

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd to conduct free health services on June 12

The Department of Education (DepEd), through its Health and Nutrition Center (DepEd-HNC), will simultaneously conduct a workshop cum demonstration cooking of Malunggay recipes for in-school feeding, expanded-universal medical-dental check-up, and deworming of pre-schoolers, grades 1 and 2 pupils on June 12, 2008.

This is part of its relentless advocacy to reduce the incidence of malnutrition and other health problems among public school students.

“As the lead agency, we at DepEd hope to make our Independence Day celebrations meaningful to learners,” DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus said. “We want our activities to have considerable impact on their lives – this is why we are conducting these health initiatives – to improve the students’ nutritional status by providing free medical, dental, and nutritional services,” he added.

The workshop and cooking demonstration of Malunggay recipes will be held at the school level. This will include actual feeding of pupil-beneficiaries. School heads, parents, and teachers from public schools nationwide will be enjoined to help prepare the recipes and feed the students.

DepEd-HNC has been exploring ways to prepare *Moringa Oleifera* or Malunggay, and enhance the nutritional content of recipes offered in public school canteens. Malunggay leaves – and even in powdered form – are known to cure beriberi and various vitamin deficiencies because of its rich nutritional value.

Interested individuals may also get free CDs that illustrate the benefits of malunggay. This visual material will also include steps on how to prepare malunggay powder and other malunggay-based recipes.

Participation of school health personnel and local health organizations will likewise be encouraged during health check-ups on preschoolers and grades 1 and 2 pupils. With support from Civitan International – an international foundation based in the US – teachers will benefit from free visual screenings and will also get free reading glasses.

In addition, DepEd will work closely with the Department of Health (DOH) to provide pupils with deworming medicines and conduct deworming treatment. This will start on June 10 and will conclude on June 12 to cover as many preschoolers as possible.

PRESS RELEASE

To prevent dental diseases, DepEd and Colgate-Palmolive Philippines will provide dental vans all over the country. Each van will be manned by public school dentists who will conduct oral inspection and *prophylaxis*, which is the professional cleaning done to remove plaque and stains. Teachers, meanwhile, can also avail themselves of free dentures.

DepEd-HNC Director Dr. Thelma Santos is “grateful for the invaluable support of these private organizations that have been working with us in our persistent efforts to make our children healthy enough to actively participate in school.”

Administrative Order 205 by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo directs the Education Chief to lead the organization and implementation of activities to commemorate Independence Day on June 12, 2008. Lopus has organized a task force with representatives from the Office of the President, Department of Education, Department of Tourism, and the National Historical Institute.

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