

Hancock 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 **14%** of Hancock County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **17.6%** 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 **36%** of Hancock County’s adult population have obesity and **31%** 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, 611 contacts were made with Hancock County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN HANCOCK COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 95% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 83% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 83% made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

Let's stay home and cook!

The Hancock County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistant partnered with a women's rehab facility to teach Healthy Affordable Meals. A survey showed that only 13% of the women cooked meals at home at least five days a week. When asked why they didn't cook more meals at home, there were many responses: not having the time, not being prepared with ingredients, and not knowing easy recipes to make. They also said they didn't get what they needed at the store and kids didn't like what they made. The class was surprised to learn all the helpful tips to help someone prepare to

cook at home. They talked about how to make a food budget and a list for the week of meals, drinks, and snacks. After you make the list, look to see what ingredients you need and what you have on hand. The lesson also taught how to plan to shop at the store. We also talked about ways to buy in bulk, how to pick fresh veggies and fruit, and to buy store brands when you can. The NEP assistant gave out a few of the NEP food recipes cards. After more helpful tips and lots of discussion, the ladies felt much more prepared to cook more meals at home. At the end of the class, 93% of the group cooked dinner at home more times a week.



**University of Kentucky
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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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.



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