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roadshows at primary schools and kindergartens; as well as organised seminars for kindergarten teachers.

In addition to the above, numerous nutrition guidebooks and recipe books for parents and educational materials for children have been published.

We are also continuing our mass media initiatives by contributing educational articles to all the major newspapers and magazines in English, Malay and Chinese. The NMM programme has also appeared in major television programmes, including *Selamat Pagi Malaysia*, *Hello On Two*, and *Malaysia Hari Ini*.

NMM has a few activities lined up for NMM 2012. Could you tell us more about these activities and how they help deliver health-promoting messages?

The first activity, and the highlight of NMM 2012, will be the NutriFun Land Carnival. We are introducing a new interactive learning section for both children and adults alike to explore the Food Pyramid, to educate them about the calories and fats in common Malaysian meals, to teach them healthier ways to choose foods, and to enable them to develop smarter shopping habits and jumpstart their fitness regimen.

We will also be distributing our new publication – *Family Nutrition Matters: Experts' Answers To Frequently Asked Questions*, which covers 20 frequently asked questions about family nutrition-related problems.

Moreover, a practical mini booklet – *Tips To A Healthier Lifestyle* – will be distributed as well during the carnival. In addition to the printed materials, various outreach activities have also been planned for this year, targeting both children and parents.

One of these activities is a series of fun educational roadshows, called NutriFun, which will be conducted in 20 selected primary schools in the Klang Valley. Through these roadshows, we aim to convey nutrition education messages through simple and fun interactive sessions.

Nutri-Combo Kits, which contain educational materials for both children and parents, will be distributed during these roadshows.

Besides the above activities, which are con-



Dr Tee E Siong, chairman of the Nutrition Month Malaysia's national steering committee, has big plans in store for the programme.

ducted mainly in the Klang Valley, the Health Ministry (through state nutritionists) has also planned and adapted NMM activities in other states throughout the country. There will be nutrition school roadshows, exhibitions and talks during which publications by NMM shall be distributed.

What would the public expect to gain from attending and participating in the NutriFun Land Carnival?

The carnival aims to encourage whole families to cultivate good eating habits, such as making healthier food choices, as well as incorporating physical activities as a foundation to good health and well-being.

The public will learn healthy eating and active living strategies through physical and computerised games, while nutritionists are ready to assist and provide useful advice throughout the whole learning process.

For example, children can learn about the food pyramid by listening to songs, followed by playing the game "What Makes up a Meal". This could help enhance their understanding and knowledge about the five food groups that they need to consume every day.

Adults, on the other hand, can learn how to make healthier food choices for the whole family, not only at home, but also when eating out and purchasing packaged goods.

In addition, our two-day interactive and informative carnival features free Body Mass Index (BMI) and body fat percentage checks; blood pressure, blood glucose, and blood cholesterol tests; nutrition and dietary advice by nutritionists and dietitians; fun activities and food sampling by leading F&B companies; and much, much more.

If you would like to know more about health and nutrition, as well as obtain free, valuable expert advice and information, now is your chance to do so. Don't miss out on this great opportunity; you can have fun as a whole family while learning everything you need to know about nutrition.

Could you give us a sneak peak of the Q&A nutrition guidebook that will be given out during the NutriFun Land Carnival?

Our theme for NMM this year is "Let's Create Healthier Families", and NMM wishes to reinforce its message to the public by promoting greater awareness on healthy eating and active living as the foundation to the general well-being of every family unit.

Family Nutrition Matters: Experts' Answers To Frequently Asked Questions covers 20 frequently asked questions about family nutrition-related problems, which will hopefully clear the public's doubts and concerns about nutrition for all ages. The answers provided are unbiased and are presented in a simple, tip-like format for easier understanding.

Topics covered in the book include choosing nutritious snacks for children; advising teenage girls on coping with nutrient needs during monthly periods; how to manage blood cholesterol levels through dietary approaches; clarification on fats and oils; issues related to weight management; and tips on appropriate physical activities to be incorporated into daily living.

Through this book, we aim to promote the importance of healthy eating and living in the prevention of non-communicable diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and cancers.

This book and other NMM educational

materials are available in NSM's website (nutriweb.org.my). You can download them, get a free copy at the carnival or contact the secretariat at 03-5637 3526 for more information.

What are some of the NMM activities lined up for the near future?

We will continue our commitment to disseminate useful nutrition information to the public. We plan to expand our existing activities with more relevant content as well as seek out more attractive avenues to reach out to the wider public.

We would like to take advantage of new communication channels such as websites, online videos and other new media approaches. We would also like to give out a more constant flow of nutrition information and updates to the public.

We will also target other age groups of the population, especially adolescents and young adults. In addition, we plan to reach out to more people in workplaces and community centres throughout the country.

What do you hope to see in future NMM programmes?

I hope and foresee that the programme will continue to grow larger and work closely with various stakeholders, both in the government and the private sector, to promote greater awareness on healthy living amongst all Malaysians.

We urge both public and private sectors to collaborate with us to realise our vision of becoming a developed and healthy nation. We truly believe that empowering the public with the right knowledge is the long-term solution to combating diet-related chronic diseases.

I certainly hope the public will make full use of the educational materials made available by NMM. Help yourself; help your family members prevent diet-related chronic diseases.

■ *The NMM NutriFun Land Carnival will be held at the Mid Valley Exhibition Centre on April 14-15.*