



## 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 **1,852** Webster County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **581** 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, **35.6%** of Webster County's adult population were considered obese, and **33.8%** 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, 4,873 contacts were made with Webster 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

### Save Money at the Grocery Store

Kentucky consistently lags behind other areas of the U.S. in key household economic indicators, including personal income, population living below the poverty line, unemployment, and revolving debt. In Webster County, 18.7% of families with children were below the poverty level in 2015, according to the American Community Survey. It is important to acknowledge the impact of current economic conditions on family financial management. The Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agent presented a program, Couponing and Apps, to help families learn to save money at the grocery store and improve their financial management. Thirteen adults who are in charge of their family's finances and groceries attended the class. The class discussed menu planning, identified food resource management techniques, located coupons to save money, organized coupons, downloaded secure coupon/money saving apps, and created a plan for savings. Following the class, an evaluation showed all of the participants increased their knowledge about the basics of couponing, the importance of budgeting, and maintaining financial stability. Class participants also stated they intended to implement a form of savings strategy, begin using coupons to save money, and use a money tracking or saving app to help them effectively plan financially.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

 University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

#### 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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