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Optimization of Stunting Prevention in Communities in Bahliran Village Through the Application Peduli Stunting “Penting”

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ABSTRACT

Stunting in children must receive attention. This condition can indicate that the child's nutrition is not adequately met. If left untreated, stunting can have long-term impacts on children. The increasingly rapid development of technology affects human life, one of which is the health aspect. This makes it easier to access and disseminate information. The use of technology must be used effectively and efficiently to improve public health. The presence of E-stunting is an implementation of the digitization of child nutrition recording and reporting—an application designed with various features that provide information about stunting. One of the features found in E-stunting is Food Recall. This research aims to solve health problems in Bahliran Village by empowering the community through the stunting care application (Important) to increase community awareness of stunting and Clean and Healthy Living Behavior. This research took eight months, with a research approach method that took three research stages, namely: a) Stage 1. This stage is the initial stage carried out in community empowerment. b) Stage II. In this second stage, there is a transformation of knowledge and skills. In this case, there is a need to learn about various knowledge and skills to support the empowerment activities. c) Stage III. Increased intellectual abilities and skill proficiency. In this activity, the people of Bahliran Village can take advantage of the "IMPORTANT (Stunting Care)" application, which is expected to reduce stunting rates and create a healthy and empowered community.

Keyword: Stunting, Penting Applications, Health Community, Technology

1. Introduction

Stunting is a disorder of children's growth and development due to chronic malnutrition and recurrent infections, which is characterized by length or height below the standards set by the minister in charge of government affairs in the health sector [1]. Some of the factors that cause stunting in children in Indonesia include poor nutrition in pregnant women and children under five, lack of understanding of health and nutrition aspects during pregnancy, and limited access to health services such as Antenatal Services (ANC), Postpartum Care, and quality early education. In addition, the low availability of access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities as well as limitations in achieving nutritious food and clean and healthy living behaviors that are not implemented are among the factors causing stunting [3]. Stunting is a serious problem that has a long-term impact. This problem not only affects the lives of individuals, but also has an impact on society and the country as a whole. Children who experience stunting tend to be susceptible to illness, experience a decline in cognitive ability, unbalanced physical growth, and have an unoptimal posture as adults. Imagine, if a child

is stunted, he will often experience health problems that require medical expenses. This will certainly disrupt the economic stability of the family. On a broader level, overall health costs will also increase, depleting financial resources that could be allocated to public health [2]. The negative impacts that can arise due to stunting are divided into two aspects, namely short-term and long-term impacts. In the short term, stunting results in disturbances in brain development, lowers intelligence levels, disrupts physical growth, and disrupts the body's metabolism. Meanwhile, in the long term, adverse effects include decreased cognitive ability and learning achievement, a weakened immune system that makes them susceptible to disease, and an increased risk of a number of serious diseases, including diabetes, obesity, heart and vascular disease, cancer, stroke, and the risk of disability in old age. All of these impacts have serious implications for the quality of human resources in Indonesia, productivity, and the nation's overall competitiveness [3]. Stunting has a significant impact in inhibiting children's physical growth, increasing the level of susceptibility to diseases, resulting in disturbances in cognitive development that reduce children's intelligence and productivity levels in the future. In addition, stunting also has the potential to increase the risk of degenerative diseases when reaching adulthood. Economically, the adverse impact of stunting on Indonesia's workforce is currently estimated to reach around 10.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), equivalent to an amount of 286 trillion rupiah [4].

The presentation of stunting in Indonesia in 2022 shows a figure of 21.6%. This figure shows a decrease when compared to 2021 which showed a figure of 24.4%. The prevalence of stunting in North Sumatra Province (North Sumatra) has also decreased significantly by 4.7%, with a prevalence rate that now reaches 21.1%. This is a decrease from the previous figure, which was 25.8% in 2021 [6]. In Simalungun Regency, the prevalence of stunting shows a figure of 17.4% [7]. Accelerating the reduction of stunting in children under five is one of the main focuses in the government's program, in accordance with the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). The national target set for 2024 is to reduce the prevalence of stunting to reach a level of 14% [5]. The development of technology that is increasingly rapidly affecting human life is one of the aspects of health. This provides ease of accessing and disseminating information. The use of technology must be used effectively and efficiently in improving the degree of public health. This research aims to solve health problems in Bahliran Village, Panai District, Simalungun Regency, namely by empowering the community through the stunting care application (Important) to increase public awareness of stunting and Clean and Healthy Living Behaviour.

2. Methods

This form of community service is to form a healthy village through optimizing community knowledge by using the stunting care application. The location of community service was carried out in Bahliran Village, Simalungun Regency. The stages of activities carried out include:

1. Stage 1

This stage is the initial stage carried out in community empowerment. At this stage, awareness and behavior formation are carried out. The need to form awareness towards conscious and caring behavior so that they feel the need for self-empowerment. In this stage, the party who is the target of empowerment must be made aware of the need for changes to change the situation so that it can prosper. The forms of activities carried out at this stage include: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with religious leaders, community leaders and cross-sectors, socialization of PHBS to the community

2. Stage 2

In the second stage, it is a transformation of knowledge and skills, in this case it is necessary to learn about various knowledge, and skills to support the empowerment activities carried out. With the existence of knowledge, abilities and skills that are an additional value of the potential they have. So that in the future empowerment can run according to the expected goals. The forms of activities at this stage include; Recruit cadres who are willing to monitor and evaluate important applications

3. Stage 3

Improvement of intellectual ability and skill proficiency. In this stage of improving intellectual ability and skills, the goal of empowerment is directed to further develop the abilities owned, improve the abilities and proficiency of existing skills that will later lead to independence. At this stage, a mentoring process will be carried out to volunteers who will invite the surrounding community to behave in a clean and healthy life.

3. Result and Discussions

This community service activity was held on Thursday, October 19, 2023 in Bahliran Siborna Village, with the active participation of around 50 participants consisting of mothers who already have children and health cadres. Before the service team explained how to use the "Important" application to the community, the activity began by providing in-depth education about stunting. This is intended to ensure that participants have a solid understanding of the problem, its causes, and the possible impact it has on children's growth. The service team presented the latest data on the prevalence of stunting and risk factors related to stunting. The team also informed the public that the acceleration of stunting rate reduction is currently the main focus of the Indonesia government.



Figure 1. The service team provides education to the community

The service team also explained how crucial the role of the family is in preventing stunting and how providing proper nutrition and good care can make a significant contribution in keeping children from stunting. Furthermore, the service team provides information on how to monitor the child's height. The team showed simple tools that can be used at home to measure a child's height. The service team also socialized PHBS to all people of Bhaharan Village. This includes an introduction to important concepts such as washing hands with soap, maintaining environmental cleanliness, and other healthy behaviors. Through this counseling, the community began to realize the importance of clean and healthy living behaviors in preventing stunting. After the initial stage of awareness, the next step is to transform knowledge into concrete actions. At this stage, people are taught to use the "IMPORTANT" app to monitor their children's growth and development. The service team provides training to mothers with children and health cadres on how to use the "IMPORTANT" app. They were taught how to enter child growth data and get information about stunting data in the selected area. This training aims to enable the community to utilize technology effectively to improve the care of their children.



Figure 2. The service team teaches how to use the "Important" App

In order for the understanding provided to be optimal and its use effective, the team selected health cadres in Bahliran Village as participants who will be examples in demonstrating the use. The cadres are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the use of the "IMPORTANT" application. Community Empowerment Cadres in the Health Sector, hereinafter referred to as Cadres, are every person who is chosen by the community and trained to mobilize the community to participate in community empowerment in the health sector [8]. They ensure that the growth data of children in Bahliran village is input regularly and correctly. If a child is found to be at risk of stunting, preventive measures will be taken immediately.



Figure 3. The service team gave souvenirs and photos with the community.

As a form of gratitude to the community who have participated in this activity, the service team provided souvenirs that are expected to be useful for the people of Bahliran Village. This souvenir is not only a sign of gratitude, but also a reminder of the importance of joint efforts in preventing stunting and improving the quality of life in Bahliran Village. With community empowerment and the use of "IMPORTANT" apps, it is hoped that stunting rates will be reduced, and people will have a better understanding of the importance of clean and healthy living behaviors. This is a significant step in efforts to create a healthier and empowered society in Bahliran Village.

4. Conclusions

The service activities that have been carried out in Bahliran Village, Panai District, Simalungun Regency have been carried out and are running well between the service team and partners. In this activity, the people of Bahliran Village can take advantage of the "IMPORTANT (Stunting Care)" application which is expected to reduce stunting rates and create a healthy and empowered community.

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