

Spencer 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 **8.3%** of Spencer County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **9.5%** 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 **35%** of Spencer County’s adult population have obesity and **26%** 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, 9,260 contacts were made with Spencer County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.



Our Success

Agricultural Field Day is a big success

The Spencer County Cooperative Extension Service, along with school staff from the elementary schools, saw the need to continue Ag Day. They wanted the chance to teach youths about Kentucky agriculture.

A lot of county partners helped with this event. The County FFA students served as hosts for each of the classrooms. Buses took the students to the field for the event. School staff and others helped during the event at the water stations and lunch. Local 4-H youths participated with their swine, beef, poultry, and ducks. This year the local FCCLA chapter taught youths about making butter, the local FFA chapter taught about floral design, and a team of Master Gardeners led a booth about plants. Spencer County Ag Day was, once again, a huge success in the fall of 2023. Nearly 1,500 students participated in this event with more than 70 volunteers helping.



**University of Kentucky
Nutrition Education Program
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension**

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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