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CHANGING ATTITUDES

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Ms Robin Lim (far left) and Ms Roslyn Teng with the snack boxes which have monthly themes. ST PHOTO: AZIZ HUSSIN

Start-up's goal: Snack your way to good health

By **ONG KAI XUAN**

MAKING snacks healthy may seem like a tall order in this fast-paced world, but two young women here have taken up the challenge with a new start-up.

The budding business takes nutritious snacks to the doorsteps of people seeking healthy lifestyles – and was just one of a dozen start-ups on show at an innovation fair yesterday.

Ms Robin Lim, 20, of Singapore Management University (SMU), and Ms Roslyn Teng, 20, of Yale-NUS College, set up Made Real last year as a social movement initially.

They wanted to tackle what they call a “social problem” – eating disorders – by advocating a healthy lifestyle.

They organised health and fitness bazaars and focused on the “concept of community”, Ms Lim told The Straits Times. This was done through community picnics that featured healthy food.

Made Real made the shift to become a start-up this year, creating an online subscription system for a monthly snack box costing \$23.50 a month – with lower prices for longer subscriptions – that is delivered to customers.

The snack boxes have monthly themes such as “Think Spring!”, and usually contain special snacks such as bandung granola and Earl Grey lavender cookies.

Ms Teng said: “We had to do a lot of research to find local suppliers who can deliver in small

batches, so that we can introduce more interesting, novel products to our fans.”

Their suppliers come up with unique flavours for their themes as well as healthier recipes to fit the “healthy snacks” description.

The boxes contain not just snacks but also trial vouchers for fitness classes, fitness tips, notes of encouragement as well as information for people battling eating disorders.

“We try to adopt a holistic approach”, said Ms Lim. “In the long term, we hope to channel our resources into content, programmes and events that impact our community with a more positive body image. This includes a teen empowerment programme centred on body positivity and confidence

that we ran at Singapore Girls’ Home last week.”

Including Made Real, all 12 start-ups on display at the innovation fair held at SMU yesterday are being incubated by the SMU Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Some are still in the prototype stage.

They include a Web application allowing tuition teachers to update parents on their children’s progress, an application letting taxi drivers view traffic conditions, an educational programme to teach programming in schools, and a programme to match potential sponsors to events.

The fair also saw students consulting three mentors who gave tips about entrepreneurship and answered their queries.

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