



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 **9,250** Boone County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **2,961** 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, **35.6%** of Boone County's adult population were considered obese, and **22.5%** 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, **24,838** contacts were made with Boone County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN BOONE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **76%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **83%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **86%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **81%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Healthy Meals with New Fruits and Veggies

Helping Hearts is a non-profit organization that helps Northern Kentucky residents who are struggling financially to secure assistance for their families' immediate needs, including food, hygiene items, and cleaning products. Helping Hearts distributes free fresh produce to Northern Kentucky residents weekly. The founder of the organization mentioned that many people say they aren't sure how to prepare some of the produce. The Boone County Nutrition Education Program assistant collaborated with Helping Hearts to fill this void. During a four-part series, 26 participants came to the Boone County Cooperative Extension Enrichment Center for sessions on budgeting, food safety, planning meals, how to read labels, eating more fruits and vegetables, and basic cooking skills. After a lesson, participants moved to the kitchen, where they would follow a recipe and prepare a healthy meal using some of the "unfamiliar" fresh produce (squash, zucchini, and peppers). Because the nutrition series was a success, Helping Hearts reached out to the Boone County Extension Homemakers organization to start beginning basic sewing classes. The participants learned to make hems, blankets, and basic clothing repairs. This, too, has been beneficial to the group, increasing independence.



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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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