



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: MARION 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 **17.1%** of Marion County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **22.3%** 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, **37%** of Marion County's adult population was considered obese, and **38%** 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, **1,568** contacts were made with Marion County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN MARION COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **92%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **84%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **88%** made changes to be more physically active.



## OUR SUCCESS

### Hands-on learning with school lunch

**M**arion County Cooperative Extension Office was hit with the news in March that the world was facing a health pandemic with COVID-19 and as a result, our local Marion County schools and businesses were to be shut down for an undetermined amount of time. Our local Extension office was part of the essential workforce that was able to keep working, as we were keeping the county informed with information about how to continue to stay healthy at home. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) Assistant partnered with the Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent and the 4-H Agent to discuss ways we could help kids continue to learn and be safe during this time. Our team decided to put together brown bags for the kids to do hands-on learning. We also prepared a family bag to use when they cooked together. We gave these bags to the schools' family resource director to be given out when the lunches were picked up at the school locations.



**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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.



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