



## 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 **5,724** Grayson County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,813** 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, **38.7%** of Grayson County's adult population were considered obese, and **34.2%** 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, **10,341** contacts were made with Grayson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN GRAYSON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **98%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **90%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **93%** 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 **95%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Healthy Citizens in Grayson County

**M**aking the choice to eat right and exercise can sometimes be challenging. But having someone to be accountable to is helpful and can make it easier to stay on track. Recently the Nutrition Education Program assistant from the Grayson County Extension Office partnered with the TOPS (Taking off Pounds Sensibly) program to teach a series of nutrition lessons. During the nine-month series, participants demonstrated significant changes in their daily nutrition intake, as well as in their daily activity levels. Ninety-four percent showed improvements in eating more fruits and vegetables on a daily basis; and 88 % of participants indicated they are exercising more and working toward strengthening their muscles. Furthermore, participant's knowledge and understanding of food safety and food resource management increased 94%. The participants substantially improved their eating habits and have attained an overall healthier lifestyle. Quotes from participants include: "We love your classes and wish you would come every month from now on," and "I never realized how important it is to make sure that your food is cooked thoroughly until now."



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

 University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

#### 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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