



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT: KENTON 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 11.5% of Kenton County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 16 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 35% of Kenton County’s adult population have obesity and 25% 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, 4,827 contacts were made with Kenton County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2021, 96% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 93% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 87% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 61% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Surviving an Epidemic During a Global Pandemic

During 2021, the Kenton County NEP (Nutrition Education Program) senior assistant continued a partnership with the Mary Gandy Travis Recovery Treatment Center (RTC). RTC is a short-term residential treatment center for men and women, where clients receive individual, group, and family education and therapy as well as participate in other recovery-based activities to encourage a life of recovery, health, and wellness including learning the importance of eating healthy and being physically active. Because of the ongoing pandemic, RTC opened the dining hall for the NEP senior assistant to teach the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum, so the female residents could spread out and be socially distant from each other. During the seven-lesson series, the NEP senior assistant went to RTC weekly to teach the participants about eating healthy, making

better food choices on a budget, cooking food safely, planning meals, and cooking a healthy breakfast. Throughout the year, RTC had to periodically close its doors to outside partners because the residents were in quarantine for exposure to COVID. Nevertheless, 20 women were able to successfully complete the program, while an additional 91 women attended one or more sessions of the series. Those who graduated from the program were extremely proud to be able to say they had successfully accomplished this goal. According to a nationally recognized web-based reporting system, 95% of the women had a positive behavior change in at least one food group during the series; 49% increased their food management skills, such as planning meals ahead of time, checking for sales before shopping, and comparing food prices; and 55% of the participants increased their amount of physical activity while at RTC.



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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