



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: BELL 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 **31.3%** of Bell County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **43.5%** 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, **37%** of Bell 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, 3,360 contacts were made with Bell County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN BELL 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 100% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Working with food banks to help families

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a significant increase in demand for emergency food boxes as more families faced layoffs and cutbacks in Bell County. Bell County's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) Assistant, through the University of Kentucky, partnered with Lighthouse Mission and Cooperative Christian Ministry food banks to get nutrition information and healthy recipes into food boxes for families in the community. Sharing information and recipes from our Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum about how to store and prepare the included food will reduce waste because items will not expire if families don't know how to prepare them. Pairing specific recipes with items included in food boxes will encourage preparation of healthy nutritious meals for families. One recipient said, "I was so happy to see recipes in my food box. Sometimes it's hard to think of ways to use some things you receive. These recipes will give me the opportunity to prepare healthier meals when feeding my family. Thank you."

By partnering with the food banks, the SNAP-Ed Assistant was able to reach 450 families throughout Bell



County. Providing resources to help through these tough times and in the future will leave a lasting impact on our county.

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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