



## 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**.<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>   | 17.1%    | 13.4% |
| <b>Child Poverty</b>   | 22.1%    | 18.4% |
| <b>Food Insecurity</b> | 14.7%    | 12.3% |

In 2017, an estimated **4,130** Boyle County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,136** were children under 18.<sup>1</sup>

### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.<sup>2</sup> 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%**).<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 2015, **32.6%** of Boyle County's adult population were considered obese, and **28.1%** were considered physically inactive.<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 2019, 9,937 contacts were made with Boyle County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN BOYLE COUNTY

#### 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

### Lunch and Learn Program Expands

Five years ago, the Family and Consumer Sciences agent started the Lunch and Learn program. Originally, it was a nutrition class where participants sampled a recipe from the Food and Nutrition Calendar and talked about different aspects of food preparation. Subjects often covered included food safety, MyPlate, stretching grocery dollars, food preservation, and increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. This class was always well attended and grew every year. In January 2019, Lunch and Learn became a hands-on cooking class. Each month, instead of sampling a recipe, participants got in the kitchen and prepared the recipe themselves. Most participants were repeat clients who had attended Lunch and Learn from the beginning. Others were new to the program, which helped introduce them to Cooperative Extension and its programming. A group of deaf individuals, already familiar with the Cooperative Extension through programs offered at the housing authority, also attended regularly. Participants reported increased confidence in the kitchen. They feel comfortable reading a recipe, trying new foods, incorporating more fresh fruits and vegetables in their daily cooking routine, and making more food at home. Lunch and Learn is an ongoing program that continues to be full each month with a growing waiting list.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
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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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