

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 **9,131** Whitley County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **3,241** 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, **35.5%** of Whitley County's adult population were considered obese, and **35.9%** 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, 2,047 contacts were made with Whitley County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN WHITLEY COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 82% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 91% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 93% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 82% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Healthy Choices in Recovery

According to the CDC and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the use of illicit drugs and misuse of prescription drugs and alcohol contribute to the deaths of more than 90,000 Americans. The Whitley County Expanded Food and Nutrition assistant along with one of the local rehab centers that treats (mostly pregnant) women decided to incorporate the Healthy Choices For Every Body curriculum to help them on the road to recovery. Some of the classes included: “Cooking Is Healthy for Every Body,” “Feeding Your Pregnant Body,” “Feeding Every Little Body,” “Meal Planning,” and “Eating Better on a Budget.” The classes also provided food demonstrations and hands-on activities that will help them transition once they leave the program. According to the National Center for Biotechnology: “Proper nutrition helps those in recovery to feel better both mentally and physically. Furthermore, adding nutrition education in substance abuse treatment programs can increase a participants’ success in achieving recovery.”

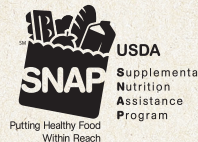


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SOURCES:

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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