



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: MASON 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 **18.2%** of Mason County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **24.8%** 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 Mason County's adult population was considered obese, and **32%** 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, 6,552 contacts were made with Mason County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN MASON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 98% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 53% made changes to be more physically active.



## OUR SUCCESS

### Nutritious recipe videos on Facebook

As COVID-19 put everyone in a different “new normal,” kids were home, restaurants were closed, grocery store shelves of ready-made foods were empty, and we had to cook. To help make this task healthy and easy, the Mason County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Assistant started a weekly video series of healthy meals and snacks. Using recipes from the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum, NEP calendars, and the Plan Eat Move website, we demonstrated a different recipe every Friday and posted it on Facebook for online viewing. We shared cooking tips in the video, such as the proper way to peel an orange, how to measure accurately, the correct way to crack an egg, along with food safety information. The videos were viewed, shared, and received feedback. One viewer shared a picture of her making one of the demonstrated recipes. Another said, “I love this recipe! (Colorful Quesadilla) Simple and easy to do! Thank you for sharing.” We made and shared 12 videos on Facebook reaching more than 12,800 people as of June 30, 2020.



**University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
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**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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