



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 **13,394** Hardin County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **4,369** 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, **35.4%** of Hardin County's adult population were considered obese, and **27.1%** 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, **10,191** contacts were made with Hardin County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN HARDIN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **64%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **73%** 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 **32%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Healthy Choices During Recovery

Statistics show that in 2010, 24,428 people were admitted to the Kentucky drug and alcohol programs. That number has drastically increased in nine years. Hardin County has 17 facilities and agencies that work with alcohol and drug addictions. The goal of working with rehab centers is to help them make healthy food choices on their road to recovery. While addicted food was not always a priority to them, but now that they are sober and recovering, food is important to them. Eating healthy foods will help with the recovery process. The intake information provided by the participants showed soda as a big part of their meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). "Think Your Drink" lesson was used to show them the amount of sugar that they were consuming over time, by drinking so many sodas. After doing the math and showing them how much sugar is in one 20 oz. bottle of Mt. Dew, it was an eye opener for the ladies. One of the ladies, stated that in a week's time she drinks a case of soda in a week. The following week in class she stated that she had only drunk 8 sodas and was drinking more water. This is a major diet change for her, because at the beginning of class she stated, "she was not giving up her sodas".



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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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