



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 **23.0%** of Monroe County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **34.6%** 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, **37%** of Monroe County's adult population was considered obese, and **36%** 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, 5,479 contacts were made with Monroe 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

Youth nutrition education

According to the Kentucky Health Facts, one of the critical health challenges facing Monroe County is obesity. Understanding that obesity often begins in childhood, the Monroe County Extension Council identified the need to assist youths in developing healthy habits in nutrition and exercise as a key area of focus for Monroe County 4-H Youth Development. The 4-H Youth Development Agent delivers nutrition programming to more than 90 children ages 3 to 5 in the Head Start program, in preschool programs, and in school-sponsored day care centers. Each month, the children are taught the basics of good nutrition through hand-on, educational activities in food preparation and food safety. Youths in the program are introduced to new food items and the different food groups through MyPlate and the different colors that represent each food group. The LEAP curriculum was often used so the children also had a book that related to the food we prepared. Through oral evaluations, the children were able to place food items in the appropriate food groups and choose healthy snack options. We empower the children to try various fruits and vegetables prepared in many different ways and help them to prepare the food themselves. We send recipe sheets home for parents each month to reinforce healthy food options in the home.



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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