



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: HOPKINS 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**.<sup>1</sup> 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.
<b>Total Poverty</b> <sup>1</sup>	16.0%	12.3%
<b>Child Poverty</b> <sup>1</sup>	20.9%	16.8%
<b>Food Insecurity</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>(Actual ratings during COVID-19 may be higher)</i>	14.7%	11.7%

In 2018, an estimated **18.1%** of Hopkins County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **23.6%** were children younger than 18.<sup>1</sup>

#### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.<sup>3</sup> 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%**).<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

In 2020, **36%** of Hopkins County's adult population was considered obese, and **33%** was considered physically inactive.<sup>5</sup>

## 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, 17,494 contacts were made with Hopkins 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

### Gardening series increases knowledge on growing herbs

In the summer and fall of 2019, the Hopkins County Cooperative Extension office taught a gardening class series. Based on high public demand from survey results, the gardening series focused on growing different kinds of herbs. The series was split into four classes (one class per month) and discussed three herbs per class for a total in-depth study of 12 herbs. The class taught about a variety of herbs: sage, mint, lavender, basil, oregano, thyme, cilantro, parsley, chives, marjoram, savory, and dill. In each class, students learned about how to grow, care for, and manage the different kinds of herbs. In addition, the classes also mentioned different varieties of each herb, including their culinary, medicinal, and cosmetic uses. At the end of each class, there was a hands-on activity about herb propagation from growing cuttings to planting seeds.

We conducted a survey at the end of each class. Based on the survey results, 89% of the participants said they would take what they learned from the classes and apply it to their own lives, and 93% of the participants increased their knowledge of herbs from taking the classes. Finally, 96% of the participants were interested in attending more gardening classes and workshops at the Hopkins County Cooperative Extension office in the future.



**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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