

## Community Empowerment Through 175 UINSU KKN Work Program in Efforts to Prevent Stutting in Ara Condong Village Stabat District, Langkat District

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this seminar is to address the persistent issue of stunting, which remains a serious problem in Indonesia despite a decrease in prevalence from 2.8% to 21.6%. The specific aim is to enhance public health quality by increasing parental knowledge about stunting, particularly in Ara Condong Village, which has a nearly zero stunting rate.

**Method:** The approach involves educational methods and direct observation of parents. The process includes several stages: (1) data collection on stunting issues in the village, (2) obtaining permission from the village office to conduct seminar activities, (3) coordination with posyandu cadres, and (4) socialization of seminar activities to pregnant mothers and mothers with toddlers.

**Practical Applications:** The practical application of this seminar is to provide educational information to parents about stunting, thereby increasing their knowledge and understanding of the issue. This is expected to contribute to the prevention of stunting in Ara Condong Village.

**Conclusion:** Based on the results of the KKN 175 program aimed at preventing stunting in Ara Condong Village, it is hoped that these efforts will improve the quality of human resources in the village. Despite the low stunting rate in the village, the community remains vigilant and proactive in preventing stunting through education and awareness.



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## **Introduction**

The Community Service Program (KKN) has a long-standing reputation as an educational initiative that seeks to apply academic knowledge to real-world community settings. In Indonesia, this program has evolved in response to the changing social issues faced by the community. One institution that actively implements the KKN program is UINSU. A prime example of the successful implementation of the KKN program is the KKN 175 UINSU in Ara Condong Village, Stabat District, Langkat Regency. Ara Condong Village, located in the Stabat District of Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, is predominantly inhabited by the Banjar ethnic group, particularly in Hamlet IV Pasar VI. The Banjar people are known for their strong, diligent, and religious character. The primary livelihood of the inhabitants is farming and animal husbandry. The village's strategic location, coupled with an adequate supply of farmers and livestock, has led to an almost zero stunting rate in Ara Condong Village. However, this does not imply that the community is oblivious to the issue of stunting.

According to WHO data, the global prevalence of stunting in children under five was around 149.2 million (22%) in 2023 (World Health Organization, 2021). In Indonesia, the Indonesian Nutrition Status Survey (SSGI) reported a decrease in the stunting rate by 2.8% to 21.6% (RI Ministry of Health, 2022). Despite this decrease, stunting remains a serious issue due to its prevalence rate still being above 20%. Stunting is a condition where children under five years of age experience growth failure due to chronic malnutrition, resulting in a height that does not correspond to their developmental age.

The nutritional needs of toddlers and older children vary based on their growth rate, development, and activity level. Insufficient nutrient intake can lead to nutritional problems, including stunting. Therefore, it is crucial to educate about proper breastfeeding for toddlers and complementary feeding from animal protein sources to prevent stunting. The mother's nutritional status before, during, and after pregnancy also influences fetal growth and the risk of stunting. Other contributing factors include pregnancy spacing, genetics, age, and inadequate nutritional intake during pregnancy.

The objective of this seminar is to enhance public health quality by providing educational information to increase parents' understanding of stunting. The KKN 175 UINSU students strive to increase knowledge by conducting socialization on early marriage prevention, counseling on stunting introduction to pregnant women and mothers with toddlers and collaborating with Posyandu cadres in Ara Condong Village to educate about stunting introduction and prevention. This initiative is a testament to the community's proactive approach to stunting prevention.

## **Method**

In the implementation of the stunting prevention program, the students of KKN 175 UINSU employed educational methods (Husein et al., 2022; Yuindra et al., 2022) and conducted direct observations (Rosha et al., 2020; Ruswati et al., 2021) of mothers who attended posyandu activities in Hamlet IV Pasar VI Ara Condong Village, Stabat District, Langkat Regency. The initial stages involved a thorough analysis of the situation and environment where the activities were conducted. This was followed by the execution of the licensing process at the Ara Condong Village Office. To gather accurate data about the stunting problem in Ara Condong Village, direct interviews were conducted with the staff of the village office. Coordination was also carried out with posyandu cadres. From the results of these interviews, it was found that there was one case of stunting in the village. This highlights the importance of the program and the need for continued efforts in education and prevention to maintain the low stunting rate in the village. The program serves as a model for how proactive measures and community involvement can effectively address public health issues.

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## Result

The KKN 175 UINSU students initiated their stunting prevention program by obtaining permissions from the village office to conduct stunting-related seminars in Dusun IV Pasar VI and collecting data on stunting in Ara Condong Village. Despite finding only one case of stunting in Hamlet XI Ulu Brayun within the last year, the students continued their efforts to educate pregnant women and mothers with toddlers about future stunting prevention. Prior to these activities, the students socialized their approach to the community and invited pregnant women and mothers with toddlers to attend both posyandu and stunting seminars.

*Figure 1. Preparation*



Source: Private Documentation, 2023.

The Stunting Prevention Seminar was held on August 2, 2023, at 11:00 at one of the posyandu cadres' houses. This activity coincided with routine posyandu activities carried out by the women of Hamlet IV Pasar VI Ara Condong Village. The students presented material on the introduction of stunting, the differences between stunted children and normal children, identifying children, causal factors, impacts, and providing information about immunization.

*Figure 2. Presentation*

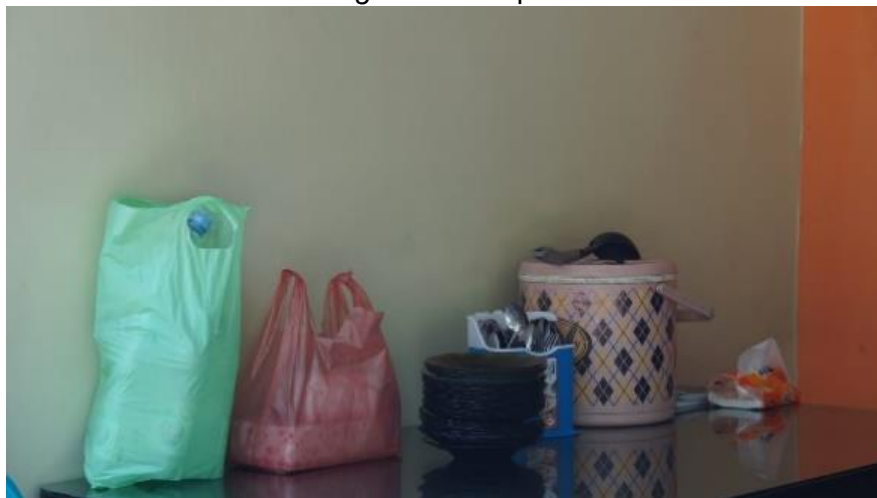


Source: Private Documentation, 2023.

Following the presentation by the Public Health Department Students, the Village Midwife provided education and guidance regarding stunting and answered questions from posyandu mothers. At the end of the activity, mothers and toddlers were served green bean porridge provided by the posyandu. Supplementary feeding (MP-ASI) in the form of biscuits and baby milk was also provided to mothers who brought their toddlers to the posyandu.

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Figure 3. Banquet



Source: Private Documentation, 2023.

In addition, the KKN 175 UINSU students held a socialization on the prevention of early marriage at the Ara Condong Village Office Hall in August 2023. The material was presented by students from the UINSU Constitutional Law Department. They emphasized the importance of educating teenagers about parenting, especially in an era where children are often exposed to sexual images on social media. They highlighted the risks of teenagers engaging in sexual behavior without understanding the realities of life.

Figure 4. Question and Answer



Source: Private Documentation, 2023.

The students also addressed the issue of parents with low knowledge tending to marry off their underage children due to living on the poverty line. They stressed the need for education to prevent such practices and to lighten the burden on parents.

## Discussion

The implementation of the stunting prevention program by KKN 175 UINSU students in Ara Condong Village has demonstrated the effectiveness of community-based educational interventions. Despite the low prevalence of stunting in the village, the program's focus on education and awareness has been instrumental in maintaining this status. The seminar's approach, which combined educational methods with direct observation of mothers, allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the situation. This was further enhanced by the active involvement of the village office and posyandu cadres, highlighting the importance of

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community participation in such initiatives.

The finding of a single case of stunting in Hamlet XI Ulu Brayun underscores the need for continued vigilance. It serves as a reminder that despite the overall low stunting rate, the risk remains, particularly in areas with limited resources or knowledge about stunting. The seminar's focus on providing knowledge to pregnant women and mothers with toddlers is a proactive measure that addresses the issue at its roots. By educating these key groups about proper nutrition and the risks of stunting, the program aims to prevent future cases. The additional focus on early marriage prevention further demonstrates the program's comprehensive approach to improving public health. Early marriage often leads to early motherhood, which can increase the risk of stunting due to inadequate maternal nutrition and care. The KKN 175 UINSU program's efforts in Ara Condong Village provide a valuable model for stunting prevention. The program's emphasis on education, community involvement, and proactive measures can serve as a blueprint for similar initiatives in other regions. Further research could explore the long-term impact of these interventions on stunting rates and overall public health in the village.

Marriage at a young age, specifically before 20 years of age, has profound implications for the prevention of stunting (Efevbera et al., 2017; Marphatia et al., 2017). Early marriage can lead to an increased risk of stunting in children due to teen pregnancies often resulting in increased iron needs for growth (Christian & Smith, 2018; Kasjono et al., 2020). These needs may not be adequately met, leading to nutritional deficiencies that can result in stunting. From a psychological perspective, children who marry early often lack sufficient knowledge about pregnancy and proper parenting patterns due to their instability, which can increase the risk of stunting (Andrestian et al., 2023; Simbolon et al., 2021). Furthermore, early marriage often takes place in families living on the poverty line (Kasjono et al., 2020; Stark, 2018). To lighten their burden, girls are often married off to people who are considered more capable (Austin, 2017; Dixon, 2013). This can lead to early motherhood and increased risk of stunting due to inadequate maternal nutrition and care. Given these implications, it is necessary to educate communities about the risks associated with early marriage and to regulate the marriageable age. This can help minimize the impact of early marriage on the incidence of stunting. Early marriage has significant implications for stunting prevention, and addressing this issue is crucial for reducing stunting rates. It underscores the importance of education, community involvement, and policy interventions in tackling this complex public health issue.

## **Conclusion**

During the KKN activities, an impressive total of 175 UINSU real work lecture groups have been actively implementing a variety of work programs. One of the most significant of these is the concerted effort to prevent stunting. In Ara Condong Village, located in the Stabat District of Langkat Regency, these efforts are being carried out through the medium of parenting seminars. The primary objective of these seminars is to enhance family understanding about stunting and its long-term implications. The role of parents, particularly in the early stages of childhood, is pivotal in preventing stunting. By educating mothers about the importance of nutrition and the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, we can combat stunting in toddlers more effectively. This education is not just a necessity, but a crucial step towards addressing the problem of stunting. Through these efforts, we can significantly contribute to children's growth and development. Moreover, by reducing stunting, we can also decrease poverty rates, which are often exacerbated by poor income as a result of the stunting problem. These initiatives underscore the importance of community involvement, education, and proactive measures in tackling the complex issue of stunting. It's a testament to the power of collective action in fostering healthier communities.

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