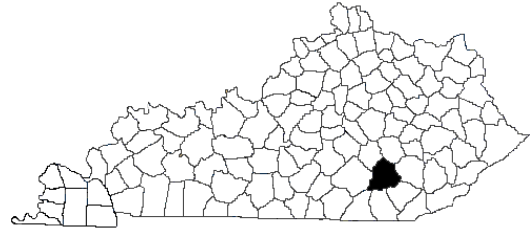


Building Strong Families for Kentucky

..... in Laurel County

Judi O'Bryan, 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 Laurel County resulting in strong families for Kentucky. Educational programs focus on:

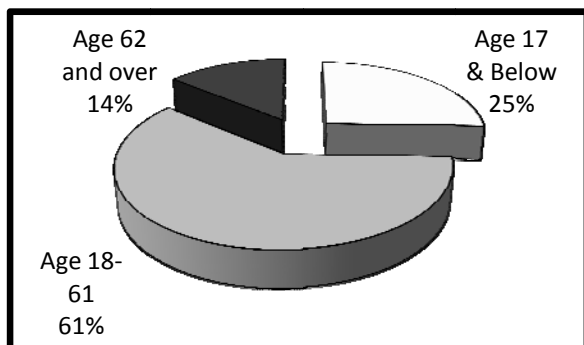
- Making Beneficial Lifestyle Choices***
- Nurturing Families***
- Embracing Life as You Age***
- Securing Financial Stability***
- Promoting Healthy Homes and Communities***
- Accessing Nutritious Food***
- Empowering Community Leaders***

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension made **50,195** contacts with Laurel County families during 2007-2008.¹

Our People

The 2000 U.S. Census reported total population as **52,715**.² The graph below indicates the percentage by age group.

Figure 1. Population by Age Group² (n=52,715)



Spotlight on . . .

Accessing Nutritious Food



With approximately 50% of Laurel County children eligible for free and reduced lunch, many are concerned that children will not receive a sufficient amount of nutrition during the summer months. The Summer Feeding Program is a federally funded program that provides free food in the summer for children through age eighteen. The YMCA, the Laurel County Extension Service, and St. Joseph of London joined together to expand our small summer feeding program. Over the years we have expanded from one site to 49 sites. We served over 42,000 children in 2007. The Extension Service staffed five sites by recruiting over 100 volunteers to take food to these children.¹

Our Families

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

- **15,415** families reside in the county.
- **2,747 families (17.8%)** live below poverty level.
- Median family income is **\$31,318**.
- **571** grandparents are responsible for the care of their grandchildren.

According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, **12,529** people in Laurel County receive food stamps. The average family food stamp benefit is **\$228.79** per month.³

In the county, **187** children live in out-of-home care.⁴ In 2004, there were **335** incidents of adult abuse and **53** incidents of child abuse.⁵

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

- **50** people increased their knowledge and skills related to parenting and personal relationships.
- **960** people adopted money management practices to reduce debt and/or increase savings.
- **388** people used safe practices to store, handle, and prepare food.
- **100%** of food stamp recipients or eligible recipients enrolled in the nutrition education program improved their diet.

Our Community

Unemployment rates are a key economic indicator. In September 2008, the rate of unemployment in Laurel County was **6.5%**. This represented a **25%** increase from the September 2007 level of **5.2%**.⁶

Mortgage and bank card delinquency rates and foreclosure filings are important financial indicators of community well-being. In Laurel County, 90-day mortgage delinquency rates have increased by **72%** and 60-day bank card delinquency rates have increased by **36%**.⁷ In a six-month period (May through October 2008), **99** foreclosures were filed.⁸

Access to health insurance is another important factor contributing to family well-being. In Laurel County, **16%** of the people under age 65 are uninsured.⁹

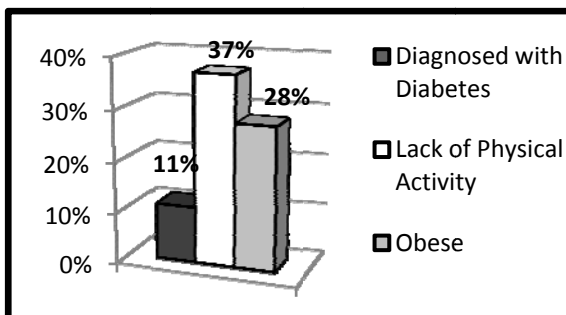
As a result of participation in Laurel County Extension programs:¹

- **372** adults and youth utilized improved communication, problem solving, and group process skills to address community needs.
- **532** people were involved in addressing issues of their community.
- Laurel County Extension is involved in **50** community coalitions.

Our Health

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

Figure 2. Health Risks.⁹



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

- **5,100** people made lifestyle changes to improve physical health.
- **243** people implemented new practices to maintain their health and well-being.
- **4,200** adults or youth improved their ability to make informed and effective decisions.

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.