



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 **5,632** Muhlenberg County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,544** 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, **38.1%** of Muhlenberg County's adult population were considered obese, and **32.7%** 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, **16,655** contacts were made with Muhlenberg County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN MUHLENBERG COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **97%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **89%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **94%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **89%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **85%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Increase in Physical Activity

The CDC says 39.8% of American adults are obese, with obesity in young adults growing at an alarming rate to 35.7%. Young adults come to the Muhlenberg County Job Corp from various backgrounds and parts of the country to learn a trade. The Muhlenberg County SNAP-Ed assistant partners with the Muhlenberg County Job Corp to provide nutrition education to these clients. The goal is to teach them healthy eating, food safety, and about increasing their physical activity. Thirteen young adults at the Job Corp completed the Healthy Choices for Every Body program. Throughout the program, clients learned to build a healthier plate and recognize healthy food with MyPlate; 92% of the group showed an increase in eating fruits more often each day. They learned to read recipes and prepare easy and affordable meals. Almost 70% planned more meals ahead of time. They also learned about proper food storage and to waste less food. Lastly, tips were given to increase their physical activity, as they are young adults and lifelong habits are being formed now. Their physical activity improved. Almost 70% increased their exercise to at least 30 minutes per day, and 77% made small changes to be more active.



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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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