



# Nutrition and Fun: It's Time for Children to "Talk to Friends" (Wisely How to Choose Snacks Properly)

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## Abstract:

Child growth and development is an indicator of the quality and ability of a nation in terms of welfare. Where children who become the next generation of a nation must be considered from an early age in providing nutrition including adequate and balanced nutrition. The negative impact of snacks consumed due to non-nutritional value, lack of cleanliness and unsafety can be dangerous for children. One of the efforts offered to overcome this problem is the existence of an innovation program: it's time for children to talk to friends, namely wise and appropriate ways to choose snacks. The purpose of this study is to increase children's understanding of how to be wise and appropriate in choosing snacks. The methods used include lectures in giving material, FGD to improve case understanding, and role play to simulate snack selection practices carried out in 1 day at SB Hulu Kelang Malaysia. The number of participants was 17 students of classes IV, V, VI and 25 students of classes I, II, III. The instruments used are PPT material, and snack props. Significant differences in results were obtained in the pretest and posttest results for SB Hulu Kelang students in providing education on how to wisely and correctly choose snacks, where when the pretest showed only 1 person who could answer the question of the characteristics of unhealthy snacks correctly and perfectly, while the posttest results were obtained almost all students could mention the characteristics, Compression from consuming perfectly unhealthy snacks. This shows that there is an increase in the understanding of SB Hulu Kelang students on how to wisely and appropriately choose snacks.

**Keywords:** Snacks, Kids, Wise

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Children who are old enough to attend school will often grow and develop more [1]. But the intensity of school-related activities such as studying, exercising, playing, and other activities requires more energy consumption, especially when students spend four to five hours there [2]. Therefore, in order to achieve the right balance, it is important to consider child nutrition more seriously. We are all aware of the importance of a balanced diet for a child's growth and development, which in turn reflects a country's standards and ability to achieve success. Children need special attention from an early age in terms of nutrition, which includes adequate and balanced food intake, because they are the next generation of the nation [3].

The growth and development of a child will be greatly influenced by the amount of food he consumes [4]. Your child's body may not get the nutrients it needs, causing various growth problems, including insufficient calorie intake [5]. Malnutrition, including caloric energy deficits, can be caused by children who are exposed to nutritional deficiencies for too long, especially lack of energy and protein [6].

Data on the nutritional condition of children aged 6 to 12 years in Indonesia was published by Riskesdas in 2018. Based on the survey, 9.2% of children are classified as obese, while 7.6% of children are classified as thin [7]. In Aceh Province, underweight children have higher nutritional rates than domestic children (8.3%), and obese children have

higher nutritional status (11.6%). This shows a situation where most children in school do not get a healthy diet. To prevent nutritional problems in Indonesia, the government and other relevant parties have turned their attention specifically to this problem [8]. Unhealthy and low-nutrient snacks often captivate children. Foods high in sugar, saturated fat, and preservatives may adversely affect health, including diabetes, heart disease, and obesity [9]. Overeating without taking into account energy expenditure leads to an excessive buildup of nutrients, which can lead to an excess of nutrients consumed [10]. The main cause of childhood obesity is an increased consumption of foods high in fat and carbohydrates, and this phenomenon tends to be more frequent in metropolitan areas today [11].

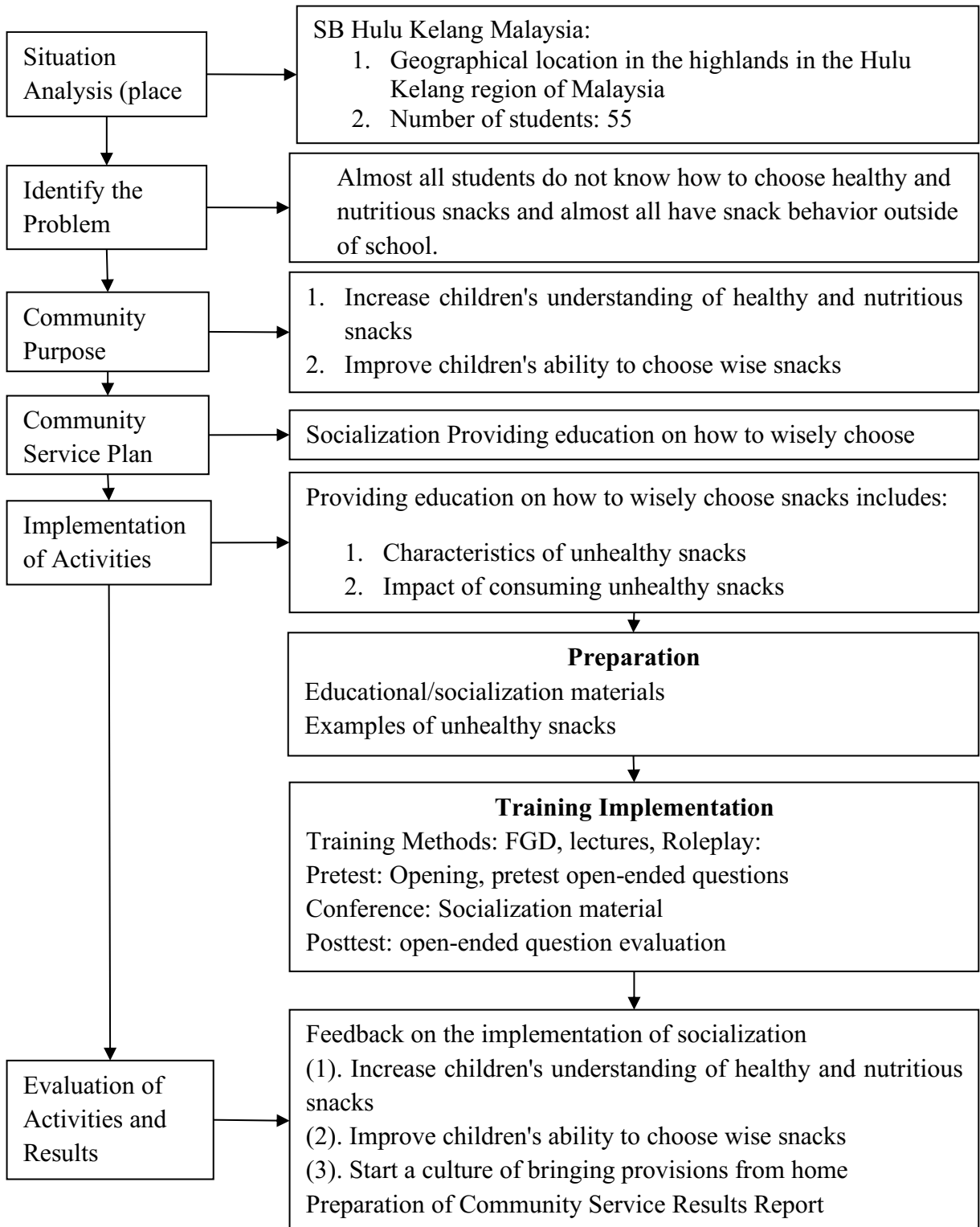
Children who bring provisions from home often decide to buy snacks while at school [12]. This kind of consumptive behavior is common among school-age children. Some people take this for granted, given that children attend school for approximately five hours every day, draining them of energy from breakfast. Children often choose to buy snacks at school as a way to replenish energy that has been drained [13]. Choosing snacks with balanced nutritional value will ensure there are no major problems. However, when kids choose snacks that aren't high enough in nutrients, things will be different [14]. Factors that influence snacking behavior in children include knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, emotions and motivation. In addition, the environment of the family also contributes to influencing this behavior, especially from the parenting environment of parents, peers, mass media and so on [15]. Peers can have a very large influence on snacking behavior where this is related to the desire to be accepted in certain groups so that children tend to follow the rules that apply [16].

Based on research findings, it has been proven that parents have a significant influence in influencing their children's food choices [17]. To encourage this behavior, parents can help by giving permission and offering pocket money. High socioeconomic status and comprehensive family nutrition knowledge are two examples of factors that can strengthen the role of parents in managing children's snack choices [18]. Parents are believed to be able to effectively guide their child in developing healthy snacking habits. In addition, children are often influenced by eating trends and advertisements that are popular among classmates. Often they choose food without thinking about the nutrients it contains, instead choosing only based on appearance and taste [19].

Children's well-being may be threatened due to the adverse effects of eating unhealthy, harmful, and low-nutrient snacks [20]. Eating unhealthy snacks can affect a child's health and may cause dietary problems [21]. This can increase the likelihood of gastrointestinal tract disorders and other health impacts caused by exposure to harmful substances [22]. This can adversely affect children's academic progress, interfere with students' ability to focus during class, and increase absenteeism rates. This is why it is so important for children to make wise snack choices. They must understand the importance of eating a balanced diet for their growth and well-being. Children also need to know how to choose healthy foods and what types of foods are good for them. An inventive program called "it's time for children to talk to friends", which refers to a sensible and appropriate approach to choosing snacks, is one step that can be taken to overcome this problem.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The method used in this service will be described in the diagram as follows



### 3. RESULTS AND IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS

Based on the results of the service that has been carried out at SB Hulu Kelang Malaysia, activities have been carried out according to the initial plan, namely for 1 day which was attended by 17 students of grades IV, V, VI and 25 students of grades I, II, III. Located at Sanggar Belajar Hulu Kelang Negara Malaysia, the activities that have been carried out are providing education on how to wisely choose snacks including:

- a. Characteristics of unhealthy snacks
- b. Impact of consuming unhealthy snacks
- c. Examples of unhealthy snacks



**Figure 1.** Material exposure to the characteristics of unhealthy snacks



**Figure 2.** Material evaluation process (posttest)

A significant difference in results was obtained in the pretest and posttest results for SB Hulu Kelang students in providing education on how to be wise and right in choosing snacks, where when the pretest showed only 1 person who could answer the

question of the characteristics of unhealthy snacks correctly and perfectly, while the posttest results were obtained almost all students could mention the characteristics, the impact of consuming unhealthy snacks perfectly. This shows that there is an increase in the understanding of SB Hulu Kelang students on how to wisely and appropriately choose snacks. In choosing snacks, students can pay attention to several things as a guide. First, students need to look at the nutrition labels printed on food packaging. These labels provide information about the amount of calories, protein, carbohydrates, fats, sugars, fiber, and vitamins contained in foods [23]–[25]. Students can compare this information to choose healthier snacks. In addition, students also need to pay attention to the ingredients in the snacks. They need to avoid foods that contain a lot of added sugar [10], [26]–[29],

Hawker food is a health risk because the handling is often unhygienic which allows snack food to be contaminated by toxic microbes or the use of Food Additives (BTP) that are not permitted [11]. Hawker food contains many risks, dust and flies that perch when food is not covered can cause disease, especially in the digestive system. Not to mention if the water supply is limited, then the tools used such as spoons, forks, glasses and dishes are not washed cleanly. This causes various diseases such as dysentery, typhus or other stomach diseases [6].

According to [3], As a result of consuming too often unhealthy snacks can be dangerous and cause some symptoms to appear such as:

- a. Decreased appetite
- b. The emergence of various diseases due to unhygienic food
- c. Is the cause of obesity in children
- d. Not guaranteed nutritional value in children's snacks
- e. Pursing
- f. Candy that is a favorite is not a good source of energy because it only contains carbohydrates. Too often eating sweets can cause problems with dental health.

With a good understanding of the characteristics of unhealthy and dangerous snacks, it is hoped that parents can teach children about the characteristics of unhealthy snacks, with the aim that children do not buy unhealthy snacks. Alternatively, parents can provide provisions for their children, so as to ensure that the food consumed by these children has a guaranteed level of hygiene and health [30].

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

School children are one of the vulnerable groups who often face problems related to food poisoning. This situation arises due to the potential risk of breeding microorganisms in food, despite the actual nutritional value contained in it. Significant risks associated with biological and chemical contamination can have a serious impact on the health of schoolchildren, both in the short and long term. Therefore, it is important for snacks provided for schoolchildren to have a balanced and good nutritional composition. The various potential risks that arise in connection with outside food make it important for students to be wise in choosing their snacks. Students are expected to be able to identify the signs of unhealthy snacks and understand the harmful effects of consuming them. In addition, we also expect parents to pay more attention to their children's food choices, by teaching them to be wise in choosing snacks and prioritizing bringing provisions from home. In this way, the food or snacks consumed by children can be guaranteed cleanliness and safety.

## 5. REFERENCES

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