



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 **4,592** Breathitt County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,130** 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, **36%** of Breathitt County's adult population were considered obese, and **31.5%** 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, 7,222 contacts were made with Breathitt County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN BREATHITT COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **98%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **100%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **100%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **100%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **99%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

LEAP into Gardening

According to 2018 Kentucky Kids Count Data, 74% of children in Breathitt County come from low income families. With such a high rate of low income households, it is important for families to grow vegetables at home to save on grocery expenses. The Breathitt County SNAP-Ed assistant, in partnership with Breathitt County Schools, taught the LEAP curriculum. During one visit with a kindergarten class, the book “The Surprise Garden” was read to 26 students. As part of the lesson, students tried a variety of vegetables, participated in seed-planting activities, and learned where their food comes from. All of the students indicated they would ask their parents to purchase vegetables to eat at home, as well as seeds to start their own gardens.



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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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