



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: KENTON 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 **10.4%** of Kenton County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **14.1%** 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, **33%** of Kenton County's adult population was considered obese, and **25%** 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, 4,821 contacts were made with Kenton County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 86% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 75% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 81% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 67% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Nutrition, cooking and gardening classes on Facebook

The property manager of Wynnbrook Pines Apartments contacted the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Assistant from the Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service to request a basic nutrition and cooking class for residents. Just as the program was about to begin, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States, and all in-person programming halted. The NEP Assistant asked if the manager would like to try offering the program virtually to residents. She quickly agreed and the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum became a virtual series which posted to a private Facebook Group for the residents. Topics included the importance of meal planning, eating a wide variety of healthy foods, sticking to a budget, eating breakfast, and purchasing, preparing, and storing food safely. Since children were at home because of the pandemic, we included puzzles, scavenger hunts, and physical activity suggestions for them. Children were also included in making healthy choices for snacks and meals, and taught how to help prepare meals with their parents or grandparents. The NEP Assistant demonstrated how to prepare a healthy recipe and provided the recipe



to the residents so they could prepare it in the safety of their homes, and showed how substitutions could be made if some of the ingredients were not available. The NEP Assistant also provided seed packets and gardening information to residents so they could grow container gardens on patios or balconies. Plans are being made to offer the series again on-site once it is safe to do so. Plans are also being made for a community garden in the apartment complex next summer. In spite of the pandemic of 2020, the NEP Assistant has maintained the relationship with the apartment manager at Wynnbrook Pines. The virtual series was a good way to maintain a partnership with the community.

**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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