

Jefferson 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 **15.2%** of Jefferson County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **20%** 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 Jefferson County’s adult population have obesity and **27%** 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, 5,527 contacts were made with Jefferson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 85% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 74% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 74% made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

Positive improvements in nutrition among young adults

As stated by USDA's MyPlate, eating healthy can be a chore. It is hard when you do not know what or how much to eat. It is best to eat foods from each food group each day. The Jefferson County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistant worked with the nonprofit Goodwill Industries of Kentucky. Twenty-four young adults took part in a three-day class using the Healthy Choices for Every Body course of study.

Sessions focused on whole fruits, veggies, and how to make half your grains whole grains. The lessons also discussed protein and how to limit extra calories. The NEP assistant engaged the young adults in the lessons by using visuals to support

the USDA's MyPlate lessons. She also taught other topics such as how much food to buy per person and how to make a weekly menu and shopping list. They also discussed how to plan for leftovers and how to be active for at least 30 minutes each day.

At the end of the program, all the students had a 100% success rate. This showed they learned to eat more fruits and vegetables. It also showed they learned to drink less regular soda and fruit juices and cook dinner at home. One student shared, "Just by taking time out to look at my calories from 'Choose Your Plate', I now know how much fruit, veggies, grains, dairy and protein I am to eat each day. I get 30 minutes of activity each day and I feel great."



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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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