

Get Active Programme – Rajasthan

Implemented by

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART)

In collaboration with

Health-Related Information Dissemination Amongst Youth (HRIDAY),

New Delhi

Final Technical Report of Module II

Introduction

CUTS CART, in active collaboration with HRIDAY, New Delhi, implemented the project entitled ‘Get Active’, partnering with 30 selected English medium schools in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The duration of the project was of nine months, i.e. from November 2008-July 2009. The project was formally launched in Jaipur, Rajasthan, on December 12, 2008. All activities under both the modules have been completed successfully (which has been elaborated below).

Objectives

- Educate children about ‘My Pyramid’ and how to choose a variety of foods from different food groups;
- Encourage children to make the healthy choice an easy choice by teaching them the importance of balance and moderation; and
- Promote the concept of energy balance through Get Active ‘My Pyramid’ activities.

Activities Undertaken

Second Teachers Training Workshop

Second Teachers Training Workshop was organised at Maharani Plaza, Jaipur, on April 16, 2009. Around 70 participants, including Dr Sunil Thomas Jacob, State Programme Coordinator, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Rajasthan; Dr Namita Bhagat, Chief Dietician, Fortis Escorts Hospital; Tina Rawal and Surbhi Bhalla from HRIDAY; CART’s personnel; media persons; and teachers from selected 30 English medium schools of Jaipur city attended the workshop. The main objective of the workshop was to provide training to teachers for the implementation of the activities under Module II of the ‘Get Active’ programme. This workshop provided teachers a common platform for discussing various issues for effective implementation of the programme. The workshop was designed in to describe the methodology to be adopted to inculcate nutritional intake and physical activity behaviours among school students (*The report of the workshop has already been submitted*).

Orientation Session in Schools

After the teachers were oriented in Second Teachers Training Workshop on April 16, 2009, about the activities in module – II, orientation sessions were conducted in schools with students of classes VII-IX to introduce the module and create an atmosphere where students feel motivated to learn more about the Food Pyramid and develop good eating habits in their daily routine. In the session, a quick round of questions-answers was kept to ensure that students are clear about the concepts of module – I, which helped in generating the interest required to understand module – II as well.

In the session, minute details of ‘Food Pyramid’ were explained to the students by ‘Get Active’ team, including the concept of food groups and portions of food groups which an individual requires on daily basis, depending upon the activity involvement. Further, students were briefed about the physical activity, which varies on individual basis, depending upon the food consumption habits and the body requirement. In the session, the basic focus was upon the importance of the structure of Food Pyramid and placement of food groups, along with physical activity. In addition to this, a detailed discussion took place as to why whole grains and cereals are recommended to be consumed in large amounts and fat, oil and sweets should be consumed as minimum as possible. The Get Active team emphasised attaining a balance in the food being consumed from variety of food groups, to ensure sufficient amount of nutrients in the body, so that students can undertake daylong activities actively. Stress was laid upon the concept of consuming more from food groups at the bottom of the pyramid, with lots of vitamins, minerals and fibre and less at the top, which is high in fat and carbohydrates.

Following are the various queries, which emerged in the orientation session, which were resolved by the ‘Get Active’ team efficiently:

- Why whole grains and cereals are placed at the bottom of the pyramid?
- Does the serial of food groups in the Pyramid differ for different age groups?
- Many children enquired as to why sweets should be consumed in less quantity?
- Students were curious to know their body requirement of nutrient intake.
- How a balance can be attained?
- Which physical activity would be appropriate for them as an individual?
- What are the advantages in the long run?
- How to increase the level of appetite?

Class Room Activities

Day One Activity

As the students were already oriented with the concepts of Food Pyramid, on the following day, they were briefed about the activities under the module and were asked to record meals of a day, along with physical activity in worksheet 1.

Day Two Activity

On day two, students came with worksheets filled up with the detailed description of their meals and physical activity. Teachers then distributed ‘My Pyramid’ posters in the class and explained the concept of the Pyramid, the structure of the Food Pyramid and the placement of food groups and physical activity, which helped them in recalling the orientation session. Further, teachers explained to the students how to draw their own pyramid according to the portions of food consumed on the previous day, noted in worksheet 1. After a detailed discussion on the Food Pyramid and other related concepts, students constructed their personal pyramids on the basis of the food consumed. Drawing their own pyramid was a very interesting task for them, as it was their own pyramid they were working on. On completing of the pyramids, the students were eager for their pyramids to be recognised as the ideal one.

After completion of the construction of personalised pyramids teachers assessed individual pyramids with the ideal pyramid. And, the comparison was really shocking and surprising, as 95 percent shapes of pyramids of a class, as reported by the teachers, were just exactly opposite of the ideal shape of the pyramid. Maximum number of servings was in the food group fat, oil and sweets. And, in many cases, the students were not able to put their pyramids into a structure due to inequality in the portions of the food groups.

Day Three Activity

Treasure Hunt

This field activity was a very interesting activity and a good opportunity for students to learn with fun. The students of a class were divided into five groups with equal number of students and assigned with a food group name. After the formation of the teams, the members of each team, by majority, had chosen a queen or king as a leader of their group. Further, teachers handed over the deck of cards to respective queen/king and asked them to hide the cards in the identified specified area within five to eight minutes. Then, the team mates started searching for the cards with the help of clues given by the teachers and the time given to them was 10-12 minutes.

Once the searching process was complete, randomly, students were asked various questions related to the information shared with them in module – II ‘My Pyramid’, specifically related to the benefits and importance of consuming all food groups. All the students were very prompt in answering the questions and eager to win the game.

In totality of the ‘Get Active Programme’, this was the sole field activity about which students were very excited and enthusiastic to learn while playing. This activity raised the spirit of the students, which encouraged them for self-learning and inculcating good eating habits in their daily routine. The zeal seen in the students is appreciable and the idea behind including the field activity in the programme turned out to be fruitful. Such an activity is a vital part of any programme, as the students learn more speedily when practically taught, in comparison to classroom lessons.

Programme Appraisal Forms

After the completion of all the activities under module II, the teachers of Classes VII, VIII and IX of all partnering schools were handed over the programme appraisal forms. This form was specifically filled up to get the feedback of module – II of the programme.

Outcomes

- A group of selected students and teachers in all the schools are equipped with the skills to impart the information and knowledge about the Food Pyramid and related physical activities.
 - After the implementation of the activities under module – II in schools, the students have become capable of deciding as to which food group should be consumed in what quantity.
 - Around 16,000 students in Jaipur city are now aware of the importance of consuming food from various groups and in proper quantities.
 - All the schools have displayed the ‘My Pyramid’ calendar in their school premises and respective classes, which help the students in recalling the pyramid to be followed.
 - Some principals have decided to observe a health day in the school on a monthly basis, in which they will organise some activity related to healthy food, for instance, quiz or group discussion, etc.
 - Schools have also come up with an idea of keeping a watch on the food being prepared in canteens. They have decided to add milk products and fruit juice to their canteens.
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