

Promoting Healthier Lifestyles in Kentucky: The University of Kentucky's High Obesity Program



University Partnership

CDC's High Obesity Program (HOP) promotes healthy eating and active living in counties that have more than 40% prevalence of adult obesity. CDC provides funds to land grant universities that work with communities—mostly in rural areas—whose residents may have less access to healthy foods and fewer opportunities to be physically active.

The Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service at The University of Kentucky works with six county Cooperative Extension offices and their partners to:

- Promote healthier food options at local retail stores.
- Provide incentives to buy fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets.
- Enhance park and recreation facilities and develop safe places for physical activities such as walking and biking trails.

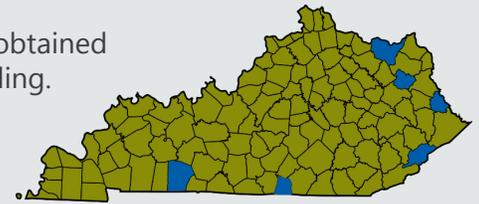
Kentucky by the Numbers*

Kentucky HOP counties include: Clinton, Elliott, Letcher, Lewis, Logan, and Martin.

In these counties:

- The estimated adult obesity prevalence ranges from 40.1% to 43.6%, well above the state adult obesity prevalence of 31.3%.
- More than 1 in 3 adults don't get any physical activity.
- The percentage of children enrolled in public school eligible for free and reduced lunch ranges from 55.8% to 77.6%.

*These data were obtained at the time of funding.



Programs in Action

- In four of the six HOP counties, there are no recreational or fitness facilities. Grantee-led coalitions in these counties established walking trails and fit stations in community parks to increase physical activity and promote active community design.
- Clinton County's Healthy Hometown initiative is creating a culture of health and wellness by launching programs that focus on children who are at risk for having obesity and type 2 diabetes. One program paired elementary school children with fitness buddies from local high schools who exercised with them for about 30 minutes a day. The initiative also launched an annual family 5k, which drew over 200 child participants.
- Lewis County provides nutrition education and free "Kid's Bucks" to children at farmers' market to allow them to buy fresh fruits and vegetables from farmers. Extension agents in the county also helped make water easily accessible to approximately 500 youth by installing water-bottle filling stations in schools.



Voice from the Community

"This program has been a wonderful asset to the community because there are a lot of kids out there getting active—it's really the only free area that kids can go to. We've been making changes to the park, and I've seen a tremendous increase in kids that's actually going out there and participating, kids that's out there playing."

—April Speck, Clinton County Healthy Hometown Coordinator Program Director