



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 **4,845** Montgomery County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,430** 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, **35.1%** of Montgomery 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, 4,557 contacts were made with Montgomery County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 83% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 92% 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 87% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Fuel Foods vs. Treat Foods

The fourth “H” of the 4-H pledge refers to health. Yet in Kentucky, according to the Trust for America’s Health Survey and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kentucky’s obesity rate for children ages 10-17 is 19.3%. Over 36% of adolescents have at least one sugary drink a day most weeks, and children between the ages of 6 and 11 consume 21 to 23 teaspoons of added sugar daily. Given the obesity crisis, the Fuel Forward Activity, from the curriculum’s 4th “H” for Health Challenge, was chosen for 4-H classroom clubs in March. It teaches youth the difference between foods that provide energy and nutrition, referred to as Fuel Foods, and foods that just provide energy and no other benefit, referred to as Treat Foods. Each member received a Fuel Forward Activity Card that listed a food and its nutrients. It also listed activities (running in place, jumping jacks, squats, etc.) for the youth to engage in. As a result of the club program, over 380 youth ages 9-12 learned the difference between foods that “fuel” them with both energy and nutrition to help them grow versus foods that only provide energy and no other benefit to their health.



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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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