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## OPTIMIZING ADOLESCENTS AS PROSPECTIVE BRIDES AND GROOMS IN BUILDING A HEALTHY GENERATION WITHOUT STUNTING IN JOMBANG REGENCY

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### ABSTRACT

Stunting is a major nutritional problem in Indonesia that remains unresolved. Jombang is a regency in East Java Province. The prevalence of stunting in Jombang Regency remains high, based on 2024 e-PPBGM data. Stunting itself is a nutritional problem that can be reduced. Jombang Regency has a demographic bonus, namely a high number of adolescents. Adolescents are prospective brides and grooms who can play a role in producing healthy, stunting-free future generations. The problem is that adolescents' knowledge of their role in stunting prevention is lacking. Allowing this situation to persist could impede the government's long-term goal of reducing stunting rates. The solution to address this problem is providing education to increase adolescents' knowledge about stunting and their role in stunting prevention. The educational material was generally about stunting, but there was additional material on the topic of stunting that was in accordance with the characteristics of stunting in adolescents in Jombang Regency. The implementation of activities began with seminars and training on reporting suspected stunting among adolescents. This activity can enhance adolescents' understanding of stunting and the procedures for reporting suspected cases in their local area.

Keywords: Adolescent, Nutrition Disorders, Stunting.

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## INTRODUCTION

The 2020 Global Nutrition Report reported that approximately 149 million (21.9%) toddlers worldwide experienced stunting, with the majority of these children in Asia, representing 81.7 million, or 54.8 percent. Stunting in Indonesia is a problem leading to a crisis or double burden of malnutrition (Global Nutrition Report, 2020). This category includes districts/cities where there has been both a decline and an increase in stunting rates, leading to what is known as dynamic stagnation. Jombang Regency is no exception, with the prevalence of stunting reaching 21.2% in the 2021 SSGI and 18% in the 2024 e-PPBGM. The Jombang Regency government has implemented various programs to reduce stunting rates. However, this approach is still not enough to address the issue completely. Optimal efforts require cooperation and involvement from various parties.

Stunting remains a major public health problem in low- and middle-income countries, including Indonesia (Mulyaningsih et al., 2021). Stunting is not only characterized by growth failure (shortness) but also permanent developmental failure and metabolic disorders that increase the risk of various non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Achadi et al., 2020). According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, stunting prevention can begin before marriage through efforts made through marriage-age planning and premarital screening of couples or prospective brides and grooms (Prafitri et al., 2023). Therefore, it is necessary to increase the role of adolescents in stunting prevention. Based on discussions and

analysis between the author and relevant parties in the Jombang government, namely the Population Control, Family Planning, Protection, and Empowerment of Women and Children (PPKB PPPA), innovative efforts are needed, namely involving adolescents in stunting prevention. Adolescence is a life stage full of transitions from childhood to adulthood. The lives of adolescents entering adulthood are often haunted by financial readiness in preparation for marriage. Financial readiness is often a major issue for those preparing to start a family.

However, health preparedness is often overlooked. The incidence of stunting can be reduced by monitoring and providing specific interventions for adolescent brides-to-be. Health workers can educate prospective brides-to-be about preventing stunted offspring. Children with stunting can inherit stunting from parents who are at risk of having stunted offspring. Therefore, this can be prevented through education about health during pregnancy, among other things.

One way to address community health issues is through health education seminars and training to detect suspected stunting in adolescents. Furthermore, Jombang Regency is experiencing a significant demographic bonus in the form of a significant number of adolescents. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Jombang Regency, in 2023, the number of adolescents aged 10-14 years was reported to reach 109,934, and those aged 15-19 years reached 101,927 (BPS Jombang, 2023). The hope of this activity is to increase knowledge and create stunting-aware adolescents who can monitor the risk of stunting in their peers and become agents in producing quality children who can

avoid the risk of stunting later in life when they grow up.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Community service activities began with an assignment from the head of the Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Airlangga, as stated in the assignment letter number 3206/TB/UN3.FKp/PM.01.01/2025.

### *General Purpose*

The primary goal is to improve the knowledge of adolescent about stunting and their role to prevent stunting.

### *Special Purpose*

We evaluate the knowledge of adolescent about stunting and their role to prevent stunting.

## **PLAN OF ACTION**

### *Strategy Plan*

#### *Preparation stage*

1. Coordinate the community service team.
2. Organize the implementation and assign team tasks.
3. Prepare health education materials and presenters.
4. Develop a module on the role of adolescents in stunting prevention.
5. Coordinate with adolescents affiliated with religious organizations, including the Nahdlatul Ulama Student Association (IPNU) and the Nahdlatul Ulama Female Student Association (IPPNU).
6. Prepare the seminar venue.

### *Implementation*

The detailed implementation of the activities is as follows:

1. Organize the event committee, consisting of the catering, presenter, moderator, and documentation team.

2. Conduct a pre-test by adolescent seminar participants on the seminar topic to determine their level of knowledge before the seminar begins.
3. Open the seminar with a welcome speech by the activity leader, delivered by the head of community service.
4. Presenting seminar material with four speakers, each with topics including preventing and accelerating stunting reduction in Jombang, the concept of stunting and the role of adolescents as prospective brides and grooms in stunting prevention, adolescent reproductive health, and nutritional support in stunting prevention.
5. Conducting a post-test by adolescent seminar participants on the seminar topics presented to determine their level of knowledge after the seminar.
6. Conducting training with a demonstration of how adolescents fill out a form for suspected stunting by adolescent seminar participants.
7. Adolescent seminar participants (adolescents on stunting alert) have developed the skills to report suspected stunting using a link in gform-based.

### *Setting*

The activity was held in a hall at a restaurant in the Denanyar District, Jombang Regency.

### *Target*

Fifty adolescents participated in the seminar.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The evaluation was carried out by measuring the level of knowledge of adolescents before and after receiving

education on all the topics presented in the seminar by filling out a questionnaire.

Table 1 Average pretest and posttest results of the level of knowledge of adolescents alert to stunting in Jombang Regency (n=50)

No	Indicator (main topic)	Pret est	Postt est	Impro vement
1	Family life planning	55	82	+27
2	Positive self-concept	52	80	+28
3	Family role	48	77	+29
4	Maintaining personal health	57	84	+27
5	Fulfillment of balanced nutrition	50	82	+32
6	Clean and Healthy Living Behavior (PHBS)	60	85	+25
7	Personal hygiene of the genital organs	49	80	+31
8	Utilization of nutrients	47	78	+31
9	Independence in fulfilling nutritional needs	50	79	+29
10	Introduction to adolescent reproductive health	53	80	+27

Based on the table above, the aspect with the largest point increase was "fulfillment of balanced nutrition." Meanwhile, the aspect with the smallest point increase was "Clean and Healthy Living Behavior." The lowest pretest score was for "Family Role," and the highest for "Clean and Healthy Living Behavior." The lowest posttest score was for "Utilization of Nutrients," and the highest for "Clean and Healthy Living Behavior."

This community service initiative began with a collaborative problem identification process with the community service partner, the Jombang Regency PPKB PPPA Office. The identification revealed that stunting rates in Jombang Regency were still above the standard target set by East Java Province. A potential target for the community service program is optimizing the role of youth or youth organizations in stunting prevention.

The chosen activity to optimize the role of adolescents in stunting prevention was a seminar. The seminar involved one speaker from the Jombang Regency PPKB PPPA Office as a partner in community service. Three other speakers were from academics at Airlangga University: one doctoral student from the Faculty of Medicine and two lecturers. The four topics presented at the seminar included preventing and accelerating stunting reduction in Jombang, the concept of stunting and the role of adolescents as prospective brides and grooms in stunting prevention, adolescent reproductive health, and nutritional fulfillment in stunting prevention.

The seminar was held in a hall and attended by adolescents in Jombang Regency, aged 15-21, with educational backgrounds ranging from high school to

university. The seminar was held on Sunday, September 28, 2025. The organizing team for this activity included the event committee, the consumption committee, and the documentation committee. The results of the evaluation of adolescents' knowledge levels showed an increase in knowledge about stunting and the role of adolescents in stunting prevention.

The technology was implemented through the use of audiovisual media, interactive tools and props, and a gform link (<https://forms.gle/zjDoXT7shUgGyjFf9>) that teenagers used to report any suspected stunting in their neighborhoods. This facilitated the teenagers' reporting, which we could then monitor and provide input for to our partners. Reporting training was conducted at the end of the seminar, followed by a simulation of filling out the questionnaire a week after the seminar, conducted by several participants.

Dewangga and Istifadah (2024), in their study of hypertension in adolescents, found that the Healthy Youth Movement to Prevent Hypertension (GEMAS GASI) program was able to increase knowledge related to hypertension in high school-aged children (SMA) before and after participating in the program. It was reported that as many as 64.3% of students had increased knowledge, and as many as 35.7% of students had stable knowledge after the program. The program was able to increase student knowledge by more than 50%. The GEMAS GASI program consists of 2 activities, namely counseling and making infographic posters. Counseling activities include education on hypertension, risk factors, and hypertension prevention. This is in line with counseling on the first 1000 days of life (HPK) with

educational video media on knowledge and attitudes in high school students (SMA) in preventing stunting. Counseling using this video media succeeded in increasing adolescent knowledge and attitudes, where there was an increase in the knowledge value category before the intervention, namely from 30% after the intervention to 80%, and for the attitude value category from 26% to 90% (Yuliam & Mariyani, 2023). This is supported by a literature review on the use of video media to prevent stunting of the knowledge and attitudes of adolescent girls. Stunting education using video media has a significant impact. Adolescent girls tend to experience improvements in knowledge and attitudes regarding stunting prevention after intervention using video media. The study results concluded that video media is considered the most effective media compared to other media in stunting prevention education (Dermawan & Rahfiludin, 2024).

The use of innovative educational media has been widespread and has had a positive impact on knowledge and so on for various subjects such as adolescents and adult audiences. A study (Siregar et al., 2025) on the use of audio-visual media was able to improve the knowledge and attitudes of pregnant women about stunting prevention. The results of the data analysis stated that the results of the study showed that there was a significant difference between the knowledge and attitudes of pregnant women before and after the intervention using audio-visual media. In adolescent audiences, adolescents themselves have a big role in conveying nutritional information to fellow adolescents (peers) in an effort to prevent stunting. This was conveyed by

(Purnamasari et al., 2022) in their study on the effect of nutritional counseling on stunting prevention using animated video media on adolescent knowledge and attitudes. The study design used a pre-experiment involving 29 adolescents concluded that there was an effect of nutritional counseling on stunting prevention with animated video media on adolescent knowledge and attitudes.

The knowledge of adolescent participants in a stunting prevention seminar increased immediately after receiving health education about stunting. This was quite effective in increasing adolescent knowledge. Not only did it depend on what was presented in the seminar, but also the expertise of the presenter also influenced the level of understanding of participants in receiving the material presented. This was conveyed by several participants after the seminar. This is in line with a study (Yusuf & Mangile, 2019) that stated that many factors determine the success of counseling, starting from the content of the counseling material, the environment, the tools, the room used, and the presenter's expertise in the counseling.

The youth participating in the seminar received vests as a symbol of their status as stunting-aware youth in Jombang Regency. The stunting-aware youth will become stunting prevention agents by filling out a reporting link for suspected stunting youth in their area of residence. This is a step to optimize the role of youth, which can be implemented through ongoing education programs and mentoring for the roles they play in 2023. In addition, youth were given motivation about their role as agents of change, disseminators of health

information, and role models for other youth (Parinduri, 2021).

The partners, who also served as speakers at the seminar, received positive feedback. Following the seminar, the speakers discussed the possibility of similar activities next year with the committee. Sustainable stunting prevention efforts need to be considered through various innovative activities. Increasing community participation and program sustainability in reducing stunting prevalence can be achieved by providing further training to cadres and intensive health promotion (Firdaus et al., 2023)

Various forms of activities that are able to maintain the sustainability of the program so as to reduce the number of stunted growths have been widely carried out. Siregar (2025) in his study, the implementation and impact of the program on community welfare and stunting prevention produced outcomes such as increased community participation in Integrated Service Post (Posyandu) activities, household food diversity, and the formation of 5 sustainable micro-enterprises with increased income. The program successfully addressed the determinants of stunting through a holistic approach that integrates aspects of nutrition, environmental health, access to health services, and social and economic empowerment. The above study is supported by a study. Regarding the concept of sustainable development goals (SDGs) as a framework adopted by the Indonesian government in reducing the prevalence of stunting cases. The study concluded that collaboration between state actors and non-state actors is needed to address stunting cases in Indonesia. Starting from synergy between



ministries/institutions and collaboration with academics, public health scholars, companies, and foreign parties. These results are important as recommendations for every stakeholder in implementing the SDGs concept to reduce the prevalence of stunting cases in Indonesia (Situmenang & Putri, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Community service activities have been implemented through educational activities in the form of seminars and training through a simulation of reporting adolescents suspected of stunting. The seminar on prevention efforts and the role of adolescents in stunting was able to increase adolescent knowledge. The reporting system for adolescents suspected of stunting was further enhanced through a simulation after its implementation was explained at the end of the seminar. The seminar and training on reporting adolescents suspected of stunting provided an enjoyable experience for both partners and adolescents. Overall, this community service has proven to provide real benefits in reducing the risk of stunting and increasing the capacity of adolescents as prospective brides and grooms.

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