

## The Role of Posyandu Cadres in Preventing Stunting in Tanjungsari Village, Rowosari District, Kendal

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### Abstrak

*Stunting masih menjadi masalah kesehatan masyarakat yang signifikan di Indonesia, khususnya di daerah pedesaan, yang memengaruhi pertumbuhan dan perkembangan anak akibat kekurangan gizi, kurangnya stimulasi psikososial, serta infeksi berulang. Menurut Organisasi Kesehatan Dunia (WHO), anak dikategorikan mengalami stunting jika tinggi badan menurut usia berada lebih dari dua standar deviasi di bawah median Standar Pertumbuhan Anak WHO. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh tingginya prevalensi stunting di Kabupaten Kendal yang meningkat dari 17,5% pada tahun 2022 menjadi 22,4% pada tahun 2023, sehingga memerlukan kajian terkait intervensi lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi efektivitas program berbasis masyarakat yang dilaksanakan oleh kader Posyandu di Desa Tanjungsari, Kendal, untuk pencegahan stunting. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kuantitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini melibatkan seluruh populasi Desa Tanjungsari melalui total sampling, dengan pengumpulan data melalui survei dan wawancara terstruktur, serta dianalisis menggunakan metode statistik deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun telah dilakukan edukasi mengenai gizi ibu dan praktik pengasuhan, angka stunting masih cukup memprihatinkan, yang disebabkan oleh faktor ekonomi dan rendahnya keterlibatan orang tua. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya dukungan berkelanjutan serta kolaborasi lintas sektor kesehatan dan nonkesehatan untuk meningkatkan efektivitas program pencegahan stunting.*

**Keywords:** Stunting; Posyandu; Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Anak



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### Abstract

*Stunting remains a significant public health problem in Indonesia, particularly in rural areas, affecting child development and growth due to malnutrition, inadequate psychosocial stimulation and repeated infections. According to the World Health Organization, children are classified as stunted if their height-for-age is more than two standard deviations below the WHO Child Growth Standards median. This study was motivated by the high*

prevalence of stunting in Kendal district, which increased from 17.5% in 2022 to 22.4% in 2023, prompting an investigation into local interventions. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a community-led program implemented by Posyandu cadres in Tanjungsari Village, Kendal, for stunting prevention. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, the study involved the entire population of Tanjungsari through total sampling, collecting data through surveys and structured interviews, analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The research findings revealed that despite educational initiatives targeting maternal nutrition and parenting practices, stunting rates remain concerning, attributed to economic factors and less parental involvement. This study underscores the need for continued support and collaborative efforts between the health and non-health sectors to improve the effectiveness of stunting prevention programs.

**Keywords:** Stunting; Posyandu; Child Growth and Development

## **Introduction**

Stunting is a disorder of growth and development of children caused by ongoing malnutrition and repeated infections, which is indicated by length or width, height that does not meet the standards. determined by the minister who organizes government health work. Currently, stunting is still a serious problem faced by Indonesia, especially in rural communities.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), stunting is a disorder of child development and growth caused by malnutrition, inadequate psychosocial stimulation, and recurrent infections. Children are categorized as children whose growth is stunted if their height for their age is more than two standard deviations below the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards.

Stunting is a chronic malnutrition disorder that attacks children from the beginning of the first golden period of life, starting from in the womb (9 months 10 days), until the age of two years. Stunting will be seen when the child reaches the age of two, where their average height is lower than children of the same age. Therefore, prevention requires fast, precise, and comprehensive action.

From the data on the nutritional status survey (SSGI) in 2022, the prevalence

of stunting in Indonesia was at 21.6%. This figure has decreased compared to the previous year. However, this prevalence is still classified as a high prevalence of public health problems (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Other factors that cause stunting in children are family income and expenditure.

Income will affect food needs which will also affect the fulfillment of family nutrition and children's opportunities to obtain formal education (Rahmawati et al., 2020). According to the results of the Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI), the prevalence of stunting in toddlers in Central Java province in 2022 was 20.7%.

Central Java has regencies/cities where each year the prevalence of stunting increases and decreases. One of the regencies that has an increasing prevalence of stunting between 2022 and 2023 is Kendal Regency. The results of the 2022 Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) showed that the prevalence of stunting in Kendal Regency was 17.5%.

Meanwhile, from the results of the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey (SKI), the prevalence of stunting in Kendal Regency increased by 4.9% to 22.4% (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). To address stunting, the Kendal Regency Government has issued a letter requesting

funding for community empowerment cadres who handle stunting issues.

Then in November 2021, the Regency Government through the Kendal Regency Community and Village Empowerment Service issued letter number 141/1255/Dispermades regarding budgeting for stunting prevention. Efforts to reduce stunting require active participation from various parties.

Reducing stunting problems must involve the health sector and non-health sectors that can be carried out well by the local government and the entire community. One of the villages in Kendal Regency that implements efforts to reduce stunting is Tanjungsari Village. Tanjungsari Village is a village located in Rowosari District, Kendal Regency.

This village makes efforts to prevent stunting and overcome stunting. Efforts to reduce stunting in Tanjungsari Village have active participation from various parties, including Posyandu cadres. Posyandu cadres as the main actors in health services in the village have a role in efforts to prevent stunting. Posyandu cadres are involved in several activities.

Not only tasked with providing basic health services, Posyandu cadres also have an active role in educating the community about the importance of balanced nutrition, monitoring child growth and development, and good parenting. This is in accordance with the explanation of Rozatul & Fitrah (2022) which states that Posyandu cadres must be active in carrying out their duties in order to achieve Posyandu goals.

Posyandu cadres are expected to be able to play an active role in promotive and preventive activities and be able to become community educators. From this, of course, the role of the integrated health post through the integrated health post cadres is

very necessary to prevent stunting. In Tanjungsari village, there are integrated health post cadres who routinely carry out activities every month in various activities related to health.

Based on this, researchers are interested in further researching how programs as a form of integrated health post cadre efforts in preventing stunting and the effectiveness of the programs that have been implemented by integrated health post cadres.

Stunting is a disorder of growth and development in children due to chronic malnutrition and repeated infections, which is characterized by the length or height being below the standard set by the minister who handles government affairs in the health sector (Presidential Regulation (PERPRES) Concerning the Acceleration of Stunting Reduction, 2019).

To diagnose stunting, body length according to age (PB/U) is measured for children under 2 years of age or height according to age (TB/U) for children over 2 years of age to 5 years of age (Simbolon, 2019). Specific interventions are interventions that are directly related to health.

The main target of specific interventions is children in the First 1000 Days of Life (HPK), this intervention is short-term (Siswati, 2018). Posyandu (Integrated Service Post), is a health service provided to the community by health workers and their cadres in full.

Health service activities provided routinely are Family Planning services, maternal and child health, immunization, nutritional improvement and diarrhea management. The implementation of this posyandu program has a very large influence and social change.

These social changes are in the form of changes in people's perspectives on health, especially maternal and child health, monitoring child growth and development, early detection of diseases, and many other benefits that cause changes in people's perspectives on health.

One of the biggest changes is the change in the perspective of treatment and health, which was previously alternative to medical treatment and health (Ahmad et al, 2020). The criteria for Posyandu cadres are from the local village community. Experienced as cadres, preferably in the field of Posyandu cadres, PAUD teachers and other health cadres.

Have good communication skills, especially being able to speak the local language and a minimum education of junior high school (Directorate General of Village Community Development and Empowerment, 2018b).

## **Methods**

This study is a quantitative descriptive study, with the independent variable (X) being the Posyandu Cadre and the dependent variable (Y) being Stunting Prevention, the population of this study is the Tanjungsari Village Community, Weleri District, Kendal Regency.

The sample in this study was taken from the entire Tanjungsari Village community, with the reason being to be able to overcome the occurrence of ongoing Stunting. Determination of the sample using total sampling if all members of the population are used as samples, another term for saturated samples is census.

Data collection in this study was carried out through questionnaire surveys and structured interviews. The data analysis technique in this study used descriptive statistical analysis.

## **Results and Discussions**

Stunting is a condition where a person's body mass index is lower than the body mass index of other people (of the same age). Toddlers are also said to be stunted when their height is shorter when compared to their age.(Primadewi, 2021)Short stature in relation to rapid age growth, is used as an indicator of chronic malnutrition that describes malnutrition of toddlers in a short time (Sudargo, 2010).

The type of food given to newborns outside of breast milk is formula milk (51.1%), while the type of complementary food is sugar water (17.8%), water mixed with honey (12.2%), condensed milk (2.2%), and grated and mashed bananas (1.1%). Community service that has been carried out in the context of counseling on stunting prevention programs for infants and toddlers has begun since the prospective bride and groom.

Prospective brides and grooms in Tanjungsari Village will be given education and understanding about stunting. Because Stunting in Tanjungsari Village tends to be in a stagnant condition. This is not due to food shortages but rather refers to poor parenting patterns due to the busyness of parents.

Judging from the economic conditions, the people of Tanjungsari Village are in a middle-class economic condition, but this is in contrast to the nutritional status of children in the village. In fact, in Tanjungsari Village, parents of toddlers who suffer from stunting tend not to pay much attention to the nutritional content of the food consumed by both the mother from pregnancy to the baby.

This is because they are too focused on their work, namely smoking and salting fish, some parents even choose to go abroad and entrust their children to neighbors. This is what causes the nutrition

of the mother and the baby to be less fulfilled. Toddlers who experience stunting in the short term are generally very often exposed to infectious diseases, diarrhea, and acute respiratory infections.

While in the long term, namely malnutrition which causes their development and way of thinking to be slower than children of the same age. The impact of stunting not only affects health but also the intelligence and growth of children.

Based on the results of interviews with the Tanjungsari village midwife and the Family Empowerment and Welfare (PKK) cadre of Tanjungsari village, as well as the processed data, it was found that in the last two months, namely June and July, from 7 to 101 children who attended Posyandu, 2 of them showed a tendency towards underweight (BB) and short height (TB), with poor nutritional status.

This shows that the problem of stunting still exists in Tanjungsari Village and immediate treatment is needed. Most toddlers who are stunted are toddlers whose parents tend to be busy working. Tanjungsari Village itself has three hamlets that are included in the scope of the Tanjungsari II Health Center.

The people of Tanjungsari Village themselves have varying ages ranging from babies, toddlers, children to the elderly. The main target of this community service activity focuses on babies and toddlers who are included in the stunting category.

To overcome this stunting, both the village, center, health center, KB office and PKK cadres work together to provide assistance in order to accelerate the reduction in stunting rates in Tanjungsari Village. The health center itself prevents stunting by routinely holding mother-to-toe class meetings, providing additional

food (PMT) which is operational health assistance from the Provincial Profit Assistance (Bankeu).

Holding counseling at the Posyandu and providing PMT at the village level. For the provision of PMT at the village level, there are several programs including: 3-month program, 40 days, 4 not for pregnant women, and special PMT for stunted children. From this program, assistance in the form of PMT has been running for 5 stunted toddlers who have never received assistance before.

The provision of PMT assistance has had a good impact as stated by the Tanjungsari Village midwife that some toddlers have gained weight but many also have inconsistent weight. PMT must be carried out continuously because efforts to prevent stunting cannot be done instantly and the results can be seen immediately.

And from the PKK Cadres also always try to provide education and approaches by holding routine counseling to pregnant women and mothers who have toddlers to pay attention to nutrition, especially toddlers aged 6 months and over according to the Healthy Menu Card (KMS) reference by making mashed food for babies according to their age.

PKK Cadres also visit pregnant women directly to provide Chronic Energy Deficiency (KEK) assistance programs and direct counseling for the mother to prevent stunting. Based on the KEK standard with the reference of the Upper Arm Circumference (LILA) of less than 23.5 cm, it is categorized as KEK which is feared to affect the baby's weight after birth.

This can also be observed through symptoms that are often experienced by pregnant women, namely experiencing nausea to vomiting in the first trimester of pregnancy. pregnancy that causes the pregnant mother to lack food intake and

can have an impact on the development of the fetus in the womb.

Based on the counseling that has been done, there has been no significant impact but the village is trying to minimize it but as one of the efforts to prevent stunting, it starts from the prospective bride and groom, slowly to change the mindset of parenting patterns that are still permissive. Permissive parenting is a parenting pattern that provides freedom to act and behave according to what is desired.

(Hanifah Asma Fadhilah, 2021) Permissive parenting or permissive indulgent can also be interpreted as parental involvement in raising children but only applying a few restrictions. This causes children to be less able to control themselves. So it can be concluded that permissive parenting is a parenting style that provides freedom so that it results in a child losing control over themselves.

(Pravitasari, 2012) And from the program that has been implemented, of course there are several obstacles. The obstacles in preventing stunting faced are starting from parenting behavior that is difficult to change because it is ingrained and has become a habit in society. Then in terms of economy, although there is some assistance, some are not yet effective.

Some assistance such as providing additional food tends to be rejected by both the parents of the toddler or even by the toddler. And the last challenge is the lack of PKK cadres because there is no honorarium for carrying out their duties.

However, this effort must be continued because this program has become the responsibility of the cadres and is expected to be able to maintain the nation's generation for the next 10 years to have maximum health.

Although the counseling that has been carried out has not had a significant impact, both the health center and PKK heads always try to educate, approach and motivate mothers of toddlers to improve their parenting patterns and routinely attend integrated health posts to find out about their children's development from month to month.

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, there are several opportunities to make improvements in stunting prevention that can be carried out, namely:

- a. Improved coordination
- b. Strengthening the capacity of PKK cadres by providing training and incentives
- c. More interesting and effective program innovation
- d. Regular monitoring and evaluation to see the impact of the program.
- e. Focusing on behavioral change through education sustainable and a more personal approach
- f. Improving access to services by ensuring that all pregnant women and toddlers in Tanjungsari Village receive adequate health services.
- g. Strengthening an effective referral system
- h. Involvement public and religion in efforts to prevent stunting
- i. Increased budget support.
- j. Improving parenting patterns that tend to be permissive.
- k. Raising awareness of the importance of attending integrated health posts.

The following is data from the children's integrated health post from May to July in Tanjungsari Village.

**Table 1.** Stunting Children Data for June

Feni	10.5	88	48	13
Humaira	10.5	96	49	14

**Table 2.** Stunting Children Data for July

July	BB	TB	LIKA	LILA
Feni	10.6	87.7	47.7	14.8
Humaira	10.5	96.1	50	12

**Table 3.** Data table of stunted children in June and July

No.	Name	BB	TB	Lika	Lily
1.	Arsa	11.6	84	47.5	15
2.	Hans	8.2	76	47	14
3.	Ghafi	14.2	99.9	50	18
4.	Dafa	10.8	77.5	47.2	15
5.	Feni	10.5	88	48	13
6.	Humaira	10.5	96	49	14
7.	Sauma Nada	13.1	85.9	49	18.3

**Table 4.** Data table of stunted children in June and July

No.	Name	BB	TB	Lika	Lily
1.	Qiana	12.1	98.3	48.3	14.7
2.	Rafka	11.2	91.2	46	14
3.	Humaira	10.5	96.1	50	12
4.	Feni	10.6	87.7	47.7	14.8
5.	Arsya	11.4	85.2	47	13
6.	Nasyaug	11.5	88.3	49	14.7
7.	Zayyan	12.2	91	49.5	15

### Conclusions

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that Stunting is a condition when a person's body has a lower mass index compared to the body index of people who are in accordance with their mass. The Stunting prevention program has been given to prospective brides, especially in Tanjungsari Village, where stunting education will be provided.

To overcome stunting sustainably, the community in Tanjungsari Village has worked well with village officials, PKK

cadres, and the KB office to provide assistance in order to reduce stunting rates in Tanjungsari Village. The PKK cadres themselves have made efforts by providing education on the nutrition of toddlers aged 6 months and over with reference to the healthy card (KMS) by making baby food according to their age.

However, these efforts have not had a significant impact, but the village continues to strive for it by educating, providing motivation and approaches to improve parenting patterns and diligently attending integrated health posts for mothers who already have toddlers. Meanwhile, the challenge for the PKK cadres themselves is the lack of employment that participates in preventing stunting.

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