SCHOOL CANTEEN AS AGENT OF PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING HABITS

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School is not only promoting acquisition of knowledge and modification of behavior. It also promotes healthy eating habits through the operation of School Canteen. The Department of Education mandates the school to establish a school canteen to serve nutritious foods. Most of the time of learners are spent in school. As the second home, the school entrusts in the safety and welfare of the learners. So, the school must aware to the food intake and nutrition of the learners. The food serves in school follow the prescribed menu by the Department of Education to assure the learners receive proper nutrition and well-balance diet.

There are 3 categories which classified the food:

The Green category describes as food and drinks that should always be available in the canteen like milk (unsweetened), fresh buko (unsweetened), brown rice, oatmeal, cassava, boiled saging na saba, boiled peanuts, puto, shellfish, lean meats, nuts, milled rice, corn, whole wheat bread, boiled sweet potato, corn binatog, suman, fish, small shrimps, chicken without skin, egg and fresh fruits which probably in season.

Second, the Yellow category describes as food and drinks that should be served carefully. It may be served once or twice a week only (Tuesdays and Thursdays), in small servings, and should be less prominent in the canteen menu, because they may contribute to excess calories if eaten in large amounts. These area fresh fruit juices, bread using white refined flour, banana cue, camote cue, turon, maruya, waffles, pancit, sandwiches, fried rice, biscuits, pancakes, champorado, arroz caldo, butter, margarine and processed food such which still subject for evaluation of saturated or trans fat and sodium as reflected in their Nutrition Facts.

Lastly, the Red category describes as food and drinks not recommended in the canteen menu, since they contain high amounts of saturated fat or sugar or salt like soft drinks, alcoholic drinks,
sports waters, sports drinks, flavored mineral water, energy drinks, sweetened waters, powdered juice drinks, processed fruit/vegetable juice, ice cream, ice drop, ice candies, any product containing caffeine, any jelly, slushies, cakes and slices, donuts, French fries, bicho-bicho, all types of heavily salted snacks, sweet biscuits and pastries, and other sweet products.

Geronimo (2017) stressed that the canteens in schools and DepEd offices shall not sell foods and beverages high in fat and/or sugar and/or sodium. The management should strictly observe the fat consumption by providing more of foods in the green category.

The school canteen is not only established to generate income and sustain the needs of the school but to develop the learners’ development in eating healthy foods and promoting good eating habits.

References:

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