



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 **19,618** Kenton County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **5,541** 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, **32.6%** of Kenton County's adult population were considered obese, and **21.3%** 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, 12,078 contacts were made with Kenton County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN KENTON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 83% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 71% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 82% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 79% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 84% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Professor Popcorn Pops in to Teach Nutrition Education

More than 50% of the students at Ninth District Elementary receive free and reduced lunch. The Kenton County Nutrition Education Program assistant along with the school's Community Learning Coordinator used the Professor Popcorn curriculum to teach students the importance of healthy food choices. With more than 100 students in the afterschool program, the assistant worked with 32 students in first through fifth grades. She taught the students the importance of healthy foods and physical activity, along with the importance of hand washing. With the visuals and activities that the Professor Popcorn curriculum provided, the students were very engaged in what they were learning. By the end of six weeks more than half the students were able to correctly name all of the food groups and what foods belong to those food groups.



University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



 University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

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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