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Counseling Mental Health Problems In School-Age Children

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A B S T R A C T

Background. Mental health of school-age children will be achieved by individuals who are able to develop physically, intellectually, and emotionally. However, because of the magnitude of infectious diseases that occur, mental health problems are not too taken into account. School-age children who have mental health problems like vulnerable emotional and behavior in the functioning of daily life, even experiencing difficulties in learning and socialization functions. The problem is often not responded to in time so that school-age children come to the consultation in conditions that are quite severe and require appropriate treatment. The purpose of this community service is to increase students' knowledge about inner mental health problems and how to overcome them.

Methods. Community service consists of three stages, Education, Student Assistance and ended by the evaluation of health education activities on mental health problems in school-age children at SD Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya. These activities involve the head of School, teachers and students. **Results and discussion.** the results of posttest conducted obtained 78% of participants were able to correctly answer questions about mental health problems in school-age children. **Conclusion.** it is expected that school students can become the successors of the nation who have an understanding and knowledge of mental health problems in school-age children in order to form self-awareness of the understanding and knowledge that has been obtained by students.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health in children is characterized by the ability of children to control their own emotions, regulate the expression of emotions in their social situations. Children who experience emotional disorders will tend to have difficulty in regulating their emotions (Nuryanti, 2008). Destructive, aggressive, disobedient, and anti-social behaviors, as well as anxiety disorders or emotional disorders are emotional disorders that often occur in school-age children (Prawira, 2012). If the emotional disorder lasts continuously, it can be an emotional mental problem in school-age children (Oktaviani V, Jumaini, Erwin, 2018). Emotional mental problems is a state of psychological change, which can occur in all people (Kementrian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2013). Emotional mental problems in school-age children include difficulty following learning, easy to get bored, often complain of pain, eating disorders, sleep disorders, have behavior like children aged below, and risky behavior such as fighting (Soemardi, 2016).

The results of a survey in Australia by Report on the Second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of mental health and wellbeing in 2015 in Lawrencen et al found that almost 13.9% of children aged 4-17 years experienced mental health problems consisting of Deficit Hyperactive Disorders (ADHD) 7.4%, anxiety disorders 6.9% and emotional and behavioral disorders 2.1%.

Mental health problems mostly occur in children aged 7-11 years and even younger. Emotional mental symptoms are more prevalent in girls, reaching 54.5% than in boys (Mubasyiroh, Putri, & Tjandrarini 2015). Factors that can increase emotional mental problems in children include: individual factors, family, life events, social, and school factors (IDAI, 2013). School is an environment that becomes a strategic place to equip children with knowledge and real life and has a considerable influence on Child Development (Desmita, 2011).

Other symptoms in children with emotional mental problems can also be seen from the interaction with the surrounding environment if the child withdraws from his environment, does not interact with his friends, is irritable, restless, cries non-stop, until conflicts arise with the family and school environment (Waterman, 2016).

Related research conducted by Mubasyiroh, Puri and Tjandrarini (2015) on determinants of students' emotional mental symptoms in Indonesia in 2015 stated that the role of parents and friendship is very important in influencing the emotional mental of students, as well as the necessary companion such as parents and school. (Handono & Bashori, 2013) also argue that self-adjustment and school support are needed to support stress to their environment. The results of a preliminary study through a short interview conducted at the principal of SD Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya found that the principal hopes that his students get an overview of mental health problems in order to prevent negative behavior which is the beginning of the emergence of psychosocial problems.

The impact of emotional mental problems on children can continue into more serious disorders such as depression and suicide risk if not successfully overcome early (Kementrian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2013). Mental health problems in this case are mental and emotional problems in school-age children are rare. While mental disorders in children have become a global problem associated with suffering, stigma, discrimination can even lead to death. Some psychosocial stressors such as physical illness, inadequate parenting, domestic violence, relationships with friends and economic factors are often associated in the incidence of mental health problems of school-age children. If these problems are not addressed, then cognitive development such as learning difficulties, memory disorders, inappropriate behavior disorders will continue to increase and end up with reduced social functions due to bullying and negative criticism from teachers or peers.

Based on this background, the Department of Psychiatric and Gerontology STIKES Hang Tuah Surabaya conducted community service to students of SD Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya about counseling mental health problems in school-age children. This is the obligation of STIKES Hang Tuah Surabaya to provide health services in coastal areas where SD Muhammadiyah 9 is located.

METHOD

This community service counseling activity about mental health problems in school-age children was carried out in November 2019 for 1 Week with 66 participants. Power Points, leaflets and posters, absent, posttest evaluation has been prepared to support during community service activities.

The first stage is socialization to the Headmaster, teachers about the materials and technical implementation to the evaluation. The socialization aims to introduce what actions we will take during community service. Starting from the Coordination of operating licenses, delivery of activity mechanisms, determination of implementation schedules and evaluations. The second stage is the implementation phase which consists of screening mental health problems, education, training and mentoring students. Screening for mental health problems is used using the SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire). Education is carried out directly through the lecture method with power point media and illustrated leaflets. The next stage is relaxation training and mentoring conducted jointly by forming a group of students consisting of 7-8 students to learn the stages of Deep Breath relaxation well to control negative emotions.

The third stage is the evaluation of activities. This process was carried out by the community service team and students to find out whether the efforts to realize a healthy soul can be applied easily by teachers and students. Monitoring evaluation is a re-visit to evaluate the counseling activities that have been carried out.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This community service activity is an effort to prevent mental health problems of students to change people's behavior, in this case is a special group of children who have the status as students of SD Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya. Efforts to change student behavior through community service involves driving the health of teachers and principals and staff by socializing students about the importance of maintaining mental health. Through the socialization stage, all school needs for mental health problems of students can be accommodated, so that educational activities can be planned, relaxation training as an effort to solve problems to prevent mental problems.

Stage 1 Education

Educational activities or counseling went well and students were enthusiastic about the material that was delivered. Counseling that has been delivered is information about mental health problems that often occur in school children, how the impact that occurs if the problem cannot be controlled and what the actions of students if there are some of the problems felt by students. Counseling can improve students understanding of mental health problems in school-age children, so it is very helpful in preventing the occurrence of mental health problems (sya'diyah, H., et al, 2020).



Pictures. 1 Stage 1 Education delivery

Stage 2 Student Assistance

The assistance in the Breath relaxation exercise is done as one of the problem solving efforts in overcoming mental problems that may be experienced by students. Practicing relaxation aims to educate adolescent students to immediately relax if they experience symptoms of mental health problems that have been described in the education session (Kirana et al., 2021).



Pictures. 2 Student Assistance in Deep Breath Relaxation Training

Stage 3 Evaluation

The results of counseling conducted ended with a posttest obtained as many as 78% of students were able to answer the questions given and were able to re-practice the deep breath exercises that had been taught.

CONCLUSION

Community service activities counseling mental health problems in school-age children has been implemented. This activity was received by SD Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya well and enthusiastically. Thanks to the community service team, principals, teachers and students help each other carry out counseling on mental health problems and how to overcome them. Evaluation obtained that through the knowledge provided, there is an understanding of mental health problems and prevention efforts. SD

Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya is a school located in the coastal area, and cooperates with educational institutions to get physical and mental health education of its students.

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