MISSION: READINESS
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA

Kentucky Member Nutrition Training

November 2021

Childhood Obesity in Kentucky

Children ages 2-4 participating in WIC



Children ages 10-17



High School Students



Source: State of Childhood Obesity

The Solutions

- **National School Lunch Program**, which has seen increased fruit and vegetable consumption since Mission: Readiness helped to pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. *The program was originally created after World War II with strong support from military leaders to address malnutrition concerns that impacted our military readiness.*

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) –** provides parents and children with direct payments to purchase food at retailers, and serves as an essential tool in combating food insecurity in low-income families.

- **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) –** provides funding for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Summer Meals Participation

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

87,530

Kentucky Number of students participating in in 2019.

Source: State of Childhood Obesity

SNAP Participation

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

482,283

Kentucky Number of residents participating in in 2020.



76% Percentage of eligible residents participating in 2016.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) -- Children

239,000

Kentucky Number of participating residents who are children in in 2018.



39.9% Percentage of participants who are children in 2018.

Source: State of Childhood Obesity

WIC Participation

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

94,296

Kentucky Number of residents participating in in 2019.



53.3% Percentage of eligible residents participating in 2016.

Source: State of Childhood Obesity

Mission: Readiness Policy Priorities

- Maintain strong nutrition standards for school meals, proactively addressing and pushing back on attempts to rollback standards
- Ensure schools have adequate resources to update their school meal infrastructure to foster use of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Increase federal meal reimbursement rates to remove barriers to school participation in breakfast and afterschool snack programs
- Expand summer meals programs to reach all children experiencing food insecurity in the summer months and who struggle to access healthy food on the weekend

Mission: Readiness Policy Priorities

- Support nutritional incentives to use SNAP benefits to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and nutrient dense healthy foods
- Foster eligible families' enrollment in SNAP and WIC by reducing stigma and barriers around enrollment
- Allow for eligible families to maintain WIC certification through the early years of a child's life
- Increase diversity of food choices and purchasing options in WIC
- Expand WIC eligibility for children to their sixth birthday, or when they enter kindergarten, whichever comes first

Other Solutions

- **Increased physical activity** by strengthening physical education (PE) classes and supporting other opportunities to get kids moving.

- **Early childhood education**: Studies show that programs can help children develop healthy habits at a young age by serving nutritious meals and ensuring children get adequate exercise throughout the day.

Next Steps

- Conversations in your communities
- Upcoming virtual events

Resources

- Mission: Readiness Nutrition Roadmap
- Mission: Readiness Podcast

If you have any questions about this presentation, please email or call:

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