

Aree Niyomsub 2009: The Role of Teachers in Promoting Nutrition of Preschool Children in Private Schools in Bangkok. Master of Science (Home Economics), Major Field: Home Economics, Department of Home Economics. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Tasanee Limsuwan, Ph.D. 84 pages.

The objectives of this research were to study 1) the level of knowledge and role of teachers at private schools in Bangkok in promoting nutrition of preschool children; 2) the type of activities used to promote nutrition of preschool children; and 3) factors related to the role of teachers at private schools in Bangkok in promoting nutrition of preschool children. Data were gathered through the use of questionnaire from 150 kindergarten teachers chosen through multistage sampling from medium to large private schools in Bangkok. Data were analyzed using percentage, means and chi-square statistics.

The results showed that the mean age of the sample teachers was 36.46 years and 98.7% were female. Slightly more than half were married (52%) and did not have children (53.3%). The majority (81.3%) were educated to bachelor's degree level. The mean length of time they had worked with preschool age children was 10 years and 7 months. Almost all the schools (99.3%) prepared and served lunch for the children. The major problems encountered were refusal to eat vegetables (66%), slow eating (56%), and low food consumption (53.3%).

About half of the sample showed a high level of nutrition knowledge. The other half showed medium level. The largest number of samples gave correct answers regarding nutritional principles, but their level of knowledge of appropriate serving sizes was rated as "low" to "medium". As for their role in promoting the nutrition of preschool children, the majority of the samples reported that their major role was evaluation, followed by giving knowledge. The teachers had only a small role in planning and other aspects of nutrition. They used a variety of activities to promote nutrition: story telling (88.7%), musical activities (88.0%), movement activities (66.0%), cooking activities (78.7%), art activities (72.7%), games (66.7%) and rhythmic activities (66.0%). The primary medium used was real-life examples.

The study of the correlation showed that teacher age, length of time working as a kindergarten teacher, and knowledge of food and nutrition were significantly correlated to the teachers' roles in promoting the nutrition of preschool age children at .05 significance level.

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