



## 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 **2,129** Wolfe County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **707** 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, **35.3%** of Wolfe County's adult population were considered obese, and **34.9%** 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, **12,162** contacts were made with Wolfe County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN WOLFE COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **92%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **95%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **96%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **93%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Healthy Eating

According to the CDC, empty calories from added sugars and solid fats contribute to 40% of daily calories for children and adolescents ages 2-18. Approximately half of these empty calories come from six sources: soda, fruit drinks, dairy desserts, grain desserts, pizza, and whole milk. And most young people do not consume the recommended amount of water. The Wolfe County Cooperative Extension Service nutrition assistant partnered with Middle Kentucky Community Action/Wolfe County Head Start to offer seven lessons to its parents using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. The lessons included limiting salt, fat, and sugars; the benefits of a healthy breakfast; moving to low fat or fat-free milk and yogurt; better beverage choices; and planning meals. The parents prepared recipes like yogurt parfaits, flavored waters, and salsa they could make with their families. They learned how to limit the foods that have more empty calories from added sugars and solid fats, like cakes and cookies, and started offering more fruits and vegetables. They learned to make healthier drinks like fruit smoothies and flavored water using fresh fruits. They learned eating healthy and cutting empty calories from their children's meals and snacks will improve the quality of their diets.



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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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