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HEALTHY LIFE STARTS FROM HEALTH SCHOOL

It is not easy to have a “Health Campus”.

Health is the capital of a student’s life. Without a healthy body, you will not be able to achieve anything. The school “Escola Secunda Ria Luso-Chinese de Luis Gozaga Gomes” deeply believes that helping student to build up a healthy living habit during middle school is more important and has a deeper effect than to educate them with subject knowledge only. During the summer holidays in the year 2005, several teachers visited many eminent health schools in Hong Kong. After they returned to Macao, they started their planning aggressively. They hoped to drive and promote health work in Macao schools and truly enhanced a higher level concept – building “Health Campus”.

In December 2005, the “Health School Promotion Team” of Escola Secunda Ria Luso-Chinese de Luis Gozaga Gomes was established. At that time, there were only four members. At the beginning, due to the teachers’ teaching pressure and insufficient experience and the fact that most of the health promotion activities were designed and planned by teachers, the activities overlooked the aspects of communication in administration and lacked the participation of students and supports from workers. As a result, many of the works were at a standstill. But we did not give up. We were brave enough to learn from failure; to adjust plans for improvement; to learn from experiences of other places. Some of the teachers even persisted to work hard and underwent further learning in Hong Kong on weekly basis. The purpose was to develop a set of effective operating ways suitable for the characteristics of their schools. After two years’ growth, the “Health Campus Promotion Team” of Escola

Secunda Ria Luso-Chinese de Luis Gozaga Gomes is supported by collaboration and planning of more than ten teachers from different subject areas, administrative officers, parents representatives and students “Health Ambassador”. With the complement of professional stationed medical staff, the team also obtained support from the Public Health Bureau and The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and became the first “Health Campus” in Macao in September 2006.

“Health” should initiate from living and start from “Family and School”

Understanding the fundamental living health situation of students is necessary to drive the healthy habits of students. In October 2006, we began to compile the student health booklets and started an investigation on the body conditions of all students in School. It aimed at the collection of data on sensory organs, body growth situation and body adaptability of students. Preliminarily we knew well the general living habits and family medical histories of students for necessary follow-up and study in future. Because the health conditions of students were different in each school, we formulated the short and medium term targets according to the urgency of problems revealed in school investigation report besides referring to student’s body conditions report of Macau Health Service Bureau. We discovered that obesity, unsatisfactory body growth and lack of vitality were the conspicuous problems of student health. We decided to develop “Healthy Diet” and “Healthy Work and Rest” as our short term development working target.

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Health initiated from daily life. Our development and promotion on health strived for the integration with students' daily life and we worked hard to build up the culture of healthy life in schools. Besides creating health education posters and web pages, every year we launched many important items. For example, in the year 2006, we were the first to build up healthy snack counter. We tried to remove harmful elements which influenced healthy diet e.g. snack, soft drink, foods of excessive salt and sugar to cultivate a healthy diet habit for students. It was said, a day's planning began at dawn; a day's healthy life started from a healthy breakfast. For many years, our School developed a lot of works in this aspect: for example, the activity of "An egg for each person". Through the distribution of cooked eggs to each student and colleague for their trial, we taught the students to realize the rich nutrition value of egg. Also when students and teachers together were eating warm eggs in cold winter day, it elevated the warm emotion of students and teachers. Many students decided to substitute eggs for snack in their breakfast. Another example is: some students and parents made different styles of breakfast and brought to school to share with teachers and other students. The students and teachers on site together assessed and selected the most delicious and healthy breakfast. These kinds of activities increased the food nutrition knowledge of students and at the same time enhanced the harmony atmosphere inside school, allowing the students to undergo a profound lesson on health education.

Besides being concerned on the health habits of students in School, we shall not overlook their healthy living at home. The trend of school-home cooperation showed that family was an important and necessary element in the development works of health. For example, last year our School was lucky to have support from Health Service Bureau and medical enterprises. We successfully held face to face body check activities for parents. We carried out tests on blood sugar, lung capacity, vision, blood pressure osteoporosis and BMI for parents. Many parents began to undertake seriously the urgency of "Health" problems. They promised to collaborate with schools to plan different kinds of activities for health promotion and work hard for the healthiness of their children. In the same occasion, we arranged a seminar on "Diet and Habit" to provide knowledge on health diet and introduced different ways of preventing related diseases for parents.

In the process of these activities, besides the parents being benefited, the "Health Ambassador" who assisted in the works of body check had obtained many practical health knowledge. These knowledge instilled greater confidence and motivation for their promotion of health information to other schoolmates in schools in future. On the other hand, it was an important direction for us in these few years to build up "Health Work and Rest and Living Habits". For example, we took a sample for investigation and study on sleeping quantity and quality of students and developed test plans on students' siesta. The purpose was to enhance the spiritual appearance and healthy emotion of students. It was a continual and important item of "Health Campus" to prevent smoking, drug abuse and student bullying in schools. After years, it achieved positive result gradually. We were not going to mention here one by one. Besides psychological health of students, the works on enhancement of spirit and consciousness of environmental protection were also the keys for the development of health campus in future. We deeply believed that, students were not the only relevant objects for building "Health Campus". Teachers, management members, workers and members of the families were included also. Through the channels--- school influenced students, students influenced families, families influenced communities --- the building of healthy community groups or even cities should start from "Health Campus".

Chan Chong Meng
Member of the Health Campus Promotion Team of Escola Secunda
Ria Luso-Chinesa de Luis Gozaga Gomes- Biology and Natural
Science Teacher

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