



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT: MCCRACKEN 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 15.8% of McCracken County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 23 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 31% of McCracken County's adult population have obesity and 31% 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, **15,191** contacts were made with McCracken County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN MCCRACKEN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2021, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **83%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **97%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **84%** made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Discovering Healthy Choices During Recovery

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 7.7% of people in Kentucky aged 12 and older have a substance use disorder. The McCracken County Cooperative Extension Service SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) assistant was able to partner with Lifeline Recovery Centers women's campus to promote a healthier lifestyle using the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum. The SNAP-Ed assistant held three separate series providing seven sessions each time. Lessons included topics on My Plate; knowing the limits of fats, sugars and sodium; food safety; and eating better on a budget. Upon completion of the Healthy Choices for Everybody series, 55% were comparing

prices on food more often and were checking cupboards and planning meals before shopping, 73% were using a meat thermometer, washing hands, and not thawing frozen foods at room temperature, 75% said they ate more fruit each day, 83% made small changes to be more active, and 91% made a written spending plan weekly or monthly. Along with the classroom education, the McCracken County SNAP-Ed assistant was assisted by the agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources along with the Horticulture assistant. Participants in the series maintained a raised bed garden that grew tomato and pepper plants. The garden was maintained by participants at the residence who used the produce in recipes provided by the Nutrition Education Program.



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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