



## 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 **8,521** Hopkins County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **2,579** 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, **35%** of Hopkins County's adult population were considered obese, and **30.2%** 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, **6,860** contacts were made with Hopkins County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN HOPKINS COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **97%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **80%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **94%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **92%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **96%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### More Physical Activity for Hopkins County

**A**ccording to the CDC, Kentucky has the fifth-highest rate of obesity in the nation. Approximately 17% (or 12.5 million) of youth ages 2-19 years are obese (National Health and Examination Survey). In addition, excess calorie intake and lack of physical activity have been linked to obesity. According to the CDC, only 22% of Kentucky teens are physically active 60 minutes a day, seven days a week. The SNAP-Ed assistant in Hopkins County collaborated with the Larry Carney Center to teach a series of nutrition education classes. The Professor Popcorn curriculum comprises six lessons that include food safety, the five food groups, and a physical activity component. After the six lessons were taught, students improved their ability to choose healthy foods according to federal dietary guidelines. The youth now use safe food-handling practices, like washing their hands before they eat. Furthermore, the youth increased their daily physical activity to 60 minutes. This is a huge accomplishment since the majority of the youth said they normally would play video games instead of playing outside.



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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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