



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: FRANKLIN 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 **12.9%** of Franklin County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **18.8%** 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, **37%** of Franklin County's adult population was considered obese, and **26%** 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, 11,527 contacts were made with Franklin County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 96% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 75% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 92% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 83% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Smarter lunchrooms in Franklin County

According to the 2018 Annual Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Report for Kentucky, at least one out of three Kentucky children are overweight or obese. Nearly half of Kentucky children consume fruits less than once daily, well below the 1½ to 2 cups daily recommended by USDA MyPlate. Children who consume low amounts of fruits and vegetables are at greater risk for many nutrition-related health problems. According to the Centers for Disease Control, “eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables daily can help reduce the risk of many leading causes of illness and death, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and obesity.”

Franklin County Cooperative Extension began a collaboration with Elkhorn Middle School’s and Bondurant Middle School’s nutrition programs during the spring and fall of 2019. At both schools, 50% of the students qualify for free or reduced school meals. Working with the school cafeterias offered an opportunity for Policy, Systems, and Environment changes that directly impact students. While the National School Lunch program already has regulations in place to ensure that schools are serving nutritious foods,

getting students to select and eat healthy foods is another matter. The County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences provided the school cafeterias with marketing items designed to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables by middle school students. The cafeterias used the banners, aprons, and other signage for a six-week period.

Although the quantitative analysis was inconclusive in determining whether students ate more fruits and vegetables as a result of the marketing intervention, there have been positive qualitative changes in the collaboration of the Franklin County Cooperative Extension and the school nutrition program. This was the first opportunity to work with our schools’ food service directors, yielding a better understanding of the school system nutrition program.



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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