

EMBARGOED UNTIL Thursday, September 7, 9 a.m.

## KHIP Western Kentucky: Most Area Adults Physically Active, But Lacking Enough Fruits & Vegetables

**LOUISVILLE, Ky (Sept. 7, 2017)** About eight in 10 adults in the Western part of Kentucky are physically active, which puts them about on par with the state average, but only two in 10 eat the recommended amount of both fruits and vegetables, according to a Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP) special report on the region.

Meets both fruit and vegetable recommendations

Western Kentucky

21%

Kentucky

21%

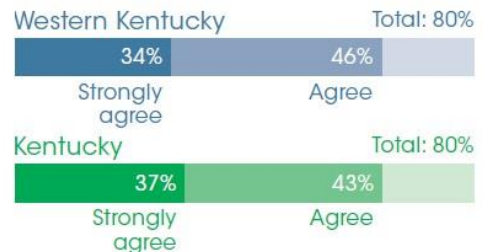
KHIP is funded jointly by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and Cincinnati-based [Interact for Health](http://www.interactforhealth.org). The findings have been divided into five regional reports (Eastern Kentucky, Greater Lexington, Greater Louisville, Northern Kentucky, and Western Kentucky), available online at [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org).

According to the Western Kentucky report, eight in 10 adults from this 42-county region say it's easy in their neighborhoods to purchase healthy foods – such as whole-grain items, low-fat options and fruits and vegetables – about the same as the proportion who say that from the entire state. The federal guidelines suggest that half of each plate be made up of vegetables and fruits. Yet just 12 percent of Western Kentucky adults meet the vegetable guideline, and only 24 percent get enough fruit.

That's about the same as the state as a whole: 12 percent of Kentuckians overall meet the vegetable recommendation and 25 percent get enough fruits.

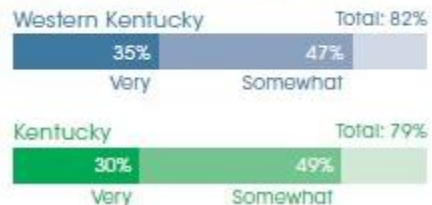
When asked about their level of physical activity, 82 percent of Western Kentucky adults said they were very or somewhat physically active, compared to the state average of 79 percent. Yet, adults from Western Kentucky rated both the condition of their sidewalks and road shoulders, as well as the safety of their neighborhoods for walking or biking, a bit lower than the state as a whole. For example, 77 percent of adults in Western Kentucky said their neighborhoods were somewhat or very safe for exercise, compared to 81 percent of

**It is easy to purchase healthy foods in my neighborhood such as whole-grain foods, low-fat options, and fruits and vegetables.** (Graph show only those who strongly agreed or agreed.)



adults statewide. And 45 percent of Western Kentuckians rated the condition of their sidewalks and shoulders as good or better, while 51 percent of Kentuckians on average rated such areas that highly.

**Percentage of adults who say that, in general, they are very or somewhat physically active**



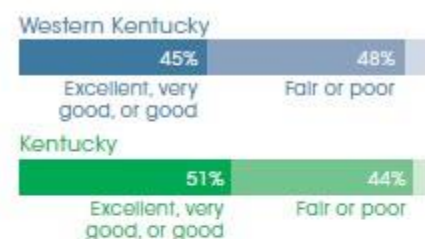
“Kentucky is facing a serious obesity issue, and part of the answer is enacting policies that ensure healthier choices are readily available, easy to find and priced comparably to unhealthy choices,” said Ben Chandler, president and CEO of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky. “In some counties in this region, the obesity rate is as high as 38 percent.<sup>i</sup> Access to fresh, healthy foods at affordable prices, and safe, well-maintained places to exercise can help area residents adopt

new habits that will significantly improve their health and reduce health care costs.”

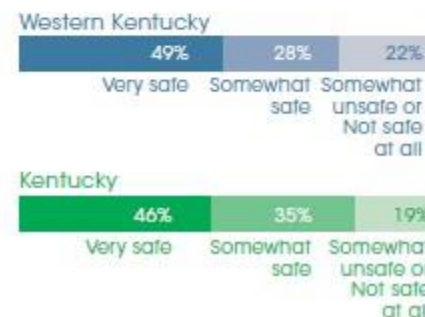
Two health coalitions are using funding and other support from the Foundation to address childhood obesity through policy and built environment changes. The Purchase Area Connections for Health coalition has completed phase one of the Paducah Health Park, which includes a walking trail, community gardens, fitness station and playing field. The Coalition also has implemented the [CATCH®](#) program in area schools to improve physical activity and nutrition.

The Partnership for a Healthier McLean County is moving ahead with changes to their school wellness policies. For example, under the new policies, food will no longer be used as a reward or reinforcement, and physical activity will not be withheld as punishment. Another coalition program provides nutritious food-filled backpacks to children from families with low incomes to take home with them on weekends.

**Rating condition of sidewalks and shoulders in the neighborhood**



**Rating safety in the neighborhood to walk, jog or bike**



KHIP was conducted Sept. 11, 2016, through Oct. 19, 2016, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,580 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone, including landlines and cell phones. The poll has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.5$  percent (Western Kentucky  $\pm 5.4$  percent). The survey instrument and data tables are found [here](#). The codebooks and data files are at <http://www.oasisdataarchive.org/>.

**About the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky**

Since the Foundation opened its doors in 2001, it has invested nearly \$26.7 million in health policy research and advocacy, as well as demonstration project grants across the Commonwealth. Funded by an endowment, the mission of the nonpartisan Foundation is to address the unmet health needs of Kentuckians by developing and influencing policy, improving access to care, reducing health risks and

disparities, and promoting health equity. Follow the Foundation on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#), and visit our website at [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org).

# # #

**Media Contacts:**

Bonnie J. Hackbarth

502-326-2583 (office)

502-552-3770 (mobile)

[bhackbarth@healthy-ky.org](mailto:bhackbarth@healthy-ky.org)

Angela Koch

502-326-2583

[akoch@healthy-ky.org](mailto:akoch@healthy-ky.org)

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.kentuckyhealthfacts.org/data/topic/show.aspx?ind=5>; accessed Aug. 29, 2017.