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Member

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
राष्ट्रीय बालक अधिकार संरक्षण आयोग
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS
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AD for...
31/8

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Dear Sir,

In recent years, levels of overweight and obesity in children and young people have increased dramatically – now around a quarter of our children are overweight or obese or underweight. This is a serious issue as overweight and obesity carry a greater risk of a number of immediate and long-term health and psychosocial problems. Excess weight gain in children is usually a result of excess energy intake (kilojoules or calories) through eating too much food or the wrong type of food, combined with doing too little physical activity or being inactive for too much of the day. Food and drinks consumed by children also affect oral (dental) health and contribute to the high rates of tooth decay in children. The development of a strategy to address the nutritional value of food and drinks supplied at school or school activities should be identified as an action.

A school has an important role in promoting healthy eating and physical activity to students and providing an environment that supports a healthy lifestyle. A healthy diet can improve behaviours critical to educational success and performance at school. Effective school-based nutrition and health interventions can also help improve academic performance. Canteens are an important part of the school environment; they can model healthy food and drink choices that are tasty, interesting and affordable, and provide the means to put into practice nutrition messages taught in the classroom.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights desires that the schools must realize their role and must contribute for making a new healthy generation. The schools are advised to make Nutrition Policy for the students as per body need, food habits and climate of respective state and not to sign canteen contracts with firms selling soft drinks, fast food or any other unhealthy food.

Need of School Nutrition Policy - Education and health are intimately linked because students spend as much time at school as in any other environment. Besides this, schools have the most impact on shaping children's eating habits next to parents as students typically have at least one snack or meal at school per day.

A Nutrition Policy is a must to make healthy choices the easy choices and a way to ensure that good nutrition is promoted both in theory and in practice. A Nutrition Policy may cover

- Commercial vending/catering contracts
- Canteens
- Nutrition education for students/staff
- Using food as reward
- Food packaging and waste
- Food Security
- Eating environments
- Role modeling
- Support of local food producers
- And many more, depending on the issues identified by your school/division

② It is also advised to involve Superintendents, School Trustees, Administrators, Teachers, Parents, Students, Dietitian and as many representatives of the school community as possible in policy development. The policy should cover all foods and beverages served or sold within the school and at/for school sponsored activities. The policy should be widely publicized and apply to students, student organizations, staff and meal/snack providers.

⑤ State government may provide guidelines to the schools to create a School Nutrition Policy, which should be based on the best scientific evidence available and current knowledge about what children need to grow and develop to their optimum potential. The commission proposes inclusion of following in the guidelines. (These are not listed in order of importance and should be considered together as a package rather than in isolation).

Children and adolescents should be encouraged to:

- eat plenty of vegetables and fruits
- eat plenty of cereals, (including breads, rice), preferably wholegrain
- include milks, yoghurt (Dahi), cheese and/ or alternatives. Reduced fat milks are not suitable for young children under two years old, because of their energy needs, but reduced fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents

- choose water as a drink.

and care should be taken to:

- limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake. Low fat diets are not suitable for infants
- choose foods low in salt
- consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.

I request you to kindly consider above advice as top priority and take appropriate action for the implementation of the same for a healthy India. A feedback in this regard will be highly appreciated.

With Best Regards and Wishes,

Sincerely Yours,


Sandhya Bajaj

The Chief Secretary
Govt. of Delhi
New Delhiss