

REPORT

To The People

Clay County 2024

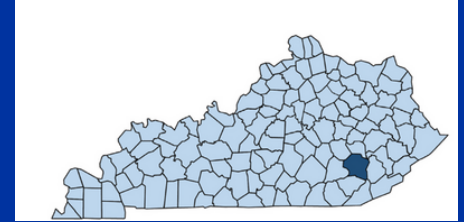


Photo credits: Swinging bridge courtesy of Les Nicholson of Les Nicholson Photography. Elk on the right courtesy of Jilliam Cooper from Getty Images (Canva). Redbud courtesy of Peter Dutton of Getty Images (Canva). All other photos courtesy of Will Bowling.

Interesting Fact: Clay County is the Gateway to the Elk & Redbud Capitals of Kentucky and the Land of Swinging Bridges!

Family & Consumer Sciences

The Importance of Mental Health

In 2021, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps released data indicating that 18% of Kentucky adults reported experiencing poor mental health for 14 or more of the last 30 days. The data indicates this percentage climbing to 23% when focused specifically on Clay County. Adult Clay Countians reported having experienced an average of 6.2 mentally unhealthy days within the 30 days prior to survey. Such data dictates that efforts to assist our community members in improving their mental health should be a priority.

Mental Health Monday's is an ongoing program series held twice monthly. Program participants are guided through mindfulness practices, stress reduction techniques, and development of coping skills as they develop meaningful social connections and practice self-care through crafting. The series began in August 2024 and sessions have averaged 15 participants.

- 100% of participants having attended one or more program sessions reported improved knowledge of the importance of positive attitude, mental activity, meaningful social connections, stress management, and self-care.
- 100% of participants having attended one or more program sessions reported intentions to improve behaviors relating to enhancing positive attitude, mental activity, establishing and maintaining meaningful social connections, stress management techniques, and self-care practices.
- 100% of participants having attended three or more program sessions reported improved behaviors relating to enhanced positive attitude, mental activity, meaningful social connections, stress management, and self-care.
- 2 program participants have indicated a substantial improvement in their overall mental health and well-being since beginning the Mental Health Monday's program series.



Mental Health Mondays

Nutrition Education



Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

Healthy Choices for Your Recovering Body

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sugar-sweetened beverages or sugary drinks are the leading sources of added sugars in our diets. Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages can increase the risk for weight gain/obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart diseases.

Healthy Choices for Your Recovering Body programs conducted by the Clay County Cooperative Extension Service Nutrition Education Program Assistant shared the recommended maximum amount of sugar to consume daily. The local substance use treatment center partnered with the NEP assistant to offer the program to the participants of the center. The classes included not only healthy tips but also included demonstrations of healthy recipes and sampling.

Thirty-eight women participated in the program, age ranging from early twenties to early fifties. At the end of the program the participants reported:

- 61% decrease in consumption of soda overall.
- 84% made changes to be more active.

Most of the participants were surprised at the amount of sugar they were consuming in their drink choices.



Healthy choices provide many benefits!!

4-H Youth Development



4-H Dollars and Sense Program

Financial Management Skills in the Classroom

Many students struggle with financial management skills and lack the knowledge when it comes to making wise financial decisions. Practicing this skill and providing more opportunities for financial literacy at an early age can help prepare youth for a more successful future. The Clay County Extension Council identified basic budgeting skills as a top need for youth throughout the county.

Local elementary schools requested the 4-H Dollars and Sense Program. Clay County 4-H, Partners for Rural Impact, FRYSC, teachers and volunteers collaborated with one another to host the program and prep students with lessons before the event.

Red Bird Christian School, Big Creek Elementary and Hacker Elementary Schools participated, and approximately 250 fourth through sixth graders completed the program.

Students learned the difference between needs vs. wants, budgeting an allowance, responsibility, and making smart financial choices. Students had the opportunity to visit booths, which included food, pets, entertainment, grooming, unexpected life events and many others. Students were able to experience the cost of items and see which items were a top priority.

Post Evaluation results revealed:

- 93% reported thinking about the cost of an item before deciding to buy it.
- 95% reported having a better understanding of managing money.
- 98% reported feeling more comfortable making smart financial decisions.



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Wilderness Trail Area Beef Series

Due to the need that local producers have voiced for more access to research based management strategies, over the last year the Wilderness Trail Area ANR agents developed a series of hands-on beef programs including marketing, predator control, reproduction, and beef quality assurance. Producers implementing these management systems can increase animal welfare and health and enhance resource efficiency, which can lead to increased economic impact for the producer. The most recent program was a two-week collaboration between specialists and ANR agents called the Bull Value Assessment Program. In the first week, producers learned how to read EPDs (Expected Progeny Differences) of bulls and how to apply them to real-world situations. In the second week, they were given a cattle management scenario and a catalog of bulls. Producers then had a chance to buy bulls at a mock auction and were graded to determine how the value of the bull bought compared to their scenario. This program was very well received by producers and agents stated that they had several producers express the value of this program to them.

Post Evaluation results revealed:

- 72% of attendees stated this program would help them with their next bull purchase.
- 86% of attendees gave a 5 of 5 rating on the content and helpfulness of sessions one and two.
- The overall rating of the program was 89%.



Pregnancy Blood Testing in Cattle

Meet Our Staff.....



*Front: Melanie Portwood, Staff Assistant, Brandy Napier, Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences,
Back: Connie Downey, Senior NEP Assistant, Alissa Ackerman, Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development,
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Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
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