

# Pulaski 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**.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky also has higher percentages of overall and child poverty<sup>1</sup> and food insecurity<sup>2</sup> among its population compared to 2020 Census and Department of Agriculture estimates for the United States overall.

	KY	U.S.
<b>Total Poverty<sup>1</sup></b>	16.3%	12.6%
<b>Child Poverty<sup>1</sup></b>	20.6%	16.3%
<b>Food Insecurity<sup>2</sup></b>	14.0%	10.2%

In 2022, an estimated **18.8%** of Pulaski County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **23.3%** of children under age 18 lived in poverty.<sup>1</sup>

#### 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians is 29%, ranking it in the top eight most physically inactive states in the nation.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

The County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Kentucky report shows that **41%** of Pulaski County’s adult population have obesity and **35%** were physically inactive.<sup>4</sup>

## 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, 6,245 contacts were made with Pulaski County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN PULASKI 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, 98% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 98% made changes to be more physically active.



## Our Success

### Staying active, making healthy choices in Pulaski County

Foods that are not healthy, added stress, and few chances to be active are challenges for making healthy choices. Data from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website show the adult obesity rate in Pulaski County is 37%. The rate for adult inactivity is 33%. To focus on these concerns, the Pulaski County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistant held weekly programs. Sixty-five people showed up for these classes. Using Healthy Choices for Every Body, we had programs at the Pulaski County Senior Center, Lake Cumberland Housing Authority, and Sky Hope Recovery Center. The program taught people and caused action changes that helped adults build healthy

habits. With a change in food intake, staying active, and changing skills, they began to see a change in their health. They learned to stay within a fixed budget. Each group member tasted a healthy recipe in class. All of the group finished seven lessons. Of those members, more than 80% made a change in nutrition (such as eating more fruits and vegetables). Eighty-six percent of the group planned meals, while 85% compare food prices more. Ninety-seven percent made small changes to be active more often. One group member said, "I learned a lot about shopping for groceries and how to wisely spend money at the store. When I go home, I am going to prepare better meals for my children and have them drink more water."



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



UK Cooperative  
Extension Service

#### 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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