CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

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RECOMENDATIONS
Boys and girls, men and women are all at risk of anemia. Anemia has terrible effects on health and wellbeing - some are irreversible - including mental retardation and poor school performance; tiredness, and poor ability to do labor, sports, and other physical activities; reduced capacity, increased illness, greater risk of death of women during maternity and birth; low birth weight and premature birth.

Through this NUTRITION INTERVENTION PROGRAM, capacity development in nutrition was integrated at the basic level of developing nutritional awareness in children, as well as increasing the capacity of parents and grandparents, even school teachers who can monitor the nutrition health along with an appointed nutritionist through various activities within and outside of a classroom.

Thus this program was a behavior focused approach to nutrition education which addressed specific individual food choice behaviors, nutrition related actions or practices which facilitated dietary behavior changes that were conducive to health, which indicated a positive normalization trend with regard to serum iron, MCHC, RBC, height, as well as a positive trend in clinical observations, attitudes and practices along with academic (Marks) performance.
The correlations between hematological, biochemical, Anthropometric and Dietary parameters also indicated a correction of iron deficiency in the children.

In affluent underweight populations protein deficit may not be a problem, thus giving high protein commercial supplements is not required but a regular deworming every 4-6 months would increase the child’s appetite. After deworming the parents must try and give nutritious homemade food to the child, as parasitic infection, in the child may be due to consumption of unhygienically prepared outside food.

Personal hygiene practices should also be emphasized by parents as simple acts like washing hands before and after eating, regular bowel movement, and bathing, brushing of teeth and cleanliness of nails go a long way in keeping parasitic infestation at bay.

At meal time as was emphasized during the parent – child interaction, a child be made to understand / explained why he / she is eating a particular food or food group combinations. This is beginning of a long drawn never ending process to keep a person healthy. A summary of the numerous healthy nutrition practices and messages as discussed with parents, grandparents, children, teachers, canteen staff, during the interactive sessions of this study is as follows:
• Consume vitamin A, B and C rich foods (raw/lightly steamed/sautéed vegetables and raw fruits) along with cereals-pulses combinations.

• Avoid tea with meals.

• Consumption of sprouts atleast 3 times a week.

• Consume dark green leafy vegetables every day, even in the form of green chutney, incorporate curry leaves in diet, and do not discard the cauliflower greens.

• Drink lime juice, fresh coconut water, buttermilk, fresh fruits juices like kokam sherbet, mango panna, amla juice instead of commercial soft drinks.

• Consumption of seasonally available fruits.

• Consume preparations of fermented/germinated cereals and pulses preparations.

• Eat jaggary – chappati instead of readymade jam – bread or chappati with a glass of milk.

• Make an effort to make low fat traditional snacks at home like roasted chivda of rice flakes, puffed rice, chikkis, etc; instead of purchasing biscuits and extruded products containing colors and preservatives.

• Avoid using soda-bi-carbonate while cooking vegetables and pulses as it destroys vitamins.
• A mixed diet comprising different food groups is more nutritious than a diet containing only one single food group.

• Eat raw vegetables as salads e.g. carrots, cucumber, tomatoes, onion, and cabbage daily with meals.

• Use just enough water for cooking vegetables. Cooking leafy vegetables in their own moisture is advised.

• Wash vegetables and then cut them and do not wash again as nutrients will be lost in the water.

• Cook vegetables without peeling, e.g. potatoes.

• Cook vegetables just before eating, avoid reheating as it leads to loss of nutrients.

• Cooking rice soaked in just enough water for at least 30-40 minutes is advised as it saves fuel and nutrients.

• Always cook in a covered pan; it saves nutrients and cooking gas.

• When you have diarrheas have plenty of fluids and water mixed a pinch of salt and a handful of sugar.

• It is better to have small meals every 2-3 hours rather than -no breakfast - a very light lunch - a heavy dinner.

• When you make paneer use the whey, it contains good proteins, in making curries or for binding dough.

• Use a pressure cooker it save time, fuel and nutrients.
Conducting nutrition education requires considerable resources in terms of money, time and personnel which are usually in short supply. This program is distinctive as it employed fun and interactive methods while teaching nutrition to school children.

As such it has the potential to be adopted by every school in India. Every school must make its own effort to increase awareness and promote healthy nutrition behavior.