



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT: HICKMAN 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 **14.9%** of Hickman County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **28** 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 **28%** of Hickman County's adult population have obesity and **39%** 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, 2,604 contacts were made with Hickman County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN HICKMAN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2021, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 81% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 96% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 81% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Story Walk Increases Literacy and Local Food Awareness

In 2013-2015, 31.9% of adults in Hickman County age 20 and older reported no leisure-time physical activity (Hickman County Data Profile, CES Community Assessment 2019). At the same time, only 76.1% of children entering kindergarten are ready to learn (2020 Early Childhood Profile). Physical activity, healthy local food choices, and early community literacy opportunities were strategically combined through the Story Walk experience. Hickman County Extension collaborated with the Family Resource Youth Service Center, Four River Counties Early Childhood Council, farmers' market vendors, and local businesses or organizations for the fourth year to hold a Story Walk event. This event is held at the Hickman County Rotary Park/Farmers' Market. The Story Walk is based on parent, caregiver, and child involvement. They read a story page by page around the walking trail, practice social skills by interacting with community businesses, and visit vendors under the farmers'

market. Because of COVID-19, developmentally appropriate experiential learning activities were offered as take-home activity kits to enable youths the opportunity to learn and play with their families. The socially distanced event was attended by 60 families with COVID-19 safety procedures in place. Of those families, 102 youths ranging in ages from 7 months to 16 were present. A total of 57 of the youths were in school, and 47 were either in home care or in preschool or childcare. Seventeen volunteers supported Story Walk. After attending Story Walk, 86% planned on completing the at-home learning kits with their family. All said they planned on visiting the farmers' market and walking path after the event. Almost three-quarters, or 70%, said that they would try recipes with pumpkin or other locally grown produce, while 85% said that this event helped them to gain skills to use in home literacy activities. This event resulted in 82% saying they plan to increase time spent reading and playing with their child.



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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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