



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 **15,049** Pulaski County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **4,132** 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, **34.6%** of Pulaski County's adult population were considered obese, and **30.2%** 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, 24,294 contacts were made with Pulaski County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN PULASKI COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 90% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 97% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 85% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Nutrition Education Provided to Recovery Center

Lake Hill Oasis is a recovery center for people with addictions who are seeking treatment. Often, they are malnourished. During their stay, clients share close living quarters and a kitchen, along with kitchen duties. Staff were concerned the clients needed to learn to handle, prepare, and store food safely. The Nutrition Education Program assistant for the Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Service offered to collaborate with Oasis and provide nutrition education to its clients. The assistant went to Oasis and enrolled a group of men into the NEP and used the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum to teach a series of lessons. The lessons addressed their nutritional and food safety awareness needs. After completing the lessons, a test showed the group improved its food choices, and an even greater impact was made in the area of food safety. All participants showed improvement in washing their hands before preparing food. Over 75% showed improvement in washing all items and surfaces after cutting raw meat or seafood, not thawing frozen food at room temperature, and using a meat thermometer.



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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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