

Boone County

2023 NEP REPORT

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 2022, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$59,341**, 21% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$74,755**.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.

	KY	U.S.
Total Poverty¹	16.3%	12.6%
Child Poverty¹	20.6%	16.3%
Food Insecurity²	14.0%	10.2%

In 2022, an estimated 7.4% of Boone County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated 8.1% of children under age 18 lived in poverty.¹

Obesity and physical inactivity

Today, 6 in 10 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. The most recent data show that the percentage of adults who have obesity in Kentucky is 37%,



ranking it in the top 10 states for high obesity rates in the country.⁴ The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians is 29%, ranking it in the top eight most physically inactive states in the nation.⁴ A large amount of data shows 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 38% of Boone County's adult population have obesity and 24% were physically inactive.⁴

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, and
- Managing SNAP resources.

In 2023, 7,175 contacts were made with Boone County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN BOONE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 74% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 70% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 70% made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

Families in the kitchen cook together, eat together, and more

Trying to keep young people away from electronics in the summer can be as testing as getting them to eat their vegetables. The Boone County Nutrition Education Program assistant set out to teach programs about this issue. We taught Families in the Kitchen...Cook Together, Eat Together to six family groups. This program helps adults work in the kitchen with children. Most were grandparents working with grandchildren. The group pledged to spend seven weeks learning cooking skills, trying new foods, and spending quality family time together.

Each week the group talked about healthy eating and how small changes can add up to big results. They made a mock grocery trip. They chose foods and then

talked about ways to use them. Then the group talked about making food part of a healthy life. They watched demos on tools and techniques needed. With help from the adult leader, the youths made a recipe. While some weren't sure about some of the ingredients, they did their best to make their dish with an open mind. The fact that they made it themselves went a long way toward helping them try their new dish.

The training resulted in learning new cooking skills and how to make healthy eating choices. All of the group learned they liked new vegetables. In the end, 83% of the adults improved their food choices and stayed more active. Most notable, families spent time together. They learned new skills which will last a lifetime of healthy cooking.



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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service
3. CDC National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
4. County Health Rankings and Roadmaps

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