

# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: JESSAMINE 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 **12.6%** of Jessamine County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **17.0%** 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, **34%** of Jessamine County's adult population was considered obese, and **29%** 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, 17,998 contacts were made with Jessamine 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

It has been projected by UK's Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) that by year 2025, 18% of Jessamine County's population will be 65 and older. As community members age, they often lose access to fresh, healthy foods because of fixed incomes, lack of transportation, and "food deserts" in low-income neighborhoods where many senior citizens live.

The Jessamine County Senior Center provides transportation services and meals for homebound seniors as well as a place to socialize and participate in activities, exercise, and health programs. To provide the Senior Center participants with access to fresh blackberries and opportunities for healthy outdoor activity, a blackberry garden was established at the Center. The Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) and Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) agents with the Jessamine County Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with the Jessamine County Senior Center and the UK Department of Dietetics and Human Nutrition worked together to plan the garden. It has been planted with three different berry varieties with row covers and trellises. Because of the

COVID-19 pandemic, the planned educational activities with Senior Center participants have been put on hold, but the plants have been established for future use.

Additionally, A Brambles Production class was offered to the public via Zoom. The Cooperative Extension Service and the Jessamine County Library promoted the program, and the ANR Agent hosted it. A total of 14 participated in the meeting and received free planting materials including improved blackberry and raspberry seedlings. One participant reported, "I had wanted to add blackberries

to my farm for several years but didn't know where to start. The Brambles Class offered by the Jessamine County Extension Office gave me tools I needed to make my berry patch a reality. I picked my first handful of homegrown raspberries last night!"

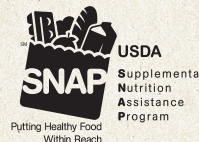


University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

#### 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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