



## 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 **4,413** Nelson County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,611** 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, **33.4%** of Nelson County's adult population were considered obese, and **28.6%** 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, 2,760 contacts were made with Nelson 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

### Nutrition Education Alive in Nelson County

In March, the Nelson County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension, with the support of the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, and the state Nutrition Education Program office, was able to hire a SNAP-Ed assistant to serve one of the greatest needs of the county: nutrition and access to healthy and local foods. Under the supervision of the FCS agent, the SNAP-Ed assistant in Nelson County has hit the ground running, enrolling new members in the program and marketing the NEP curriculum throughout the county. One of the most attended sessions so far has been a program called Teen Cuisine that was established in collaboration with the Nelson County Library. Teen Cuisine is a six session, curriculum-based program that targets teens ages 13-18 and encourages healthy food choices, explores MyPlate, and develops food preparations skills. Each session draws between 18 and 24 recurring participants. Each participant has completed a pre-survey containing questions pertaining to eating habits and ideas relating to foods and nutrition. Participants who complete the six session program will also complete a post-survey that will indicate any changes in knowledge, opinions, skills, or abilities. This program is currently active as of June 2019.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

#### 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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