

LIFE & TIMES **FAMILY**

Start the day with goodness

There's a new spin on Milo's Malaysia Breakfast Day this year, discovers **Aneeta Sundararaj**

Most adults have fond memories of drinking Milo at school: during Sports Day or Pendidikan Jasmani classes. The highlight, however, was being served what seemed like a thimble-full of ice-cold Milo from the Milo van. "And we all used to quickly finish and go to the back of the queue to line up again for more Milo," says Ho Hau Chieh, 45, executive director of Nestle Products during the media launch of Milo's second Malaysia Breakfast Day which is aimed at encouraging people to have a balanced breakfast and an active lifestyle.

"Actually, I think we found it delicious because it was small," says Nurul Fadhillah Sharif, a 40-year-old housewife, before adding: "One day, I brought a plastic container for refill. But, you know, it really wasn't so nice anymore."

For Cher Siew Wei, 32, corporate wellness manager for Nestle Products, her memory is a little different. "The school bus used to come around 5.30 in the morning. I was more interested in sleeping than wanting to eat a nutritious breakfast. But my grandmother wouldn't let me go until I had finished my Milo," says this soon-to-be mother.

POSITIVE ENERGY

This year, there is a new spin on Malaysia Breakfast Day called Positive Energy and there are two parts to it.

PART1

This part is what Cher refers to as the nutrition aspect. She says research shows that Malaysians are now one of the fattest in Southeast

What: MILO
Malaysia Breakfast Day
When: April 20, 2014
Where: Dataran Putrajaya
Details at www.milo.com.my/breakfastday



A nutritious breakfast is a vital part of building healthy bodies and minds.



Ho Hau Chieh hopes that Milo Malaysia Breakfast Day can help change mindsets about a balanced lifestyle.

our children moving and to stop them spending all their time playing computer games. Other than time for families to bond we want children to become more active."

One such child is Nurul Fadhillah's 13-year-old daughter, Amisha Sofia Azli. Recently, she won the Anugerah Tunas Harapan (Puteri) award for outstanding athletic performance in primary school.

As Amisha, currently a boarder at Kolej Yayasan Saad, Malacca, recites her activities in a typical day, it soon becomes obvious that she is, by nature, a very disciplined child. Her day begins at 5.30am and she is in school by 7.30. After a full day of lessons, she does various activities from gymnastics to athletics. As though that's not enough, Amisha has recently started violin classes. Her ambition is to be an investment banker like her father, Azli Abdul Jamil. As though on cue, Amisha starts to sing Milo's theme song.

"She has always been disciplined, though," confides her mother. "Even before she went to boarding school, if her tuition class finished at 10.30 at night, she would either finish her homework before she sleeps or get up very early in the morning. Maybe, it's because I taught her that if you do something you must have a target. What is your target? Her target may not be number 1 or 2. It's to beat her opponent. And the coaches also instil discipline. If she leaves behind something and I take it to her, the coach will reprimand me, saying that Amisha should be responsible for her own things. One more thing—even if she doesn't like what her teachers say or do, she'll do it. She won't argue with the teachers."

"I don't like arguing," says Amisha, taking a pause from her singing. Then she says something that belies her tender age: "I like to focus on competition, not fighting. Competition is where you gain victory without negative vibes." And then she launches into her song again.

Asia. "A quarter of our children are overweight. Not only are they not getting the right nutrition, they also tend to miss breakfast. They go to school hungry and only eat their first meal during recess at about 10.30am. This means that more than 12 hours have passed since the child's last meal the night before."

Even when children today do eat breakfast, they're not eating right, says Cher. Referring to her memories of waking up at 5.30 in the morning to go to school, she says that many parents today are in such a rush to make sure they beat the traffic and get to work on time, they often rely on convenient food that are not nutritious.

"When children eat kuih," she elaborates, "there is a surge of energy. But if this becomes excessive, then the carbohydrates are not

burnt up and the child becomes fat. Milo has the right balance of nutrients - 65 per cent carbohydrates, 11 per cent protein and 22 per cent fat. This ratio of nutrients provides a child's body with the much-needed fuel to take on both physical and mental challenges in school."

"Our challenge," says Ho, "is working with a changing society. I'm facing this. I have four children. With my younger children, I can tell them what to do. With the older ones, who are now teenagers, it's not easy. So, I have developed a 'buddy' system. Since they see me drinking Milo every day, I hope they will drink it too."

PART2

This part refers to the physical activities to ignite growth and development. As Ho says: "We need to get



Milo focuses on a balanced diet as much as it does on being physically active.