



Father' Role in Stunting Prevention During the First Thousand Days of Life in Blabak Village Kediri City

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ABSTRACT

Chronic malnutrition during the first 1000 days of life can lead to stunting, a disease of growth failure. In Indonesia, 21.5% of toddlers had stunting in 2023. Kediri City's stunting prevalence dropped to 5.56%, with 13 toddlers in Blabak Village diagnosed with stunting in 2024. Parenting methods are one of the variables that affect stunting. A child's development is greatly influenced by the role of parents, especially their father. The role of parents (father) will be optimal if supported by good knowledge about their role in the family. The goal of this project of community service is to provide information on the importance of father' roles throughout the first 1000 days of life. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is the approach used. The results of the community service project in Blabak Village, Kediri City, provided that an increase in knowledge about the significance of father' roles during the first 1000 days of life in an attempt to prevent stunting. Through the family's participation, this activity can indirectly reduce the incidence of stunting.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a developing country that continued struggling with serious health issues. One serious health problem that may affect human development is stunting. Growth failure brought on by persistent starvation is known as stunting. A height that is below the average for children of the same age is indicative of stunting. According to WHO standard values, stunting can be assessed with a Z-score of <-2 SD (short) and <-3 SD (extremely short) (Kementerian kesehatan RI, 2024; Noeraini et al., 2023). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target number two, which aims to achieve food security and elimination hunger and all kinds of malnutrition by 2030, includes stunting. Children's malnutrition rates are a sign of delayed growth and development. The Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) estimate that 23.2% of children worldwide would be stunted in 2024. In the meantime, 19.8% of Indonesians were stunted in 2024 (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2025; World Health Organization et al., 2025). In 2023, Kediri City's stunting incidence decreased to 5.56%. Thirteen toddlers in Blabak Village, Kediri City, were found to be stunted in a survey carried out by the community service team. This number is still far below the zero stunting incidence rate that the Kediri city council has established.



There are several factors that lead to stunting. Parenting style is one of these factors. The process of parenting and educating children in a way that promotes their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth is known as parenting style (Mauluddia, 2024; Wiranata, 2020). Every child's growth and development are greatly influenced by their parents, both mother's and father. Mother's are essential in childcare activities such as changing diapers, bathing, feeding, and changing clothes, according to Lambd. In the meanwhile, father responsibilities include taking care of their kids, protecting them, making choices, teaching them, and helping moms with childcare (BKKBN, 2022; Mauluddia, 2024). A father role might start when a mother finds out pregnant and continue to support her until the child is two years old (the First 1,000 Days of Life). For the child to have the best possible growth and development, especially in terms of preventing health issues, this role is crucial (Iswandari et al., 2020). One way a father shows concern for his child is through paternal participation (Tahapary et al., 2023).

A preliminary survey conducted by the community service team in blabak found that father involvement is still very low in cases of stunted children. This is a result of parents, especially father, not understanding their part in their children's development. The traditional roles of father are still largely dependent on their involvement in activities outside the house, such as making a living and protecting their children. In the meantime, father have a major role in their children's education, care, and guidance (Hasri, 2020).

The child's life will be significantly impacted by a father insufficient participation in childcare. These impacts include feelings of loneliness, loss, and unwell-being due to a lack of affection (Nasution et al., 2023). Children also struggle to adapt in their surroundings, feel less confident, and have low self-esteem (Mauluddia, 2024). In the end, children's emotional stability is also disturbed later in life, as evidenced by their tendency to get emotional (angry) and avoid problems when they arise (Mauluddia, 2024; Nasution et al., 2023; Sari et al., 2020; Wulandari et al., 2023)

These impacts can be avoided if parents, especially father, understand their roles in the family, particularly during the first 1000 days of life. Therefore, the community service team offers activities in the form of counseling on the importance of the father role in the first 1000 days of life as an effort to prevent stunting in the Blabak sub-district, Kediri City.

B. METHODS

This Community Service uses the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method where the community (both father and mother's) actively participate in increasing knowledge and awareness of the importance of the father role in the First 1000 Days of Life as an effort to prevent stunting events in Blabak Subdistrict, Kediri City. The steps involved in perform the community service are described and clarified as follows:

1. Preparation

The Field Survey, part of this Preparation Stage involves a visit to Blabak Village to get preliminary data on stunting and the role of father. The next step is getting permission to perform community service. And the last phase of preparation, the proposal and materials are prepared.

2. Implementation

There are three phases to this activity's execution: pre-test, counseling, and post-test. The Pre-test is conducted as a step in the initial assessment of participants' knowledge regarding the role of father in the first 1000 days of life. The next step in this procedure is Counseling. Father' roles in raising children, particularly during the first 1,000 days of life, are



covered in the counseling materials. The Post-test serves as a step in the final assessment of participants' knowledge regarding the role of father in the first 1,000 days of life.

3. Evaluation

This stage focuses on the final evaluation of this activity. A Q&A session is opened for the participants by the Community Service Team. Following the Q&A, attendees will be asked to participate in a brainstorming game and a game of snakes and ladders.

After all the stages are completed, the final stage is data processing. Data processing includes Editing, Coding, and Tabulating using *Microsoft Excel Software*. Data analysis involves describing the frequency and percentage of the pre-test and post-test results.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service was conducted at the Blabak Sub-district Hall, Kediri City, in October 2024. Thirty persons participated in this activity. The participants responded positively to this community service project. The participants' involvement and activity about the role of father in the first 1000 days of life proved this. Understanding stunting, the factors that contribute to stunting, the role of father in the family, and the effects of a lack of paternal engagement in the family were among the topics presented. Overall, the community service materials received good feedback, as shown by the increase in participants' knowledge and their activeness in answering each question in the snakes and ladders game.

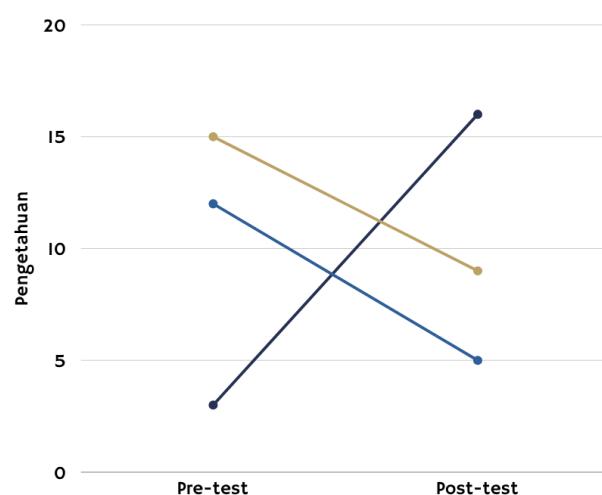


Figure 1. Results of Participants' Knowledge regarding the Role of Father in the 1000 HPK.

According to Figure 1, the results of the Pre-test on Knowledge regarding the father role in the first 1000 days of life (HPK) demonstrate that 3 people (10%) had good knowledge, 15 people (50%) had moderate knowledge, and 12 people (40%) had poor knowledge. Following the counseling session, 17 individuals (57%) had good knowledge of the father role in the first 1000 days of life, 15 individuals (30%) had moderate knowledge, and 4 individuals (13%) had poor knowledge. These results show that the community service participants' knowledge and awareness of the significance of the father role throughout the first 1000 days of life have grown. The findings of this activity are corroborated by earlier studies and community service, where the father class technique increased knowledge and attitude about the role of the father (Oktavianisya et al., 2024). This proves that if the community collaborates to



optimize the role of parents, particularly father, in raising children in every home, stunting issues can be successfully prevented at the community level.

Father play a unique role in parenting children by providing for and facilitating the needs of the family, protecting each member of the family, making decisions for the family, educating children to become social beings, and supporting mother's in raising their children (BKKBN, 2022). However, in reality, the role of father is often overlooked because father tend to focus more on activities outside the home, such as earning and providing for the family as a form of protection. If we can better understand this, a father involvement in childrearing will have a greater impact on the child's development, including social development (child's prosocial behavior), emotional development (happiness and child satisfaction can be signs of psychological well-being), and cognitive development (problem-solving, competence/competition of the child) (BKKBN, 2022; Mauluddia, 2024). Father' involvement has a major impact on stimulating their children's growth and development, according to previous research. Father' involvement is 10.9 times more likely to provide growth and development stimulation for their children compared to the lack of father' involvement (Sulistiyowati, 2019). Other studies indicate that there is no effect of father' involvement on children's BMI scores. According to other research, father engagement had little bearing on their kids' BMI levels. Nonetheless, father play a part in feeding habits, such as regulating the kind and quantity of food their kids eat. Additionally, children's dietary habits—such as avoiding particular foods—are influenced by father participation (Tahapary et al., 2023). Long-term lack of macro and micronutrients comes from a child's unbalanced eating habits and the absence of father participation in constantly regulating the types and diversity of food. Further stages of stunting are brought on by this (Boibalan et al., 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2024). In addition to providing support for the unborn child, a father role during pregnancy includes listening to the mother's frustrations about changes during the pregnancy, being a husband or soon-to-be father who is willing to assist with household chores, meeting the nutritional needs of expectant mother's, and going with the mother to prenatal checkups (BKKBN, 2022).

The wellbeing of family members is significantly impacted by father' roles. Opening discussion groups and disseminating knowledge are two ways to optimize father' involvement. This will strengthen the father position in the household and serve as a potent first step in preventing stunting.





Figure 2. Community Service Documentation

D. CONCLUSION

This Community Service has had a positive impact on the residents of Blabak Subdistrict, Kediri City. Counseling on the role of father during the first 1,000 days of life can be an effective step in preventing stunting through family involvement, particularly the role of father. The Community Service Team has high hopes for the future, where this counseling can serve as a basis for government programs in stunting prevention. The Stunting Prevention Strategy should't only focus on nutritional supplementation but also on optimizing the role of the family (both mother and father) in child stimulation starting in the first 1,000 days of life.

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