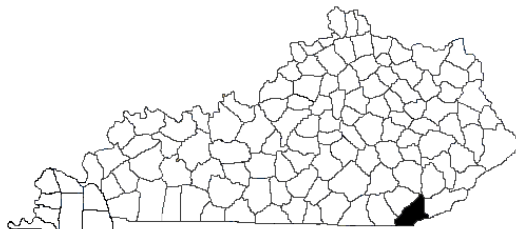


Building Strong Families for Kentucky

..... in Bell County

Rebecca Sharp, 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 Bell County resulting in strong families for Kentucky. Educational programs focus on:

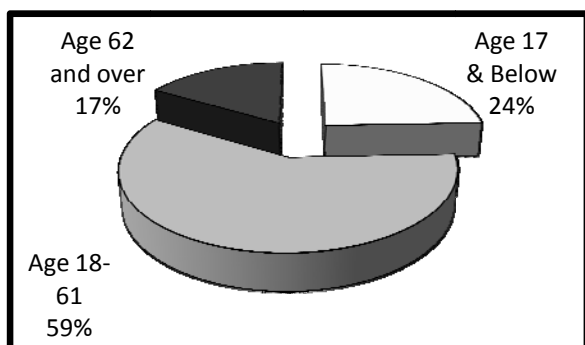
- Making Beneficial Lifestyle Choices***
- Nurturing Families***
- Embracing Life as You Age***
- Securing Financial Stability***
- Promoting Healthy Homes and Communities***
- Accessing Nutritious Food***
- Empowering Community Leaders***

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension made **22,735** contacts with Bell County families during 2007-2008.¹

Our People

The 2000 U.S. Census reported total population as **30,060**.² The graph below indicates the percentage by age group.

Figure 1. Population by Age Group² (n=30,060)



Spotlight on . . .

Nurturing Families



A workshop was developed by the FCS agent to assist parents in building their parenting skills. The ten parents who participated received information on child development, teaching self-control, caring for health, and the importance of talking and reading with their child. They participated in activities to help them develop better parenting skills and learned how to build their capacity to parent on an ongoing basis.¹

Our Families

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

- **8,592** families reside in the county.
- **2,295** families (**26.7%**) live below poverty level.
- Median family income is **\$23,818**.
- **277** grandparents are responsible for the care of their grandchildren.

According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, **9,243** people in Bell County receive food stamps. The average family food stamp benefit is **\$207.93** per month.³

In the county, **65** children live in out-of-home care.⁴ In 2004, there were **11** incidents of adult abuse and **168** incidents of child abuse.⁵

*As a result of participation in Bell County Extension programs:*¹

- **2,415** adults and youth improved their ability to make informed and effective decisions.
- **2,205** people increased their knowledge and skills related to parenting and personal relationships.
- **180** people adopted money management practices to reduce debt and/or increase savings.
- **230** people used safe practices to store, handle and prepare food.

Our Community

Unemployment rates are a key economic indicator. In September 2008, the rate of unemployment in Bell County was **9.2%**. This represented an **18%** increase from the September 2007 level of **7.8%**.⁶

Mortgage and bank card delinquency rates and foreclosure filings are important financial indicators of community well-being. In Bell County, **1.88%** of mortgages are 90-days delinquent and 60-day bank card delinquency rates have increased by **32%**.⁷ In a six-month period (May through October 2008), **21** foreclosure was filed.⁸

Access to health insurance is another important factor contributing to family well-being. In Bell County, **20%** of the people under age 65 are uninsured.⁹

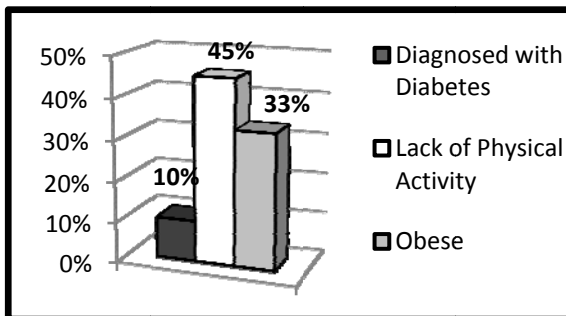
*As a result of participation in Bell County Extension programs:*¹

- **1,060** citizens enhanced their leadership skills by participation in leadership programs.
- **706** adults and youth utilized improved communication, problem solving, and group process skills to address community needs.
- **364** people were involved in addressing issues of their community.

Our Health

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

Figure 2. Health Risks.⁹



*As a result of participation in Bell County Extension programs:*¹

- **622** people made lifestyle changes to improve physical health.
- **250** people implemented new practices to maintain health and well-being.
- **50** people increased their use of radon testers, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and other devices to ensure personal safety.

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.