



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT: CHRISTIAN COUNTY

OUR FOCUS

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program (KYNEP or NEP) encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs 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 2020, 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 overall and child poverty¹ and food insecurity² among its population compared to 2020 Census and Department of Agriculture estimates for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty¹	16.0%	12.3%
Child Poverty¹	20.9%	16.8%
Food Insecurity²	13.8%	10.5%

In 2020, an estimated 19.6% of Christian County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 25 were residents under age 18.¹

Obesity and physical inactivity

Today, 60% of all Americans live with at least one chronic disease. These include heart disease and stroke, cancer, and diabetes.³ These diseases are all associated with obesity and physical inactivity. In 2020, Kentucky ranked



in the top five states in the country for obesity with a rate of 36.6% for adults.⁴ The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians is 32%, ranking it in the top seven most physically inactive states in the nation.⁵ A large amount of data show 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

The County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Kentucky report shows that 37% of Christian County's adult population have obesity and 30% were 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 2021, 5,434 contacts were made with Christian County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2021, 93% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 87% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 55% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Recovering Through Healthy Choices

According to the 2020 report by the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, “substance abuse remains one of the most critical public health and safety issues facing Kentucky.” Studies indicate that as many as 88% of people who struggle with chronic substance abuse disorders have poor appetite and diet quality overall. A paper published in The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics suggests that hands-on classes covering easy recipes, snack preparation, grocery shopping and budgeting may help addicts transition to a healthy life at home after leaving the treatment center. The Christian County SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) assistant taught the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum at a local recovery center. The residents were taught general nutrition, meal planning, food safety, grocery budgeting, and reading nutrition labels. Additionally, information was given on the benefits of limiting

added sugars, unhealthy fats, and sodium, and increasing physical activity. The residents were provided with recipes and handouts about the covered subjects with the hope this information would help with the clients’ transition to a healthy life. One hundred thirty-four residents participated in the Healthy Choices program with 65 of them graduating after completing seven required classes. According to the exit questionnaire, 92% of participants showed improvement in one or more diet quality indicators such as eating more vegetables or fruit and drinking less soda, while 95% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices like making lists and planning meals. More than half, 52%, showed improvement in physical activity behaviors. Eighty-six percent showed improvement in one or more food safety practices like proper food thawing, and hand-washing, with 73% using a meat thermometer more often.



University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates 2020
2. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service
3. CDC National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion 2019
4. The State of Obesity Report 2020
5. CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

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