, and **34.6%** 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, 6,339 contacts were made with Bath 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

Healthy Cooking for Two

According to the 2018 Kentucky Health Issues Poll — created and operated by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky — cost, not accessibility, is a barrier to eating healthy fruits and vegetables. Also, a high percentage of survey respondents are concerned with the state's high obesity and cancer rates. Knowing 37% of Bath County adults are considered obese, the Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agent wanted to help address the issue. Teaming up with the health department and the Family Resource Center coordinators, they hosted a Cooking for Two program. Participants learned how to cook meals with a partner, using lower cost and higher nutrient-dense foods. They discovered fun and healthy recipes through the Plate It Up Kentucky Proud website and found out how to reduce serving sizes to fit nutritional needs. The program was a success. Each participating pair was able to create nutritious, healthy meals made from scratch. Following the program, all participants increased their fruit and vegetable consumption, and half said they regularly search the Kentucky Proud website first for in-season produce and for recipes.



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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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