

Hardin 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 **12.6%** of Hardin County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **15.4%** 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 **39%** of Hardin County’s adult population have obesity and **28%** 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, 26,962 contacts were made with Hardin County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN HARDIN COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, 96% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 81% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 79% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 79% made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

Drinking fewer sodas and drinking more water

The Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistant in Hardin County has been working with substance use disorder clients for the past three years. This success story is from the New Horizon facility. The number of rehab facilities has grown in Hardin County over the past two years. Working with substance use recovery facilities is so rewarding and it shows that this program really works.

While out at a local function, I saw a young man who looked familiar. He walks over and starts to talk to me. He said, "I am doing so much better on my recovery journey since your class. I have stopped drinking so many sodas and I am drinking more water. I took your advice about adding fruit to the water to give it a taste. It helps me to increase my water intake." This shows the long-term effect from teaching in rehab facilities.



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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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