

ICLDC's I EAT RIGHT has reached 3,500 children in eight months



Feedback suggests that many children are choosing healthier snacks in their lunch boxes

(For more information log on to www.Diabetesuae.ae)

Abu Dhabi, May 2009: According to a recent ICLDC-led lifestyle education awareness campaign in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, children who attended I EAT RIGHT sessions are opting for a healthy diet.

I EAT RIGHT is the third pillar of “Diabetes. Knowledge. Action”, ICLDC’s award-winning public health awareness campaign, under the patronage of HH Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, and in partnership with the Emirates Foundation for Philanthropy.

The eight-month campaign reached 4,000 participants, comprising school children, parents and teachers. The healthy eating drive was conducted by Imperial College London Diabetes Centre (ICLDC) as part of the campaign roll-out in 35 schools.

ICLDC said that the feedback also revealed that a majority of the children who participated are aware of diabetes, as well as the role that a healthy diet and exercise play in preventing the disease.

The children also indicated that they discuss diabetes and healthy eating at home with their families and friends.

"The awareness of diet and exercise is critical for UAE community. We are thrilled that children responded positively to the I EAT RIGHT call for a healthy lunch box and lifestyle," said Dr Maha Taysir Barakat, Medical & Research Director and Consultant Endocrinologist at ICLDC.

It has been reported that an overweight child has a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight or obese as an adult, and obesity is well known to increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and heart disease in adulthood.

Maytha Al Habsi, Director of Communications and Public Awareness at the Emirates Foundation for Philanthropy, stressed the need for ongoing education and awareness: "The UAE community needs a constant flow of information about diabetes and healthy lifestyle. We have been delighted to support ICLDC's "Diabetes. Knowledge. Action" campaign, which has led the awareness drive with activities across the UAE, such as I EAT RIGHT."

Al Habsi said that the campaign has made good progress in the past three years and that in its second phase, I EAT RIGHT had worked with public schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, while the vast majority of the children participating were UAE nationals.

"The Emirates Foundation will continue to encourage and support public awareness initiatives such as this. Our overriding aim is to improve the quality of life for the people in the UAE," she added.

I EAT RIGHT sessions are conducted mainly on school premises by ICLDC lifestyle educators. They provide children and carers with information on nutrition, exercise, and the best ingredients to ensure a balanced and a healthy diet.

"An imbalanced diet carries the risk of obesity in later years. So, even if a child looks healthy and is not overweight now, parents need to be aware that inactivity and poor diet can lead to metabolic problems later on in life," Dr Maha added.

For more details visit: www.icldc.ae; www.Diabetesuae.ae

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Notes to the Editor

About Imperial College London Diabetes Centre

The Imperial College London Diabetes Centre is a state-of-the-art specialised out-patient one-stop facility that specialises in Diabetes Treatment, Research, Training and Public Health. Located in Abu Dhabi (next to the Zayed Military Hospital), ICLDC allows the highest level of specialised patient care, from first diagnosis to the continued management of all complications associated with Diabetes.

Imperial College London holds a renowned history and expertise in the study of Diabetes, bringing one of the leading medical academic institutions in the world to Abu Dhabi as a core working partner. Under ICLDC practices, one of the Centre's primary objectives will be to provide continuing education for health professionals and the general public. For more details visit: www.icldc.ae

About the Emirates Foundation for Philanthropy

The Emirates Foundation is a United Arab Emirates philanthropic organisation, established by the Government of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in 2005 to facilitate new public-private initiatives for social betterment.

The Foundation represents a unique multi-sector effort that offers a channel for individuals and organisations to give back to the community through six major programme areas. It manages an independent capital fund with donations from the private sector, the government and private individuals interested in philanthropy.

The Emirates Foundation for Philanthropy contributes to UAE society by supporting people, institutions and community organisations that contribute to the nation's long-term progress and sustainability. It addresses important educational, cultural, environmental and social issues affecting people's lives and aspirations. Its philanthropy helps to groom socially responsible individuals and to empower them to achieve their full personal and intellectual potential.

The Foundation focuses on six core areas: Education, Science & Technology, Arts & Culture, Social Development, Environment, and Public Awareness. In each area, the Foundation supports programmes that aim to achieve social balance and individual fulfillment. As a national initiative, the Foundation uses a variety of mechanisms to

identify and support qualified individuals, organisations, and community projects in every region of the United Arab Emirates.

The Foundation also administers key strategic projects directly – such as Takatof, which promotes volunteerism among young Emiratis – and Tawteen, which helps to improve occupational qualifications of young Emirati professionals.

The UAE is a country with a great legacy of social and cultural values. The Emirates Foundation strives to promote these, as well as other traditions that can combine with today's prosperity to engender a highly motivated, informed and goal-oriented nation. The Foundation also actively encourages the spirit and practice of volunteerism, while working to promote and build a commitment to service, particularly among young men and women.

Through institutional grants, fellowships, research awards, and philanthropy-led initiatives in various key areas, the Emirates Foundation aspires to raise the profile of UAE peoples and their institutions, as well as the reputation of its corporate citizens. Its mission is consistent with the ideals of the nation's founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. For more details visit www.emiratesfoundation.ae