

Nutrition Education for Babies and Toddlers

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Abstract

Purpose: Providing education to the community so that partner communities have the ability and success in implementing efforts and actions to prevent malnutrition in Balerejo Village, Kawedanan District, Magetan Regency.

Method: The method of this activity is providing education and motivation with the theme "Education about Balanced Nutrition for Babies/Toddlers in Balerejo Village, Kawedanan District, Magetan Regency". This community service uses lecture and leaflet methods.

Practical Applications: With this balanced nutrition education, it is hoped that mothers of babies and toddlers in Balerejo village will know about fulfilling balanced nutrition for babies and toddlers and the concept of balanced nutrition in "fill my plate" to prevent malnutrition in babies and toddlers. It is also hoped that mothers of babies and toddlers can be motivated to continue monitoring and providing balanced nutrition for their babies and toddlers.

Conclusion: The results of the program that has been implemented are that the majority of people in Balerejo Village understand and understand the problem of malnutrition in babies and toddlers, starting from counseling and education on balanced nutrition for mothers of babies and toddlers. And the impact that will occur on the community in the future after the program is implemented can increase the interest of the elderly community in Balerejo Village to carry out early detection and prevention of malnutrition problems in babies and toddlers. Apart from that, the program that has been implemented has become a good habit in the community, so that it can improve health status.



Introduction

Fulfillment of balanced nutrition plays an important role in influencing a person's health status. However, this will not be fulfilled if it is not supported by knowledge regarding balanced nutrition for individuals. Nutritional knowledge and its application in daily life is one of the factors that can influence a person's nutritional condition. (Ramadhani and Khofifah, 2021). Nutrients are chemical bonds that the body needs to carry out its functions, namely producing energy, building and maintaining tissue, and regulating life processes. Apart from health, nutrition is linked to a person's economic potential, because nutrition is related to brain development, learning ability and work productivity. Nutritious food is needed by toddlers for growth and development. Insufficient food intake and the occurrence of infections in toddlers are direct causes of malnutrition status. Therefore, the food we serve to toddlers should fulfill the nutrients that toddlers need so that malnutrition can be prevented as early as possible (Wicaksana & Rachman, 2018).

Classification of Nutritional Status The following is the classification of nutritional status according to Almatsier (2005): 1) Poor nutritional status; Malnutrition status or often called underweight is a person's nutritional condition where the amount of energy received is less than the energy expended. This happens because the amount of energy entering is less than recommended. 2) Normal status; Normal nutritional status is a measure of nutritional status in which there is a balance between the body and the energy that enters the body and the energy that the body releases according to individual needs. Energy that enters the body comes from carbohydrates, protein, fat and other nutrients. 3) More nutritional status; Over-nutrition status or often referred to as obesity is a person's nutritional condition where the amount of energy entering the body is greater than the amount of energy expended. 4) Poor nutritional status; Malnutrition is a condition when a person is declared malnourished, that is, their nutritional status is below the average standard (Padmiari et al., 2021).

Activities or efforts to convey health messages to communities, groups or individuals with the hope that with these messages, communities, groups or individuals can gain better knowledge about health. This knowledge is ultimately expected to have an influence on behavior. With health promotion it is hoped that it can bring about changes in the behavior of the target (Alini & Indrawati 2018). Nutritional problems are influenced by many factors and are very complex, insufficient food intake and high levels of infectious diseases are two factors that directly cause malnutrition. Apart from that, other factors such as lack of individual and parental knowledge, wrong parenting patterns, poor sanitation and personal hygiene, and health services also play a role in nutritional problems. Other things that are no less important are cultural, economic, educational and political factors and lifestyle which also play a big role in the occurrence of nutritional problems (Nur Intania Sofianita, Eflita Meiyetriani, 2018). Socialization of balanced nutrition and discussion of healthy food on an ongoing/continuous basis, so that balanced nutrition is not only a guide to know, but can be practiced at home and at school, resulting in changes in eating patterns for the better and improving health status (Andika et al., 2022).

Method

Activity Methods: This activity involved providing education and motivation with the theme "Education About Balanced Nutrition for Babies/Toddlers in Balerejo Village, Kawedanan Subdistrict, Magetan Regency." This community service used lectures and leaflets as methods. The participants who took part in this activity totaled 13 people, including health workers and students at Posyandu Lavender 2. The activity was held on Friday, August 11, 2023, starting at 08:30 until completion.

The material was delivered through a combination of presentations and Q&A

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sessions. The community absorbed the education well, and participants were very enthusiastic, asking many questions during the Q&A session, which helped energize the atmosphere of the event. After the material presentation and the Q&A session concluded, an evaluation was conducted, which showed that the community understood and accepted the material presented.

Figure 1. Balanced Nutrition Education for Babies and Toddlers at Posyandu Lavender 2



Figure 2. documentation of participants and students



Figure 3. Question and Answer session



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| <p>Pre-Test and Post Test</p> <p>"Balanced Nutrition Education for babies and toddlers in Balerejo Village"</p> <p>1. Good nutrition for babies and toddlers should...</p> <p>a. Not enough</p> <p>b. More</p> <p>c. Balanced</p> <p>2. When should toddlers receive complementary foods...</p> <p>a. 5 months old</p> <p>b. 7 months old</p> <p>c. Age 3 years</p> <p>3. So that your child does not experience problems with the stomach or intestines, avoid using spices...</p> <p>a. Chili, pepper, pepper</p> <p>b. Salt, sugar, soy sauce</p> <p>c. Turmeric, coriander, lemongrass</p> <p>4. Feeding children must be adjusted to...</p> <p>a. Weight</p> <p>b. Age</p> <p>c. Height</p> <p>d. Gender</p> <p>5. Exclusive treatment is mandatory until age...</p> <p>a. 0-3 months</p> <p>b. 3-6 months</p> <p>c. 1-2 years</p> <p>d. 0-6 months</p> | <p>6. MP breast milk can be given after the child is old...</p> <p>a. 1 year</p> <p>b. 6 months</p> <p>c. 2 years</p> <p>d. 2 months</p> <p>7. Increase food for babies and toddlers that is rich in...</p> <p>a. Proteins</p> <p>b. Fat</p> <p>c. Carbohydrate</p> <p>d. Fiber</p> <p>8. Rice, potatoes, cassava, corn, sweet potatoes are included in...</p> <p>a. Vegetables</p> <p>b. Staple food</p> <p>c. Side dishes</p> <p>d. Fruit</p> <p>9. The contents of my plate consisting of staple foods, animal protein, nuts, vegetables and fruit are intended for children aged...</p> <p>a. 3-5 years</p> <p>b. 1-3 months</p> <p>c. 6-23 months</p> <p>d. 0-6 months</p> <p>10. Sweet foods can cause...</p> <p>a. Decreased appetite</p> <p>b. Gets sleepy easily</p> <p>c. Doesn't cry easily</p> <p>d. Children get hungry easily</p> |

Table 1. Questions about Balanced Nutrition

Result

Nutritious food is essential for toddlers' growth and development. When nutritional intake is sufficient, toddlers can achieve good and optimal growth. Therefore, the food we serve to toddlers should meet the necessary nutrients to prevent malnutrition as early as possible. There are four factors that influence the prevalence of low knowledge, awareness, and understanding regarding malnutrition in babies and toddlers. These factors are genetic factors, behavioral factors, environmental factors, and health service factors.

Genetic factors include babies born with low birth weight (LBW) and a history of certain diseases such as tuberculosis. Behavioral factors involve parents' or guardians' indifference or lack of understanding about balanced nutrition, leading to neglect if the child shows signs of malnutrition, under the assumption that the child still appears healthy. Environmental factors are related to economic difficulties, where families struggle to provide balanced nutrition for babies and toddlers. Finally, health service factors involve a lack of education on balanced nutrition provided by health services.

Balanced nutrition education for mothers of babies and toddlers is delivered using leaflets, which contain information about the importance of nutrition for babies and toddlers, feeding guidelines from 0 to over 2 years old, key points to consider when feeding babies and toddlers, and an explanation of the "fill my plate" concept for them. The goal of this education is to help mothers in Balerejo Village understand how to provide balanced nutrition for their babies and toddlers and prevent malnutrition. It is also intended to motivate mothers to continuously monitor and provide balanced nutrition to their children.

Toddlerhood is a crucial period in human growth and development, often called the "golden age," a time of rapid growth that will not be repeated. Every toddler needs nutrition with a balanced menu, in the right portions—not excessive and tailored to their needs. Poor nutrition, both in quality and quantity, will slow the growth and development of toddlers (Hadju et al., 2023).

Health education should address the needs of the target community and aim to foster independence rather than dependence on instructors. It should focus on improving the target's quality of life and well-being, rather than merely achieving physical outcomes with little long-term benefit (Amalia & Putri, 2022). The success of health education depends on the learning components, including educational media. Engaging media can boost confidence, accelerating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor changes (Kapti, Rustina, & Widyatuti, 2013).

The balanced nutrition education at Posyandu Lavender 2 targeted 10 mothers of babies and toddlers. The success indicator was an increase in knowledge of at least 60% of participants during the counseling session. The results showed that 91.1% of participants understood the material on balanced nutrition for babies and toddlers, as evidenced by the post-test conducted four days after the counseling activity (Laswati, 2019).

Discussion

Nutritional problems in Indonesia are still dominated by issues of malnutrition, such as Protein-Energy Malnutrition (PEM), iron deficiency anemia, Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD), and vitamin A deficiency. Additionally, there are other micronutrient issues, such as zinc deficiency, which have not yet been fully revealed due to limitations in nutritional science and technology. Malnutrition can also cause infectious diseases, which can lead to death (Rahmawati & Retnaningrum, 2022).

In the survey, self-awareness was assessed using several indicators. The highest gaps identified were malnutrition in infants and toddlers, the presence of high-risk pregnant women, and waste management problems in the community. The percentage of babies or toddlers suffering from undernutrition was 33% out of 40 babies and toddlers. There are some positive indicators, as the community has received counseling from both the Community Health Center and the local village midwife, and there are routine activities like Posyandu for toddlers, Posyandu for the elderly, and other health monitoring initiatives. However, understanding and knowledge regarding malnutrition among mothers of babies and toddlers remain low. This is largely because no previous counseling has been conducted specifically about malnutrition, and many mothers are unfamiliar with the signs of malnutrition in their children. Some mothers even refuse to believe their babies or toddlers are malnourished, as the children appear healthy to the naked eye. Therefore, educating and raising awareness about malnutrition is crucial.

Addressing nutritional problems must begin with improving nutrition during pregnancy, infancy, toddlerhood, preschool years, and into adolescence and adulthood. Adequate nutrition is critical for children's growth and development, and insufficient nutrition can weaken their immune systems. High activity levels and irregular eating habits often lead to imbalances between nutritional intake and needs (Mardiyanto & Putri, 2019).

There was one high-risk pregnant woman identified with a history of hepatitis during pregnancy. Additionally, waste management in the community shows that 78% of waste is burned, 43% is directly dumped into the ground, and 28% is disposed of in rivers. Based on the results of community deliberations using the brainstorming method, the top three public health priorities in Balerejo Village were identified as malnutrition in babies and toddlers, high-risk pregnant women, and waste management.

These three problems were analyzed based on H.L. Bloom's theory (Helni, 2020), which identifies four key factors influencing public health: genetic factors (heredity), behavioral factors, health services, and environmental factors. If one of these factors is not functioning properly, public health outcomes will be suboptimal. After community deliberation, it was agreed to prioritize interventions addressing malnutrition in infants and toddlers. The root cause of the problem was identified as the low level of knowledge about malnutrition. The intervention aims to increase awareness and knowledge about the importance of nutrition monitoring for babies and toddlers in Balerejo Village.

Interventions will include counseling on malnutrition, balanced nutrition education for babies and toddlers, and mobile Posyandu activities to monitor the weight and height of infants and toddlers receiving supplementary food (PMT). One solution is providing PMT (Supplementary Food), which is a government program designed to supplement the daily food intake of toddlers to address malnutrition. This program, conducted with village health officers, involves monitoring the weight of toddlers and high-risk pregnant women. The success of this program requires continuous surveillance and prompt action. Early detection and developmental stimulation involve not only families but also healthcare providers, such as the Puskesmas (community health centers).

Posyandu plays a crucial role in educating families and the community on improving the nutritional status of infants and toddlers to prevent malnutrition (Feri Kameliawati, Riska Hediya Putri, Wiwi Febriani, 2019). Balanced nutrition refers to a daily food composition that contains nutrients in appropriate types and quantities to meet the body's needs, including macronutrients (protein, fat, and carbohydrates) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). This concept also incorporates food diversity, physical activity, and clean-living habits (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014). Consuming fruits and vegetables are an essential part of fulfilling balanced nutrition for all age groups, including school-age children. Fruits and vegetables help protect the body and maintain a healthy weight (Wijayanti et al., 2022).

Conclusion

Based on the problem of many babies and toddlers experiencing malnutrition in Balerejo Village, a program was implemented in the form of counseling for mothers of babies and toddlers about balanced nutrition. The program provided education on balanced nutrition to the mothers. The results of this program show that the majority of the community in Balerejo Village now understands the issue of malnutrition in infants and toddlers, gained through both counseling and nutritional education.

The expected future impact on the community after the program's implementation includes an increase in interest among the elderly in Balerejo Village—34 individuals have already shown interest—in conducting early detection and taking preventive measures against malnutrition in infants and toddlers. Additionally, the program has established good habits within the community, which will help improve overall health levels.

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