



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: NELSON 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 **12.2%** of Nelson County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **16.4%** 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, **35%** of Nelson County's adult population was considered obese, and **27%** 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, 14,272 contacts were made with Nelson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN NELSON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 100% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 60% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 60% made changes to be more physically active.



## OUR SUCCESS

### Nutrition Education Program Facebook page

COVID-19 hit, and all in-person groups came to a halt. Looking for ways to reach my participants online or through Facebook became a challenge. Many other counties had Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Facebook pages, so we set up a Facebook page specific to Nelson County. Within the first four weeks alone, we had 513 followers "like" the page. The reach of the page was anywhere from 70 people a day to more than 11,000 people on some posts. Our local NEP Facebook page has made the community more aware of the Nutrition Education Program. People are learning who we are and what we do! It has been a win-win for awareness and getting out healthy nutrition messages and recipes to our community and beyond.



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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