



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: JACKSON 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 **26.5%** of Jackson County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **36.5%** 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, **44%** of Jackson County's adult population was considered obese, and **37%** 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, 3,500 contacts were made with Jackson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN JACKSON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 86% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 93% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 82% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 89% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Jackson County Container Garden Project

Even during a pandemic the Jackson County Cooperative Extension service found a way to serve the community. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) Assistant partnered with the 4-H Agent, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent and several community groups and local businesses to provide a Container Garden Project. A total of 75 gardening kits were given to families at a drive-through event at the Jackson County Cooperative Extension office. The container gardening kits contained gardening supplies, seeds, plants, information packets, and everything needed for planting.

This project encouraged community families to garden, cook, and preserve their own fresh fruits and vegetables. This project was a huge success. Several families have sent pictures of plants growing, kids cooking in the kitchen, and food preservation. Youths were encouraged to learn new skills needed to grow their own food. This project also encouraged family time outdoors, cooking together, trying new recipes, and food preservation. When you know where your food comes from and know the growing process, you



can ensure your vegetables are free from chemicals and preservatives. This community youth project also enabled the Jackson County Cooperative Extension office to build relationships with several local businesses and agencies.

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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