



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 **3,974** Martin County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,102** 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, **35.9%** of Martin County's adult population were considered obese, and **31.6%** 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, 7,164 contacts were made with Martin County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN MARTIN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **100%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **99%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **99%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **100%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Super Star Chef Comes to Martin County

According to U.S. Census estimates for 2016, almost 4,000 residents of Martin County are living in poverty and more than a quarter of them are children. Those children often experience food insecurity and lack access to nutritious foods, like fruits and vegetables. To help combat this problem, the Martin County Family and Consumer Sciences Program partnered with the Nutrition Education Program to implement Super Star Chef. This three-day program taught children ages 9-12 years to choose healthier foods and how to prepare them. The recipes used were inexpensive and the ingredients readily available at local grocery stores. Thirteen students attended the program. The before and after test comparisons showed participants gained an enhanced understanding of the nutrition concepts covered. Self-efficacy of the participants increased from 32.15 to 34.85. The post-test also included seven self-assessment questions to encourage participants to make healthy food choices and be more physically active. After attending the program, all respondents reported they can identify healthy foods and that they plan to drink more water every day, eat more fruits, and be more active. Also, 92% plan to drink fewer sugary beverages, eat more vegetables, and try new foods.



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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