



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 **4,087** Russell County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,252** 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, **31.5%** of Russell County's adult population were considered obese, and **29.4%** 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, 4,677 contacts were made with Russell County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN RUSSELL COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 92% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 97% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 91% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 82% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Breakfast in Russell County

The 4-H program offered two summer cooking classes taught by the 4-H agent, 4-H/Family and Consumer Sciences assistant, and SNAP-Ed assistant. The theme was breakfast items. After practicing proper hand-washing, the youth learned knife skills and prepared fruit salad. Then the youth prepared biscuits, practicing wet and dry measuring techniques, sifting, kneading, and using a biscuit cutter. They then learned about egg preparation by making omelets and a quiche. One group also used the eggs to make French toast. After preparing the food, they learned table setting and etiquette. They also identified the placement of their food items into the MyPlate food groups. The youth ate the food and finally washed the dishes. A post-program evaluation showed all participants learned to measure wet and dry ingredients properly, use measuring cups and spoons, read a recipe, and cook safely when using knives and hot stoves. The youth planned to use their acquired skills to cook breakfast at home, make brownies, cook a birthday supper, and cook for their families. Within a month after the program, nearly half of the youth had practiced their cooking skills at home. One sent an advanced cooking item for competition at the Kentucky State Fair.



University of Kentucky
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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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