



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: BUTLER 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 **17.7%** of Butler County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **22.1%** 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, **31%** of Butler County's adult population was considered obese, and **31%** 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, 1,950 contacts were made with Butler County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN BUTLER COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 85% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 89% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 84% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Gardening kits get youth growing

The Butler County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Assistant and the Butler County 4-H Youth Development Agent viewed the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to educate during a time of uncertainty in response to food insecurity and the potential long-lasting effects of economic downturns. The Butler County NEP and 4-H Youth Development Agent, in an effort to teach sustainability and self-sufficiency through gardening, distributed more than 294 gardening kits to the families of Butler County. Included in the kits were various peppers, herbs, zucchini, squash, and tomato seeds. Kits also included soil pellets, gardening gloves, instructions for gardening, a farmers' market shopping guide, and vegetable guides. Community members safely picked up the gardening kits outside the Extension office. The families of Butler County have shared their enthusiasm about the project by posting pictures online of their children planting the seeds. During a time of crisis, the Butler County NEP Assistant and the Butler County 4-H Youth Development Agent successfully implemented a gardening program. The small success of children planting seeds, tasting the



vegetables they grew, and learning new ways to prepare them will hopefully inspire a desire to plant and learn more about gardening. In the long-term, this could help combat food insecurity in Butler 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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