



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT: PULASKI 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.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky also has higher percentages of overall and child poverty<sup>1</sup> and food insecurity<sup>2</sup> among its population compared to 2020 Census and Department of Agriculture estimates for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>Total Poverty<sup>1</sup></b>	16.0%	12.3%
<b>Child Poverty<sup>1</sup></b>	20.9%	16.8%
<b>Food Insecurity<sup>2</sup></b>	13.8%	10.5%

In 2020, an estimated 22.7% of Pulaski County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 31 were residents under age 18.<sup>1</sup>

#### 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians is 32%, ranking it in the top seven most physically inactive states in the nation.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

The County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Kentucky report shows that 39% of Pulaski County's adult population have obesity and 34% were physically inactive.<sup>5</sup>

## 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, 7,078 contacts were made with Pulaski 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

### Making Better Lifestyle Choices

According to the 2019 data from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website, the adult obesity rate in Pulaski County is 37%. High obesity rates have been linked to many health problems, including heart disease and stroke. To address this issue, a seven-session curriculum called Healthy Choices for Every Body was conducted by the Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Service SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) assistant. The SNAP-Ed assistant taught biweekly group lessons at various locations including the housing authority, recovery center, and virtually. The program provided information on food preparation, food resource

management, food safety, portion control, and physical activity. Twenty-six women, ages ranging from 24 to 79, participated in seven or more lessons and completed the program. At the end of the program, a written evaluation showed that more than three-fourths (81%) of the participants consumed more fruit and ate red and orange vegetables more often, more than two-thirds (69%) ate dark green vegetables more often, one half (50%) drink regular soda less often, and 73% increased their consumption of dairy. One participant shared, "I learned how to incorporate the food groups into my everyday life, and I plan on cooking more nutritious meals for myself and my family".



#### 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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