

## Empowering Mothers, Strengthening Teens: Promoting Teen Mental Health Through Parental Education

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### Abstract

Mothers play a critical role in shaping their children's well-being, and equipping them with parenting skills is essential for fostering healthy teenage development. This community service program aimed to empower with mothers by providing them with knowledge of positive parenting practices and raising awareness of the impact these practices have on teenagers' mental health. The program partnered with students and mothers from one state high school in North Jakarta. Interactive learning process, entangling presentations, focus group discussions (FGDs), role-playing simulations, discussions, and question & answer sessions are involving. Pre-tests were to assess knowledge, and post-tests were to evaluate program impact. The program was responses by participants well, who engaged throughout the sessions. Positive changes in participants increased pro-activeness demonstration and responsiveness towards session's effective parenting strategies were part of the observation result. It was newfound confidence in their parenting abilities. Their pro-activeness lasted into a stronger relationship and improved mental well-being for both mothers and their teenage children

**Keywords:** *Parental education, Teen mental health*

### Introduction

Adolescence is a whirlwind of emotional and social change. Excitement can also be challenging for teens and the parents who love them. Empowering Mothers, Strengthening Teens: Promoting Teen Mental Health through Parental Education tackles this critical topic head-on. It recognizes the vital role of mothers in their teens' lives and provides them with the knowledge and tools to navigate this crucial stage. By equipping the mothers with knowledge of teen mental health, open communication techniques, and valuable resources, this book empowers them to become strong advocates for their teens' well-being. Its journey is not just supporting the teens; it is also strengthening the parent-child bond and fostering a healthy, happy future.

Parenting programs are informal activities designed to align parenting and education practices for children in playgroups and at home. Effective parenting will contribute to the development of children with good personalities.

The authors identified a problem with parenting between parents and students at one of state senior high school in North Jakarta. This problem was identified through observations and interviews with the principal and guidance counsellor of

the school. The team found that there are three main problems related to parenting and adolescent mental health: (1) Lack of knowledge about the concept of parenting. Parents and students do not have a good understanding of what parenting is and what it entails. (2) Lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of parenting for adolescent mental health. Parents and students are not aware of how parenting can impact the mental health of adolescents. (3) Permissive culture, where parents shower their children with material possessions rather than love and attention. This can lead to adolescents feeling unloved and unsupported, which can have a negative impact on their mental health.

## Literature Review

### Adolescent Parenting

Adolescence is a dynamic period of growth for adolescents to search for and form their identities. This phase is crucial and many risks are to be considered for the adolescent, their families, communities and state where they are born. Parenting patterns for adolescents may result to early marriage, defiant behaviour and dropping out of school. We recognize that adolescents play an important role in the future generation of their families and Nation building, therefore, parenting management must be governed by certain strategies (Sugiyanto, 2015).

Emotional and language parenting involves providing consultations with parents to help them shape their children's behavior and manage their emotions. It encourages children to communicate everything they experience, feel, and think. Parenting implementation involved holding consultations with parents to help the children's learning development to be fair, helping each other, cooperating, having a high sense of solidarity, and respecting each other (Chandra, 2018).

### Parenting Styles and Social Behaviour Development

Parents are more likely to implement a democratic parenting style, as many as 36.66% or 11 children on the assessment of the development in children's social behaviour, parents apply a permissive parenting style to 7 children and 4 children with an authoritarian parenting style (Junita & Anhusadar, 2021). Research results indicated that MPAP (Make Parenting A Pleasure) treatment group participants showed increased parenting skills and child development knowledge and decreased parental depression compared to waitlist control group participants. The results highlight the importance of enhancing resilience by supporting parents through direct instruction and skill development (Kelley et. al, 2020).

### Parental Practices and Academic Achievement

Parental communication and expressions of affection show a better contribution of parental parenting to the explanatory model. Wijirahayu (2019) argued that a mother also played role as an action researcher in developing her daughter's communication skill. Dávila, (2023) reported the main findings in her study, indicating that parenting affected academic achievement with the intervention of

adolescent autonomy. Cognitive, motivational, and social autonomy dimensions, in order, contribute to explaining academic achievement, with Social Sciences and Mathematics being the academic fields with the highest burden. The conclusions cover the analysis of parenting practices studied and their relationship with adolescent behaviour and outcomes. The implications address the opportunities offered for future interventions and studies. High levels of warmth and positive control from fathers and mothers, as well as low levels of violence from fathers and mothers, were associated with more prosaically behaviour in children (Storm et al, 2022).

### Research Methodology

1. **Survey:** Survey to assess the current level of knowledge, and awareness among parents and students regarding parenting and mental health.
2. **Approach parents and students:** Establish contact with parents and students of SMAN 40 Jakarta to introduce the workshop and obtain their consent for participation.
3. The workshop is open to all parents and students of one state senior high school in North Jakarta.
4. **Workshop:** Conduct a four-week workshop covering the following topics: Week 1: Introduction to parenting and its importance in fostering mental health. Week 2: Raising awareness about mental health issues and the importance of self-care. Week 3: Exploring effective communication and parenting strategies to promote mental well-being.  
Week 4: Identifying and preventing toxic parenting behaviours that can negatively impact mental health.  
The workshop utilized various interactive methods, including presentations, role-playing, games, focus group discussions, and question-and-answer sessions.
5. **Evaluation and Sustainability:** Evaluation: Conduct pre-and post-tests to measure the knowledge shared, attitudes, and practices related to parenting and mental health. Sustainability: Develop a plan for ongoing support and resources to ensure the long-term sustainability of the workshop's impact.

#### Expected Outcomes:

**Quantitative:** Reduce the prevalence of stress and depression among students/adolescents because of toxic parenting.

**Qualitative:** Enhance the understanding and awareness of parents and students regarding the importance of communication and positive parenting practices for maintaining mental health.

### Results and Discussion

Adolescence is a critical period where teenagers are actively searching for and forming their identities. This can be a challenging time for both mothers and their children. Parenting programs can address the specific risks associated with adolescence, such as early marriage, behavioural issues, and dropping out of school.



By learning effective parenting strategies, mothers can play a vital role in supporting their teenagers and guiding them towards healthy choices.



**Figure 1. Workshop day 1**

Many parenting programs offer specific guidance on emotional and language development. These programs often involve consultations where mothers can receive personalized advice on shaping their children's behaviour, managing emotions, and encouraging communication. Mothers are equipped with tools to help their children express themselves openly and confidently.

Based on the partner's problems, the team has worked together with the principal and guidance counsellor of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta to identify three priority steps to find solutions that will be over three years:

1. Provide education about the concept of parenting. These include teaching parents about the different parenting styles, the benefits of setting boundaries and communicating effectively with their children.
2. Raise awareness of the importance of parenting for adolescent mental health. The activities involve educating parents about the signs of mental health problems in adolescents, how to talk to their children about mental health, and where to get help if needed.
3. Develop a program to help parents and students anticipate the dangers of depression caused by toxic parenting. We delivered this program through various methods, including digital media, workshops, and parent-child groups.

We use appropriate and practical methods, including digital media, so that parents and students at one of the state senior high schools in North Jakarta can anticipate the dangers of depression caused by toxic parenting. To achieve the solutions offered above, we use the following approach.

Involve parents and students of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta as active participants throughout the activities. It involves them in discussions, practicing educating others, and becoming agents who can persuade others of the importance of knowing and understanding the impact and prevention of mental health decline.

Conduct orientation and discussion on the essentials of maintaining mental health. Conduct discussions and role-plays or simulations to educate people about the essence of parenting as an effort to maintain adolescent mental health.

Based on the partner's problems and the solutions offered as described above, the expected output is to provide learning to the community, especially parents and students of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta, about various information about parenting as an effort to maintain mental health. Munger et.al. (2020) suggested to conduct parenting suitable to the situation and condition.

### **Pre-Activity Survey and Collaboration**

Before conducting the workshop, the Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA (UHAMKA) community service team conducted a preliminary survey by approaching the principal and guidance counsellor of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta to gain insights into the parenting practices and mental health of students and their parents. During this initial engagement, the team also sought permission to provide comprehensive parenting education to the students and parents of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta, encompassing:

1. Educating participants about the concept of parenting.
2. Raising awareness about the significance of parenting in promoting adolescent mental health.

### **Preliminary Interviews**

The workshop commenced with a pre-test to assess the existing understanding of parenting among the students and parents of one of the state senior high schools in North Jakarta. Subsequently, the team conducted preliminary interviews to identify any potential parenting-related issues faced by the students.

Based on the results of the pre-test and interviews, the team convened to strategize the most effective approach to deliver the workshop content, ensuring easy comprehension and promoting the prevention of premarital sexual behaviour and its anticipation among adolescents. The goal was to address and eliminate the issue from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives, enabling the team to maximize the impact of their counselling and anti-premarital sex ambassador declaration. Ersami et.al. (2023) argued that awareness of toxic relationship could reduce the negative impact of behaviours among adolescents.

## Interactive Presentation and Discussion

During the second visit, the team presented the workshop material, delivered by experts well-versed in the types, impacts, and preventive measures associated with premarital sexual behavior. An interactive discussion and Q&A session followed, generating multi-faceted inquiries directed toward the speakers. It fosters a lively exchange of ideas. While some participants engaged in the discussions, others opted to pose the questions through the guidance counselor, expressing concerns about their anonymity.

## Engaging Activities and Role-Playing

On the third visit, the team facilitated simulations, games, focus group discussions, and role-playing activities. Participants thoroughly enjoyed these engaging exercises, effectively conveying the importance of parenting education in safeguarding adolescent mental health.



Figure 2. Interaction among the students during the workshop

## Expected Benefits and Target Audience

This workshop is an anticipation to yield valuable benefits for various stakeholders. The primary target audience and their expected roles and benefits: (1) Students and Parents of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta. (1a) Role: Active participants who receive and transfer acquired knowledge and skills. (1b) Benefits: Develop the ability to implement preventive measures to avoid misunderstandings in parenting practices between parents and children. (2) Principal, School Management, and Guidance Counselors. (2a) Role: End-users who can implement and anticipate parenting practices that align with ethical and moral standards. (2b) Another benefit is to facilitate access to parenting education resources



Parenting programs can be a valuable tool for mothers to learn and develop skills to effectively raise their adolescent. These programs aim to align the approaches used at home with those used in playgroups or day-care settings, fostering consistency in a child's development. Ultimately, effective parenting programs can contribute to children growing into well-rounded individuals with positive personalities. Heng et.al. (2020) reminded the crucial role of parenting pattern toward the attitude of adolescent in big cities.



**Figure 3. Parent and Student reaction**

Parenting programs can help mothers understand different parenting styles, such as democratic, permissive, and authoritarian. Research suggests that a democratic approach, where there are clear expectations but also opportunities for discussion and negotiation, can be beneficial for adolescent's social development. Parenting programs can equip mothers with the tools to identify the most effective style for their unique family situation. Some programs, address to parenting issues proactively and reactively such as Make Parenting A Pleasure (MPAP), focus on building resilience in both mothers and their children. These programs can be particularly helpful as mothers navigate the challenges of parenting. By providing support, knowledge, and skill development, MPAP-type programs can empower mothers to manage stress, improve communication with their adolescent, and foster a positive family environment.

Research highlights the significant role of communication and expressions of affection between mothers and their adolescent. Strong communication helps foster trust and understanding while expressions of affection build emotional security. Parenting programs can provide mothers with practical strategies for effective communication and building a loving and nurturing relationship with their adolescent

## Conclusions

The implementation of the workshop has demonstrated positive outcomes, empowering the students and parents of one of the state senior high schools at North Jakarta. Participants have gained a deeper understanding of the importance of parenting education in fostering family harmony and creating a happy home environment characterized by open and effective communication, mutual love, and respect. In collaboration with the school administration, the team has provided ongoing support through counselling sessions, raising awareness about the detrimental effects of ineffective communication between students and parents. For productive and creative adolescents, we encouraged alternative positive outlets such as sports and hobbies.

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