



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: CALDWELL 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 **18.0%** of Caldwell County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **26.6%** 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, **34%** of Caldwell County's adult population was considered obese, and **28%** 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, **6,987** contacts were made with Caldwell County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN CALDWELL COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, **88%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **88%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **78%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **82%** made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Grab and Go bags help families

Cooperative Extension recognized the need for a change in programming as a COVID-19 response and the Caldwell County Cooperative Extension Office rose to the challenge. The 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Agriculture and Natural Resources agents, along with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) Senior Assistant began the Grab and Go Extension Programs. Community members picked up grab bags filled with educational information and activities. They were also distributed at the local food bank as well as included with the food for children in the Backpack Program. Grab bags had multiple themes and encouraged family bonding, physical activity, the development of kindergarten readiness skills, proper hand-washing techniques, the development of money management skills, and healthy eating. A total of 2,240 bags were distributed to families in Caldwell County. One participant stated, "We love the grab bags. They include fun new ways to learn." Another participant said, "I love the fun, inexpensive ways to get active and involved with my kiddos!" Still another participant stated, "My son loves

cooking and has learned about measurements." In addition to the Grab and Go Programs, the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent and SNAP-Ed Senior Program Assistant developed a virtual cooking challenge. Demonstration videos of slow cooker recipes were produced and shared via social media. We put together Grab bags filled with recipes and key ingredients for participants. We distributed a total of 60 Cooking Challenge Grab Bags. Participants

were encouraged to make healthy choices and follow food safety guidelines. A total of 596 people viewed the videos. Surveyed participants said they planned to experiment with a variety of spices when cooking and plan more meals in advance as a result of participating in the virtual cooking challenge.



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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.



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Food and Environment
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