



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: WOLFE 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 **31.4%** of Wolfe County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **43.6%** 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, **36%** of Wolfe County's adult population was considered obese, and **38%** 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, 943 contacts were made with Wolfe County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN WOLFE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 96% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 92% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 95% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 86% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Healthy Choices for Every Body program held online

Our lives have been turned upside down because of the COVID-19 pandemic. How we communicate, interact with one another, and how we travel has been affected. Programs, schools, and stores were forced to close their doors. In any challenge there is opportunity, and during this difficult time, we had to change. We had to be more open to new ways of doing things. To address the issue of providing nutrition education to the families in the community, the Wolfe County Cooperative Extension Service, Supplemental Nutrition Education Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) Assistant turned to the internet and social media to reach clientele in the community and bring them the education once taught in person. We created an online program called Healthy Choices for Every Body using private groups on Facebook and Zoom to conduct a seven-week program. The focus of the online program was on planning meals, budgeting, food safety, and other educational lessons. During this time, participants would receive an invite to a Zoom lesson. Each participant listened and interacted about each topic. Out of the 13 participants, both male and

female, 10 of them completed the online program. During the seven-week period, these participants started using meal planners, grocery lists, and cooking with what they already had on hand. One participant said, "I was so scared when I couldn't purchase certain items at the grocery store, but after participating in these lessons, I have learned that I can substitute ingredients with others. I now use dry

milk in my cooking and save my liquid milk for my family to drink." Another participant stated, "I am more mindful when planning my menu. I plan using leftovers in my menus and that saves me a lot of time and money and I am less stressed about shopping at the grocery."



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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College of Agriculture,
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