

KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: TAYLOR 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 Poverty¹	16.0%	12.3%
Child Poverty¹	20.9%	16.8%
Food Insecurity² <i>(Actual ratings during COVID-19 may be higher)</i>	14.7%	11.7%

In 2018, an estimated **19.2%** of Taylor County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **26.7%** 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 Taylor County's adult population was considered obese, and **32%** 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, 8,664 contacts were made with Taylor County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN TAYLOR COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 94% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 89% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 63% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Childcare center victory gardens

During school closures for COVID-19, day care centers, which remained open, served children of essential workers. Upon limited reopening, several children in their care were school age. Three of these centers in Taylor County expressed interest in continuing either gardening assistance or remote programming for those older children. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Assistant had actively enrolled groups in two of those centers at the time of closure. We needed a plan to assist centers to continue educating their students.

Two centers had raised bed gardens and requested assistance in continuing these gardens. The EFNEP Assistant supplied them with soil and seed with the Victory Garden toolkit. One center requested take-home pots for students in July, so we compiled 30 buckets with Victory Garden information, seeds, and gloves for them. They also asked to continue Literacy, Eating, and Activity for Preschool/Primary (LEAP) programming in August. We loaned the book "The Surprise Garden" to them along with a class activity of planting seeds in pots for their garden.

Ingredients for the Bacon and Tomato Dip were provided through county funds for the teachers to prepare with their students. We presented an additional LEAP activity in September using the book "Exercise," with accompanying activities and the ingredients for Snack Mix. This group will continue as an active enrolled group into the next programming year. An additional center that has just expanded to full capacity requested remote LEAP activities to continue into the next year. We are making plans with them for fall activities.

We have given newsletters provided by ChopChop magazine and Kids Club to these child care centers through the summer to send home with families. The EFNEP Assistant continues to be available as a resource for teachers in these child care centers.

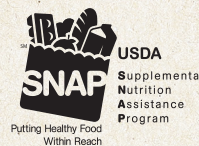


University of Kentucky
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SOURCES:

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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