

KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: ALLEN COUNTY

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 U.S. Census estimates for 2019, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$52,256**, 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$65,712**.¹ Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimates for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty ¹	16.0%	12.3%
Child Poverty ¹	20.9%	16.8%
Food Insecurity ² <i>(Actual ratings during COVID-19 may be higher)</i>	14.7%	11.7%

In 2018, an estimated **17.3%** of Allen County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **24.6%** were children younger than 18.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.³ These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke.



In 2019, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **36.5%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **30.6%**, ranking it among the top five most physically inactive states in the nation. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**13.3%**) and adults with hypertension (**40.9%**).⁴ 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.³

In 2020, **38%** of Allen County's adult population was considered obese, and **39%** was considered physically inactive.⁵

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 2020, 1,487 contacts were made with Allen County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN ALLEN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

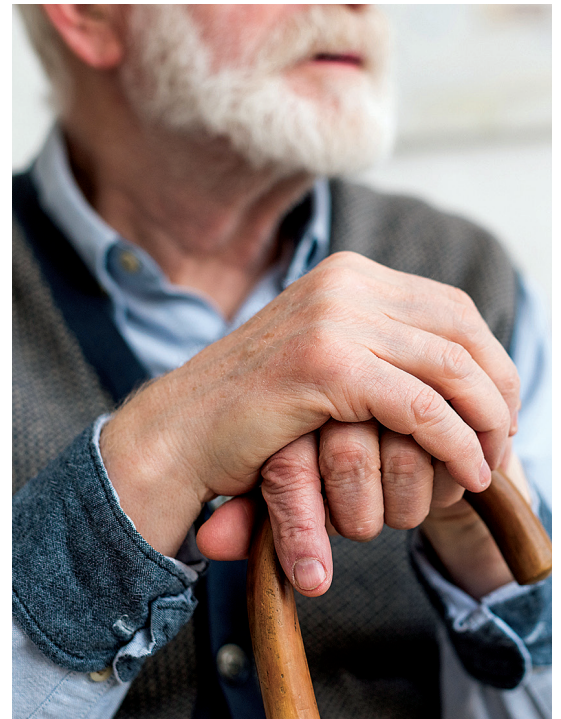
In 2020, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 100% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 100% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 91% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Helping seniors stay Healthy at Home

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the governor issued a statewide Healthy at Home initiative in Kentucky. This initiative encouraged Kentucky residents, especially those with underlying health conditions, to stay at home as much as possible to avoid becoming ill because of the rapidly spreading coronavirus. During this time, many elderly and senior citizen residents found themselves sheltering in place in order to stay safe and healthy. In an effort to reach these community members during this time, the Allen County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Assistant and the local Allen County Senior Citizens Center partnered to find an innovative approach to keep the 45 center participants engaged and active. The nutrition themed, Bingo By Phone, began by mailing a packet to each participant. Packets included bingo game instructions, a blank bingo card, numbered photos, and a list of donated kitchen related prizes. The program was offered each week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from May 12 until July 2, 2020. Each week, the senior citizen participants would call an automated voicemail recording to obtain the bingo numbers for that day. Participants were also asked to read and compare nutrition labels on food items they had in their pantry. The goals of the program were to help the seniors have structure in their days and give them something to keep them on schedule during the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic.



University of Kentucky
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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. America's Health Rankings 2019
3. World Health Organization Media Centre
4. The State of Obesity Report 2019
5. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

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