



## 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 **5,065** Lincoln County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,570** 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, **34.4%** of Lincoln County's adult population were considered obese, and **31.5%** 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, 6,253 contacts were made with Lincoln County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN LINCOLN COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 79% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 85% 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 91% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### What You Learn at Lunch-n-Learn Programs

Easy access to unhealthy foods, increased stress, and limited opportunities for physical activity all create challenges and barriers for Kentucky families in making healthy lifestyle choices. More than a third of Kentuckians are obese and more than 10% have diabetes, according CDC data. To empower residents to take better control of their health, the Family and Consumer Sciences agent and four Champion Food Volunteers taught nine Lunch-n-Learn programs to 278 participants. They demonstrated recipes, which the participants tasted and discussed how to safely prepare. The majority of participants reported making the foods at home after attending the program. Several had not tried many of the fruits and vegetables featured in the recipes. They learned more about food preparation, healthy food choices, accessing nutritious foods through farmers' markets, and ways to make the featured recipes and foods work for their families. Participants were always surprised to learn they like a food they thought they disliked prior to coming to this program. Consequently, they are choosing more nutritious foods, implementing healthier cooking methods, and planning more nutritious meals.



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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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