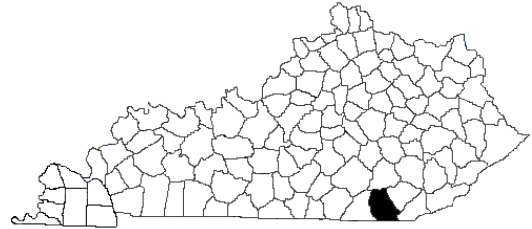


Building Strong Families for Kentucky

..... in Whitley County

Peggy Helton, County Extension Agent,
Family and Consumer Sciences



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension is committed to improving the quality of life for individuals and families in Whitley County resulting in strong families for Kentucky. Educational programs focus on:

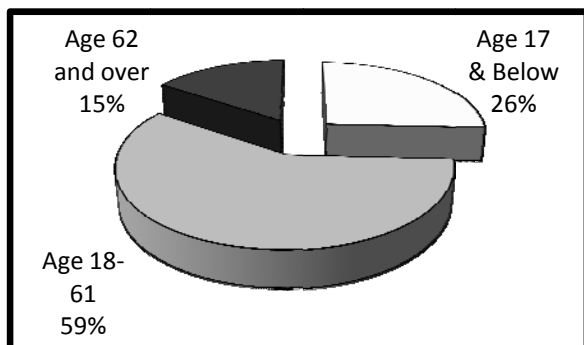
- Making Beneficial Lifestyle Choices***
- Nurturing Families***
- Embracing Life as You Age***
- Securing Financial Stability***
- Promoting Healthy Homes and Communities***
- Accessing Nutritious Food***
- Empowering Community Leaders***

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension made **8,715** contacts with Whitley County families during 2007-2008.¹

Our People

The 2000 U.S. Census reported total population as **35,865**.² The graph below indicates the percentage by age group.

Figure 1. Population by Age Group² (n=35,865)



Spotlight on . . .

Promoting Healthy Homes and Communities



Youth and the elderly have higher risks for environmental diseases caused by pollutants such as lead, carbon monoxide, mold, radon, building materials, and household chemicals. The FCS agent presented 12 programs on environmental safety to parents, educators, and Extension Homemakers, reaching 850 participants. Educational displays at 4 local health fairs reached more than 800 participants. As a result of these programs, 1,650 participants received information about the risks of environmental pollutants and now know ways to improve their indoor air quality to reduce risks for their families. Two-hundred and fifty people have made improvements in their homes including cleaning up clutter, installing smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, and changing filters regularly.¹

Our Families

Using data from the 2000 U.S. Census, Whitley County families can be described as follows:²

- **9,999** families reside in the county.
- **2,163 families (21.6%)** live below poverty level.
- Median family income is **\$27,871**.
- **390** grandparents are responsible for the care of their grandchildren.

According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, **10,109** people in Whitley County receive food stamps. The average family food stamp benefit is **\$220.61** per month.³

In the county, **275** children live in out-of-home care.⁴ In 2004, there was **1** incident of adult abuse and **243** incidents of child abuse.⁵

As a result of participation in Whitley County Extension programs:¹

- **252** people increased their knowledge and skills related to parenting and personal relationships.
- **250** adult, dependent, and child care providers increased their care giving knowledge.
- **600** people gained knowledge about safe storage, handling, and preparation of food.
- **1,561** food stamp eligible or recipient families consumed more fruits and vegetables.

Our Community

Unemployment rates are a key economic indicator. In September 2008, the rate of unemployment in Whitley County was **7.5%**. This represented a **21%** increase from the September 2007 level of **6.2%**.⁶

Mortgage and bank card delinquency rates and foreclosure filings are important financial indicators of community well-being. In Whitley County, 90-day mortgage delinquency rates have increased by **143%** and 60-day bank card delinquency rates have increased by **63%**.⁷ In a six-month period (May through October 2008), **57** foreclosures were filed.⁸

Access to health insurance is another important factor contributing to family well-being. In Whitley County, **19%** of the people under age 65 are uninsured.⁹

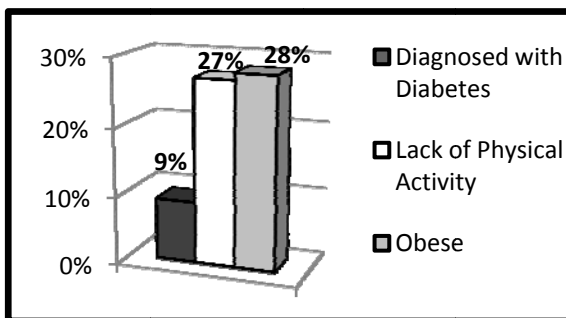
As a result of participation in Whitley County Extension programs:¹

- **142** adults or youth improved their ability to make informed and effective decisions.
- **620** citizens enhance their leadership skills by participating in leadership programs.

Our Health

The health of our people contributes to quality of life. The chart below illustrates health risks of adults in Whitley County.

Figure 2. Health Risks.⁹



As a result of participation in Whitley County Extension programs:¹

- **1,469** people gained knowledge and skills to make lifestyle changes to improve their health.
- **440** people increased their use of radon testers, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and other devices to ensure personal safety.
- **1,260** people made lifestyle changes to improve physical health.

Sources

¹ Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, Impacting Reporting, FY2008.

² U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

³ Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Data Book, June 2008.

⁴ Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kentucky KIDS COUNT, 2005.

⁵ Kentucky Department for Public Health, County Health Priorities, 2004.

⁶ Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, Kentucky Labor Force Estimates, September 2008.

⁷ TransUnion LLC., Trend Data, Quarter 1 2008.

⁸ Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts, November, 2008.

⁹ Kentucky Institute of Medicine, The Health of Kentucky: A County Assessment, 2007.