



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: BARREN 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 **19.2%** of Barren County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **26.8%** 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, **34%** of Barren County's adult population was considered obese, and **38%** 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, 5,086 contacts were made with Barren County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN BARREN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 75% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 75% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 100% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 100% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Delivering health education with meals

According to Kentucky Kids Count Data, adequate nutrition is essential for children's physical growth and brain development. However, in Barren County, 21.2% of the youth population experiences food insecurity. During the school closures caused by COVID-19, the Barren County Nutrition Education Program Assistant partnered with Barren County Schools to assist in serving hot meals to children in the community. We provided NEP materials along with meals by the Nutrition Education Program Assistant with assistance from the Barren County Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences. These materials provided families with information about budget-friendly meal ideas, stretching food dollars, food safety, proper hand-washing, and overall health and wellness.

During the partnership to distribute food and materials, the Nutrition Education Program Assistant helped deliver 630 meals and more than 400 pieces of educational content. When the Nutrition Education Program Assistant was no longer able to help deliver meals, we compiled a resource list on Facebook to assist families in knowing what to do with the provided commodities. The resource list, including recipes and proper food storage, reached a total of 4,082 people.



University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

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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