



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: OHIO 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 **17.2%** of Ohio County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **25.0%** 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, **36%** of Ohio County's adult population was considered obese, and **39%** 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, 532 contacts were made with Ohio 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

Children's Farmers' Market Day

The poor health and wellness of youths in Kentucky is a growing epidemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Kentucky's youths have the fifth highest obesity rate in the U.S. Children who are obese are more likely to be obese as adults, thus, they are at increased risk for heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, cancer, and osteoarthritis. To combat this problem, the Ohio County Cooperative Extension Service, Ohio County Healthcare, and Beaver Dam Community Farmers' Market collaborated to provide a Children's Farmers' Market Day. The goals are to emphasize the relationship of Farm to Table, develop a relationship with the producers and vendors, increase youths' consumption of fruits and vegetables, stress the importance of eating a variety of colors in fruits and vegetables, and increase awareness of the local farmers' market. We accomplished these goals through a variety of activities, such as the fruit and vegetable scavenger hunt, in which the youths visited with vendors to identify specific fruits and vegetables. The youths then received vegetable samples. We provided recipe cards so families could prepare the vegetables at home.

Another activity involved the youths completing a Meet the Farmer questionnaire, in which the youths interviewed vendors to learn how the farmers produced their products. The youths also assembled color-beaded wrist bands, which reminded the youths to eat an assortment of colors of fruits and vegetables. This was the fifth year for the Children's Farmers' Market Day, with almost 500 youths and adults attending, including 41 Hispanics. A survey showed 38% of

families were visiting the farmers' market for the first time; 95% of families prepared fresh fruits and vegetables for meals most of the time, but only 44% prepared fresh fruits or vegetables for every meal, and 98% of participants indicated they would be returning to the farmers' market for fresh fruits and vegetables.



**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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Food and Environment
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