



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT: HART 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 21.5% of Hart County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 27 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 30% of Hart County's adult population have obesity and 32% 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, 1,634 contacts were made with Hart County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2021, 98% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 89% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 80% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Identifying and Tasting Fruits and Vegetables

Poor nutrition and physical inactivity are tied to obesity. Recent research shows that among U.S. children ages 2 to 4, nearly 14% were overweight and 13.5% were obese. Obesity has been shown to contribute to major health issues including high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, elevated blood cholesterol levels, low self-esteem, negative body image, and depression in children. To address these concerns, the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences agent collaborated with the Hart County Head Start to offer LEAP for Health to 14 preschool students. Lessons focused on teaching children about nutritious foods, healthy eating habits, food safety, and being physically active. As a result of the program, 100% of the children were able to recognize physical activity and healthy snacks. Of the students, 98% were more willing to try new fruits and vegetables. One child expressed their joy in learning about the various types of vegetables and how they grow. All the children were very excited to show how much their spinach grew in their container gardens from week to week.



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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