

Lawrence 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 **25.9%** of Lawrence County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **29%** 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 **37%** of Lawrence County’s adult population have obesity and **36%** 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, **2,616** contacts were made with Lawrence County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN LAWRENCE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, **99%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **95%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **84%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **84%** made changes to be more physically active.



Our Success

Families in the Kitchen... Cook Together, Eat Together

The Lawrence County senior Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistant taught Families in the Kitchen... Cook Together, Eat Together. This program is for limited-resource families who have children ages 5 to 18. Parents and children learn to cook healthy meals while they spend quality time with each other. The series teaches seven topics: MyPlate, breakfast, know the limits, planning meals, how to budget, food safety, and reading labels. The group made breakfast, soups, and salads. They also made vegetables, one-pot meals, and snacks. The group talked about grocery shopping on a budget and cooking with a slow cooker. The class enjoyed cooking frittatas, Easy Chicken and Veggie Stir-fry, and Fresh Taco Salad. The apple crisp, Southwestern Chicken and Rice, and Slow Cooker Barbeque Chicken were also hits. Three parents and children (a total of nine participants) finished the program. As a result, all of the group ate more fruit and vegetables. They thawed frozen food at room temperature less often and drank regular soda less often.



**University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
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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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