



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 **1,065** Hancock County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **385** 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, **39.4%** of Hancock County's adult population were considered obese, and **30.4%** 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, 1,033 contacts were made with Hancock County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN KENTUCKY

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

Food Preservation Class Comes to Hancock County

According to the 2019 County Health Rankings, 13% of Hancock County residents lack adequate access to food, and 12.2% of county residents live in poverty (2017 U.S. Census data). Preserving food can save money. If done safely, home-preserved food is often healthier than store-bought canned food because less sodium and fewer preservatives are added. Retired Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agents worked with the 4-H agent at the Hancock County Extension Office to teach a Food Preservation program. The seven participants learned pressure canning, water bath canning, freezing, and drying methods of food preservation. Half were new to Cooperative Extension programming. A third reported never or rarely using food preservation methods. Half reported sometimes using food preservation methods prior to the program. Program evaluation results indicate an increase in food preservation skills. Approximately half the participants reported increasing their skill levels from beginner to intermediate, particularly for freezing and drying methods. All participants strongly agreed they improved their skills in home food preservation methods, could identify research-based methods of home food preservation, could identify the necessary equipment for home food preservation methods, and could identify spoilage in home preserved products after the 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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