Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension is committed to improving the health and well-being of individuals and families in McCracken County. To help families make wise decisions, our educational programs focus on:

- **Making Healthy Lifestyle Choices** that influence health and well-being
- **Nurturing Families** as they cope with fewer resources and more demands
- **Embracing Life as We Age** to live independently longer
- **Securing Financial Stability** in a turbulent economic period
- **Promoting Healthy Homes and Communities** that recycle, reduce waste, and protect our environment
- **Accessing Nutritious Food** that is affordable, available, and safe
- **Empowering Community Leaders** as we all work to sustain and improve our communities

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The McCracken County Master Food Volunteers and FCS Extension agent teamed up with Paducah Parks and Recreation to hold a monthly cooking/life skills series on the basics nutrition, simple cooking skills, meal planning, and the importance of eating together. Before classes began, the majority of the participants reported eating out frequently and consuming prepackaged foods. The program focused on preparing homemade meals, eating together as a family, using a grocery-shopping list, and menu planning. By the end of the series of eight monthly classes, the participants improved their menu planning, used a grocery shopping list and sat down to eat more family meals together.
Housing has long been recognized as a basic human need. Yet, because housing is often a family’s largest expense and largest debt, it can be a stumbling block for many. Safe, lower-cost housing options are often limited for struggling families, and this can lead them into crisis. Family and Consumer Sciences Extension helps people improve home safety, lessen their environmental footprint, and strengthen financial stability. It also helps communities promote healthy lifestyles throughout the lifespan by supporting strong family home environments. Please tell us ways you think we can do more.

### Availability

In 2010, in McCracken County, there were...
- 9,465 renter households
- 18,762 homeowner households
- 836 vacant housing units for rent
- 486 vacant housing units for sale

According to the Kentucky Department of Education, in 2012-2013, 215 children were homeless or were precariously housed in McCracken County.

### Affordability

According to American Community Survey estimates for McCracken County, in 2008-2012...
- 33.3% (+/- 3.9) of renter households paid 35% or more of their income for rent and utilities
- 16.4% (+/- 2.1) of homeowner households with a mortgage and 8.6% (+/- 2.0) of homeowner households without a mortgage paid 35% or more of their income for housing costs
- 41.2% (+/- 2.1) of homeowner households did not have a mortgage
- 10.1% (+/- 1.2) of all housing units were mobile homes

According to the most recent poverty estimates, in 2012, 18.0% (+/- 2.6) of residents in the county were living below poverty.

In 2013, residents needed to earn $11.83 an hour (or work 1.6 jobs at $7.25 an hour**) to afford a two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent in McCracken County.

### Health and Safety

In McCracken County, it is estimated that in 2008-2012...
- half of all renter-occupied housing was built before 1972 (+/- 2 years)
- half of all owner-occupied housing was built before 1976 (+/- 2 years)

According to 2008-2012 American Community Survey estimates in McCracken County...
- 3.0% (+/- 0.7) of all households had no landline or cell phone
- 10.4% (+/- 1.3) of workers living in McCracken County worked in Kentucky but outside the county and 5.3% (+/- 0.8) worked outside the state
- Half of all workers traveled 17.4 (+/- 0.7) or more minutes to work

Sources:
1. Kentucky Cooperative Extension reporting. FY 2014
2. 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
3. 2010 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau
4. Kentucky Dept. of Education http://education.ky.gov/federal/programs/Pages/TX-Docs.aspx (Data for school districts were combined to produce the county total.)
5. Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
6. Out Of Reach 2014. National Low Income Housing Coalition
7. Data refer to housing tenure (owner or renter).
8. The current federal minimum wage

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SOURCES:
- Kentucky Cooperative Extension reporting. FY 2014
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Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.