



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 **3,683** Hart County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,191** 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, **36.1%** of Hart County's adult population were considered obese, and **37%** 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, **3,538** contacts were made with Hart County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN HART COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **96%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **50%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **100%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **87%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Skills for the Summer

Hart County is a rural central Kentucky community. In 2012, there were 1,372 farm operations on 182,385 acres. In the 2013 USDA's Food Atlas, Hart County's free lunch eligibility was 5% above the Kentucky participation rate and nearly 10% above the national participation rate. While living in a rural community has its advantages, it also presents struggles for the 7% of the population who live more than a mile away from a grocery store and do not own a car. Although the backpack program is offered to students throughout the year, the program is currently unavailable during the summer. To help address the food insecurity, a three-day workshop was taught by Hart County's Family and Consumer Sciences agent and Nutrition Education Program assistant at the Extension office. Of the 18 participants ranging from third- to seventh-graders, 94% agreed/strongly agreed they learned the correct way to hold a knife for cutting and about the amount of fruits and vegetables they should have on their plates. About 89% learned about how germs can be transferred to food and how to read nutrition labels. Approximately 83% learned about how to wash their hands, and 83% also plan to eat more fruits and vegetables after participating in 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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