



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 **3,123** Leslie County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **831** 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, **41.6%** of Leslie County's adult population were considered obese, and **35.3%** 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, 5,426 contacts were made with Leslie County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

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Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 93% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 90% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 91% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 99% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

LEAP into Good Nutrition

According to the CDC, 60% of children do not eat enough fruits and vegetables, and as they get older, they eat even less fruit. With obesity at an all-time high in Kentucky, the Leslie County Family and Consumer Sciences agent implemented the LEAP program at the Creative Minds Learning Center. Books such as “Germs, Germs, Germs,” “Clarabella’s Teeth,” “Why Should I Eat Well,” “Dinosaur Diner,” and many more were read. Physical activity was another component of the program, and a healthy snack was provided for each lesson. During the program, 92% of the children tasted the offered snacks, and 71% reported they were trying the foods for the first time. All of the children learned the proper steps for hand-washing and brushing teeth. LEAP newsletters that provided information about that day’s lesson were sent home with the children for their parents.



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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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