



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 **1,491** Marion County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **448** 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, **36.8%** of Marion County's adult population were considered obese, and **32.1%** 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, 2,709 contacts were made with Marion County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN MARION COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 71% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 90% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 90% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 72% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Cooking Class Provides Bonding Time

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Program assistant partnered with the local library to offer a seven-week nutrition and cooking class to encourage parents and children to cook and eat together, providing more bonding time for them. The classes began with a game before the lessons from Healthy Choices for Every Body. With each lesson, the class prepared one recipe from the curriculum and was taught cooking skills, food safety, and portion sizes. The families learned new skills such as cooking without frying and not using a lot of heavy oils. They were very surprised the food tasted very good when eliminating oils and not frying them. The families were able to learn healthy cooking skills throughout this course. Comments such as “I don’t like black beans” changed after trying them for the first time. Ten families participated, and the class was so popular that there’s a waiting list for the next session.



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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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