

PROMOTING GOOD NUTRITION AT SCHOOL

by:

Norilyn S. Gonzales

Teacher III, Banawang Elementary School

A child's learning readiness, academic achievement, discipline and emotional problems have always been linked to good nutrition. If a child is hungry, he/she is not prepared to learn. That is why schools must not only focus on nurturing the minds of the learners but also feeding their stomachs with good food. Capacitating teachers and parents regarding the importance of nutrition to school-aged kids will help schools provide students healthier meals, which can result to a great health improvement to learners (Briggs, 2010).

Understanding nutrition and food intake of children, especially at school, can help promote the overall health development of each child. It is vital that schools are well informed about nutrition and its effects to avoid nutritional deficiencies since they spend most of the time at school. A well-fed child has the ability to perform well at school and can achieve his full potential (Suha, 2020)

In order to monitor, ensure, and achieve children's healthy eating habits in school, schools can introduce programs focusing on providing good foods attractive to children. Aside from government- mandated programs such as feeding programs and "Gulayan sa Paaralan", schools can introduce breakfast programs. This program aims to help learners meet their nutritional needs, wherein students' participation in breakfast programs plays a role in student behavior, cognition, and academic performance. It can also result to a better academic performance, better attendance, improved behavior, and improved concentration (Wilder Research, 2014).

Food is a child's basic need; however, food hunger and malnutrition has always been a battle our country has been combating for years. It is no question why every child needs access to good food and nutrition. Government intervention may not always be enough to promote healthy eating habits to children, but schools' feeding programs can help meet every student's nutritional needs. In order to succeed with this program, schools must involve parent organizations, community members, students, and other stakeholders to help achieve a nutritious school environment to provide each child's basic needs (Malki 2018).

References:

Briggs M. (2010) The Importance of Nutrition Education and Why its is Key for Education Success

<https://www.ecoliteracy.org/article/importance-nutrition-education-and-why-it-key-educational-success>

Suha K. (2020) The Importance of Nutrition for Development in Early Childhood

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2272&context=etd>

Wilder Research (2014) Nutrition and Students' Academic Performance

https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/Cargill_lit_review_1-14.pdf

Malki A. (2018) Effects of Student Nutrition on Academic Performance

<https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/downloads/8c97kq91n>