FIGHTING MALNUTRITION WITH OH MY GULAY SA PAARALAN
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Malnutrition results from a poor diet or a lack of food. It happens when the intake of nutrients or energy is too high, too low, or poorly balanced. Malnutrition is the gravest single threat to global public health. Malnutrition during juvenile stage might result not only to health problems but also to educational challenges and work opportunities in the future.

According to Save the Children Foundation, 1 in 3 children below 5 years old in the Philippines is malnourished. A study by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute says that 26 percent of children up to 2 years old suffer from chronic malnutrition, the highest number in 10 years.

As to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. U.S. Obesity Trends, good nutrition is an important part of leading a healthy lifestyle. Combined with physical activity, your diet can help you to reach and maintain a healthy weight, reduce your risk of chronic diseases (like heart disease and cancer), and promote your overall health.

Nowadays, we can’t deny the fact that many school children, including those in poor communities, may have access to food, but they’re not eating right, because parents lack basic knowledge on proper nutrition and they are being influenced by the junk foods around them.

Malnutrition and poor diet are always noticeable especially in the schoolers. Children from the elementary level are most of the victims of easy access street foods. Thus, it is now merely personal obligation and responsibility to have a healthy body.

In view of this, Dinalupihan Elementary School supports healthy and balanced diet because they believed that maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of some diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke, some cancers, and osteoporosis, that’s why the school fights the said problem by having Oh My Gulay sa Paaralan which encourages school children to plant green leafy vegetables not only in the school backyard but also at home that promotes healthy living.

Gulayan sa Paaralan is a combined effort of the school, stakeholders and the community to promote planting and gardening within the compounds of a small space. This aims to make young participants to be conscious of their surroundings that they do not need big spaces just
to be able to plant. That they can have their own gardens even at the confines of their own homes or small backyard.

In addition, the Department of Education sustains the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in public elementary schools nationwide that addresses malnutrition and promotes vegetable production and consumption among children. As crafted to the DepEd memorandum No. 293, series of 2017 it was highlighted to encourage schools to establish school gardens to ensure continuous supply of vegetables that can be contribute to school feeding.

At the end of the day, fighting malnutrition is a big task in a battlefield not only to the community but most especially to the school itself, though it is hard to easily stop in a snap but through collaborative efforts, concern and understanding in one way or another, the problem in malnutrition will be decreased.

Thus, providing nutrition education and counselling are some of the strategies to combat malnutrition, especially in children. The betterment of the Philippines’ future depend on its children; children that are properly equipped with nutrition to grow into healthy adults.

REFERENCES:
- https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/179316.php