

Johnson 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 **26%** of Johnson County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **31.3%** 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 **41%** of Johnson County’s adult population have obesity and **34%** 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, 4,035 contacts were made with Johnson County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN JOHNSON COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 98% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 94% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 94% made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

What's cooking at the farmers' market

The Johnson County farmers' market was in full swing by the first of July. On most days, 10 vendors set up. They carried many types of fruits and vegetables and amazing crafts. The customers were happy to see so much to choose from. They had many questions about how to make healthy meals and skip waste. Many also asked questions about preserving when they bought in bulk.

The Johnson County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) senior assistant set up an NEP table with nutrition information, recipes, and university-approved food preservation materials. She also gave a live food demo one day a week. The public could watch and learn how to make a healthy meal in person and ask questions. About 15

people watched the food demo each week. On the busiest days, the NEP senior assistant handed out samples of a recipe. The recipe featured a vegetable being sold that day. She also added one-of-a-kind recipe cards to vegetable baskets so buyers would have more ideas about how to make a new dish.

By the end of August, all regular shoppers said they looked forward to getting and making new recipes from the cards added to their baskets. All who watched the food demos said they loved getting the chance to try something new. They started watching recorded food demos on the Johnson County NEP Facebook page. The customers who asked for tips on preserving their vegetables felt more certain with the information and recipes given out at the NEP table.



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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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