

# Washington 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 **14.4%** of Washington County residents overall lived in poverty, and an estimated **17.7%** 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 **39%** of Washington County’s adult population have obesity and **31%** 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, 2,726 contacts were made with Washington County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2023, **88%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **88%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **67%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **67%** made changes to be more physically active.



## Our Success

### Super Star Chef teaches kids cooking skills

**R**esearch shows that teaching cooking skills to children helps them make healthy food choices. To teach these life skills, the Washington County Family and Consumer Sciences agent, 4-H Youth Development agent, Nutrition Education Program assistant, and a University of Kentucky dietetic student worked together. They offered the Super Star Chef program. This is a three-day camp for students ages 9 through 12. It teaches kitchen safety, food safety, nutrition concepts, and staying active. The students were able to make the food with adults nearby.

Ten students came to Super Star Chef. Pre- and post-lesson tests showed that the children were able to grasp nutrition concepts covered in the program. The score on the test rose from 6.9 in the pretest to 9.9 in the posttest (out of a total of 13). All of the children (100%) said they can point out healthy foods, plan to drink more water, plan to drink less soda, and plan to try new foods. Parents commented that kids were excited to cook at home after being part of the 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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