

Enhancing Hygiene Education: Teaching Hand Washing Techniques to Intellectually Impaired Youth at Tomohon Special Needs School

Ni Luh Putri¹, Sofyan Amu²

^{1,2}Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan dan Psikologi, Universitas Negeri Manado, Manado, Indonesia.

Corresponding Author: Ni Luh Putri

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20241208>

ABSTRACT

In general, young children with intellectual impairments are not used to washing their hands after playing, and most children do not use soap to wash their hands. Worms and diarrhea are common diseases among schoolchildren. Diarrhea is one of the most common ailments among children. It happens because children do not use soap to wash their hands. Many ailments that regularly afflict young children are commonly related to clean and healthy living choices. Establishing a clean and healthy lifestyle in kindergarten is crucial for maintaining, improving, and protecting young children. This can be accomplished through the 'School's Health Clinic' approach. Washing hands with soap simply means removing dirt and dust from both hands. Hand washing is an important part of an early childhood education program that promotes clean and healthy living habits. It can help prevent a number of infections that can lead to death, such as diarrhea and acute respiratory infections. This activity can improve children's knowledge of clean and healthy lifestyles, such as properly washing hands with soap. It can also be done on a daily basis to reduce the spread of diarrhea and worms, which will ultimately improve children's health. All children were given an explanation about the importance of washing their hands properly with soap with running water, and they were able to practice the

proper way to wash their hands so that it could be used in everyday life, such as washing their hands with soap after playing or eating.

Keywords: wash your hands, remove germs

INTRODUCTION

Washing hands with soap is one of the clean and healthy living habits that is currently very important for the health of intellectual impaired young children because the problem of poor hand washing behaviour practices exists not only in developing countries but also in developed countries, where the majority of people still forget to wash their hands. As a result, countries such as Indonesia continue to experience high rates of diarrhea. As a result, on October 15, 2008, the United Nations designated this day as "world hand washing with soap day," with a focus on schoolchildren as "agents of change" (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015), as quoted in the journal (Patel 2019).

Kindergarten is where many children with intellectual impairment spend their time. They learn to gain knowledge and interact with peers and other members of the school community through various events. However, if schools are not properly managed, they can be a source of disease transmission. Furthermore, children are more susceptible to disease during their school years (Ministry of Health, 2012).

Worms and diarrhea are two diseases that schoolchildren commonly contract (Ministry of Health, 2010). According to (Tietjen, 2004), diarrhea is one of the most common diseases that children contract because they do not wash their hands with soap. The emergence of various diseases that frequently affect school-aged children (ages 4-5 years) is generally linked to clean and healthy living habits. As a result, establishing the values of clean and healthy living behavior in kindergarten is an absolute necessity for preserving, improving, and protecting young children, and can be accomplished through the Kindergarten School's Health Clinic approach. Removing dirt and dust from both hands is a simple definition of washing hands with soap. Proper hand washing can help prevent various diseases that cause death, such as diarrhea and acute respiratory infections (Ministry of Health, 2015).

According to research conducted by (Suprpto et al. 2020) on 23 students from Kindergarten ABA 48 Semarang in 2019 to determine the students' clean and healthy living habits, such as the habit of washing their hands with soap. It was found that just 6 (26%) of the students had the knowledge and practice of properly washing their hands before the beginning of the activity. However, after being taught about hand washing utilizing visual and audio-visual media approaches, it was observed that 13 (56.5%) of the kids comprehended and knew how to wash their hands properly according to World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.

To remove germs from your hands, wash your hands with clean water and use soap (Ministry of Health, 2011). WHO recognizes the need of promoting proper hand washing using soap. This can be observed by celebrating World Hand Washing with Soap Day on October 15 (WHO, 2015). Washing hands with soap is one of the most common personal hygiene issues among school-aged children. School-aged children are the most suitable period to inculcate awareness and healthy living practices, particularly hand

washing with soap. The health of school-aged children can affect the future health of the community and nation (Maryunani, 2012). Washing hands with soap is still not a routine habit in society, especially among youngsters (Ministry of Health, 2010). According to Irianto, stated by Natsir (2018), the habit of washing hands with soap will prevent numerous diseases in children and families if they implement hand washing with soap in their daily lives. The correct behavior of washing hands with soap does not appear by chance, but must be taught from a young age, because children are change agents who may teach clean and healthy living habits for themselves and their surroundings (Natsir, 2018).

Health education is one method for preventing infections caused by incorrect hand washing. Health education is to ensure that individual, group, and community behaviors have a beneficial impact on health maintenance and improvement. Counseling increases information, which can transform a person's conduct for the better (Soekidjo Notoatmodjo, 2012). The government has made several steps to enhance the coverage of hand washing with soap, especially by adopting a policy where schools must provide facilities that promote the behaviour of washing hands with soap, such as flowing water, soap, and towel. However, not all schools have facilities for washing hands with soap. Tomohon Special Needs School is one of the kindergartens that does not have soap-washing facilities.

People need to know how to properly wash their hands with soap and water. Unclean water includes a lot of germs and bacteria that cause disease, and if you use it, the germs will get on your hands. When you consume, microorganisms rapidly enter the body, which might cause disease. Soap can remove dirt and kill germs, because, without it, dirt and germs remain on the hands (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2007). According to Notoatmodjo (2003), washing your hands cleans your hands of disease germs and prevents the spread of diseases such as diarrhea, cholera,

dysentery, typhus, worms, skin disorders, Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), avian flu, and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

Based on this, it is important to implement health education activities that focus on changing behavior with the aim of improving the wellness of young children with intellectual impairments in the long run. This endeavor also ensures that infrastructure, such as water supply, is met. The availability of water certainly makes it simpler for them to continue carrying out the clean and healthy living habit that we will later teach, so that their behavior is sustainable both at home and in the surrounding area. The issues observed include: (a) Children are not accustomed to cleaning their hands after playing. (b) In general, children do not wash their hands with soap; they just wash them. (c) There is a lack of infrastructure for washing.

IMPLEMENTATION & METHODS

This activity took place at Tomohon City's Special Needs School. The research implementation methods are as follows: (1) explaining clean and healthy lifestyles, (2) counseling on how to properly wash hands with soap to prevent worms in children, and (3) practicing how to wash hands properly. The following are the steps to wash your hands with soap: (a) Wet your hands with clean water, (b) Apply enough soap to your hands, (c) Rub the palm of one hand against the palm of the other hand, (d) Rub the back of the hand and between the fingers, rub the back of the fingers against the palm of the hand with the fingers interlocked, (e) Rub the palm and between the fingers in an interlocked manner, (f) Wash the thumb in a rotated position. (g) Rub the tips of the fingers against the palm, exposing the nails to soap. (h) Rinse soapy hands with clean running water. (i) Use a disposable cloth or tissue to dry your hands, and (j) clean the water tap dial with the same cloth or tissue. This activity demonstrates to children how to properly wash their hands with soap. A questionnaire serves as the instrument for

measuring knowledge. The data is gathered through interviews with children. Data was collected both before and after the counseling session. Leaflets, liquid soap, running water, and a cloth or tissue are used as the drying media. The service will be implemented between May and July 2024, with a total of four children participating. The service was carried out at the Tomohon Special School

RESULT

The Santa Anna Special Needs School in Tomohon organized a community service project centered on proper handwashing techniques. This initiative focused on five children in early childhood, and the partnership program was executed seamlessly. During the session, all the children attentively listened to explanations about the importance of washing hands correctly with soap and running water. They also had the opportunity to practice proper handwashing techniques, learning to wash their hands thoroughly. The children were encouraged to incorporate these practices into their daily routines, such as using soap after playing, before eating, and after meals.

CONCLUSION

To prevent various diseases that cause diarrhea, it can be prevented by washing hands properly, namely by carrying out education programs on clean and healthy living behavior through handwashing activities with soap for children of an early age with mental retardation.

The five children with intellectual disabilities are accustomed to washing their hands before eating and after playing, and in general the children are accustomed to washing their hands with soap.

This activity can increase children's understanding of clean and healthy living patterns, including washing hands with soap correctly, and can be done as a daily habit, so that the transmission of worms and diarrhea can also be reduced and ultimately will improve children's health.

Remove dirt and dust from both hands by washing hands with soap to prevent various

diseases that can be prevented by washing hands properly.

Declaration by Authors

Acknowledgment: None

Source of Funding: None

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Aiello. (2008). *Effect of Hand Hygiene on Infectious Disease Risk in the Community Setting: A Meta-Analysis*. *American Journal of Public Health* 2008, 98 (8):1372–1381
2. Departemen Kesehatan Republik Indonesia. 2013. *Laporan Hasil Riset Kesehatan Dasar Indonesia (Riskesdas)*. Depkes RI. Jakarta.
3. Desiyanto., & Djannah. 2013. Efektifitas Mencuci Tangan Menggunakan Cairan Pembersih Tangan Antiseptik (Hand Sanitizer) Terhadap Jumlah Angka Kuman, *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat*, Vol.2 No.2.
4. Departemen Kesehatan RI. (2009). *Panduan Penyelenggaraan Cuci Tangan Pakai Sabun Sedunia (HCTPS)*. Jakarta
5. RISKESDAS. (2010). *Laporan Riset Kesehatan Dasar Republik Indonesia tahun 2010*. Jakarta
6. Widiari, N, & Kurniati, D.P.Y. 2013. *Efektifitas Eduentertainment dalam Meningkatkan Pengetahuan, Sikap dan Perilaku Menyikat Gigi Pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar di SDN Sukawati, Kabupaten Gianyar*. Universitas Udayana: Denpasar
7. WHO. (2009). *Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Healthcare*. Geneva: WHO.

How to cite this article: Ni Luh Putri, Sofyan Amu. Enhancing hygiene education: teaching hand washing techniques to intellectually impaired youth at Tomohon special needs school. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2024; 11(12): 73-76. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20241208>
