



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 **4,160** Jackson County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,170** 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, **37.9%** of Jackson County's adult population were considered obese, and **33.9%** 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, 12,903 contacts were made with Jackson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN JACKSON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 83% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 85% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 85% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 92% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Healthy Grandchildren in Jackson County

In collaboration with the “Save the Children Grandparents Program,” the SNAP-Ed assistant from the Jackson County Cooperative Extension office taught a six-week nutrition program using the Healthy Choices curriculum and recipes from the Nutrition Education Program’s Food and Nutrition Calendar. The goal of the group was to teach grandparents who work with children in kindergarten through sixth grade the importance of good nutrition, food safety, and how to prepare easy meals on a budget. It is a fact that children who eat a healthy and nutritious breakfast are better prepared for a day of activity and learning. The program consisted of hands-on food prep, food safety, proper hand-washing, and nutrition games. Grandparents were introduced to simple recipes, basic cooking skills, and ideas to share with the children. Through the NEP’s Healthy Choices for Every Body series, participants focused on building a healthier plate, preparing easy meals that taste great, and how to shop on a tight budget. The program encouraged grandparents to involve their grandchildren, as well as the children in their classrooms at school, in healthy nutritional habits.



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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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