Attention on food and nutrition

RURAL HEALTH

Kollapura Rahasiyam is an engaging video CD on the secrets of a family’s health which lies in simple foods such as drumstick leaves and papaya.

The family of four stands apart among the other villagers. Their two children are brilliant in class and in sports, the husband does not fall sick even for a day to take leave from work. The one secret that they all have is the story of Kollapura Rahasiyam, or the secret of the backyard.

This 20-minute VCD movie, brought out by Isha Foundation’s Aarogya Alai, as part of its Action for Rural Rejuvenation programme (ARR) and sponsored by Aachi Masala, was released at a function recently by Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev of the Isha Foundation.

“Good health is everybody’s birthright,” says the Yoga Guru known for his Isha Yoga programmes. Democracy is not about electing someone and giving up the responsibility of taking care of oneself and the society totally to the Government and watch. True democracy is when each individual takes up the responsibility of caring for their own health, he says.

D. Subathra, co-ordinator of Aarogya Alai says that for the past five years, the ARR has treated 2.2 million people, through its 20 Mobile Health Clinics and three Rural Health Clinics and conducted over 1000 Health camps.

People are unhealthy, not because they lack money, but due to a thorough lack of awareness on nutrition, she says. Their composition of food consisted mainly of only rice. Little is known about the wealth of drumstick leaves, papaya, guava and gooseberries.

“We ultimately want to reach all the 54,000 villages in Tamil Nadu, but initially we wish to cover 5,000 villages by next year end,” she says. The strategy is to get together trained Isha volunteers and doctors on a common platform and play the CD. Lyricist Na. Muthukumar has written the script.

Public volunteers can also contact the Foundation for a list of CD and awareness posters and stickers for their village.

“Most of our hygiene problems are solved by just observing a simple hygiene of washing hands before taking food, and with soap after using the toilet,” she says. Stickers showing a leaf with a quarter portion of rice which can also be substituted with Cumru or Ragi, a quarter portion of vegetables, a quarter portion of fruits and a handful of pulses, are also being distributed to the villagers.

One other programme in the health and awareness among villagers is the Isha Vidhya programme where the Foundation is building schools in each Taluk. There are 206 Taluks in Tamil Nadu and six schools have already been built to provide quality education to rural students at a cost of Rs. 1.25 crore each on a donation of five to seven acres of land. Sadhguru says, this will benefit five lakh rural children. Actor Surya has also volunteered to be part of the 60 second advertisement film to appeal for funds for this project and Aachi Masala will co-ordinate in releasing it in the broadcast media channels.

Owner of Aachi Masala Foods, A. D. Padmasinh Isaac and Ma Foi Managing Director K. Pandia Rajan, also participated in the function. Dr. Bhavani Balakrishnan, a child psychiatrist is one of the main co-ordinators of the Aarogya Alai, coming under the ARR project directed by K. Shekar (Mobile: 99497 75000). The Foundation calls for the support of the public to take it up as their task.

—Swahiyaa

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