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As the leading nutrition, health and wellness company, Nestlé has always put health and nutrition at the forefront. The large-scale and increasing global health and development burden posed by non-communicable diseases is a concern to Nestlé, and was one of the reasons it launched the Nestlé Healthy Kids Programme. This programme is made up of two modules – a primary school module known as the Nestlé Healthy Kids Programme and the secondary school module known as Program Cara Hidup Sihat (Healthy Lifestyle Programme).

Nestlé Healthy Kids Programme

Launched in August 2010 in collaboration with the Nutrition Society of Malaysia, the Nestlé Healthy Kids Programme (the primary school module) aims at improving nutrition knowledge and promoting an active lifestyle among students aged between 7 and 12 years old.

The programme takes a two-pronged approach – the awareness component reaches out to the masses through its website (www.healthykids.org.my) and various workshops while the research component is a longitudinal research study to develop, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of an educational package.

The Nestlé Healthy Kids website provides children with interactive games that make learning fun and easy. There are also articles and recipes that parents will find very useful.

The three-year research component began in 2011 where approximately 200 children

Encouraging healthy student lifestyles



from six schools in the Klang Valley were selected for the intervention group. A similar number of children from six other schools were identified for the control group. The intervention session consists of six educational modules that were developed based on the basic principles of healthy eating and active living as well as basic hygiene and disease prevention.

The main findings from the students from the first year revealed that the knowledge score in nutrition increased in all six topics and their nutrition knowledge, attitude and practices also improved after six months.

At the end of the three-year research component, the education modules will be presented to the Ministry of Education, enabling it to be utilised by other schools in the country. This set of educational tools that have been developed based on local dietary guidelines, and tested and proven to be effective, can serve to impart nutrition knowledge to all children in Malaysia.

Program Cara Hidup Sihat

The Program Cara Hidup Sihat was launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Education

and Universiti Putra Malaysia in Dec 2012. This programme is aimed at enhancing the knowledge and practice of healthy and active lifestyles.

This three-year intervention programme targets lower secondary school students from 100 day-boarding schools across the country, their teachers and wardens, and also the food operators who prepare and serve their meals on a daily basis.

The programme is made up of six elements, the first of which includes conducting introductory talks with senior assistants of student affairs and wardens of the boarding schools to brief them about the content and execution of the programme.

Three hundred and thirty-two food operators were trained to prepare healthier and tastier food using ingredients that are lower in salt and fat. Two hundred and three teachers and wardens also received training to conduct the educational module HEBAT (Healthy Eating and Be Active among Teens) that will be taught to students.

The HEBAT module is made up of 10 topics. Phase one of the module saw four topics on understanding body weight, changes in different life cycles, the balance between energy

consumption and usage, and the importance of healthy eating and ways to keep active being introduced.

In phase two of the programme, six topics on how to stay active the safe way, choosing and eating wisely, reading food labels and easy menu planning were introduced.

Before and after the intervention programme, nutritional statuses of the students including Body Mass Index (BMI), dietary intake and physical activity levels and knowledge, attitude and practices of healthy lifestyles were measured.

The education module is monitored by senior assistants of student affairs and wardens from the schools. It is also reviewed by participating researchers from Universiti Putra Malaysia's Medical and Health Sciences Faculty. The results of the phase one research revealed that the intervention group is able to maintain the attitude score while there is a significant increase in scores for knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyle, when compared to the control group.

The findings from these reports will eventually be applied to all schools and its approach and findings will be shared with the nation.