

**ACCELERATE REDUCTION OF STUNTING: KNOWLEDGE AND PARENTING PATTERNS OF PARENTS WITH STUNTING TODDLER IN KENDAL DISTRICT****Dona Yanuar Agus Santoso\*, Livana PH**

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kendal, Jl. Laut No. 31, Ngilir, Kendal, Central Java 51311, Indonesia

[\\*donayanuar@stikeskendal.ac.id](mailto:donayanuar@stikeskendal.ac.id)**ABSTRACT**

Kendal Regency emerges as a significant stunting hotspot, reporting 5,017 at-risk toddlers for stunting in 2021. Parental comprehension of stunting and caregiving practices in toddler nutrition are crucial predisposing factors. This study investigates parental knowledge and caregiving patterns regarding stunted toddlers in Kendal. Employing purposive sampling, 165 parents (mothers/fathers) were selected. Through a knowledge and caregiving pattern questionnaire, findings reveal parents' moderate awareness of toddler stunting; 77.6% display satisfactory understanding, while 22.4% demonstrate limited awareness. Analysis of caregiving patterns indicates that 57% of parents adopt appropriate nutritional caregiving, 27.9% exhibit insufficiencies, and 15.2% follow commendable practices. These results underscore the need to enhance parental understanding of stunting and improve nutritional caregiving for stunted children. It is recommended that parents of stunted toddlers actively seek information on stunting management and attentively address nutritional requirements, particularly fat intake, for severely underweight children.

Keywords: caregiving patterns; knowledge; nutritional intake; stunting

<b>First Received</b> 01 May 2023	<b>Revised</b> 08 May 2023	<b>Accepted</b> 29 May 2023
<b>Final Proof Received</b> 18 August 2023	<b>Published</b> 31 August 2023	
<b>How to cite (in APA style)</b> Santoso, D., & PH, L. (2023). Accelerate Reduction of Stunting: Knowledge and Parenting Patterns of Parents with Stunting Toddler in Kendal District. <i>Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research</i> , 5(3), 467-472. <a href="https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v5i3.2137">https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v5i3.2137</a> .		

**INTRODUCTION**

Stunting, which indicates delayed physical growth and cognitive development in children under five, has become a major concern on the global health development agenda. This situation not only has short-term health implications, but also has a significant long-term impact on the quality of a country's human resources. The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies stunting as a public health problem that requires immediate and sustainable action. In Indonesia, including in Kendal Regency, the prevalence of stunting is still worrying. Kendal Regency is one of the regions that faces serious challenges related to stunting, which is recognized by the government and other stakeholders (Dinkes Kendal, 2020). Stunting can be influenced by various factors, including inadequate nutritional intake, low socio-economic status, limited access to health services and poor sanitation (Ministry of Health, 2019). Therefore, the Kendal Regency government has identified handling stunting as one of the priorities in efforts to improve community welfare.

In this context, research becomes increasingly important to explore a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to the high prevalence of stunting in Kendal Regency. By revealing parenting patterns, parental knowledge, and other related factors, research can provide valuable insights for the formulation of policies and intervention programs that are more effective in dealing with the problem of stunting at the local level. By referring to this

background, this research aims to analyze the knowledge and parenting patterns of parents who have stunted toddlers in Kendal Regency. It is hoped that the findings from this research can make an important contribution to efforts to improve the nutritional status of children under five and inform more careful policy steps in overcoming the stunting challenges faced by Kendal Regency.

## METHOD

This research is a descriptive study with a cross-sectional approach. This approach is used to describe and analyze the variables of parental knowledge and parenting patterns with the prevalence of stunting among toddlers in Kendal Regency at one point in time. This research was conducted in Kendal Regency, Central Java. Data collection was carried out over a three month period, namely from January to March 2022. The population of this study consisted of parents (mothers or fathers) who had toddlers in Kendal Regency. The research sample was selected using purposive sampling method. The total number of samples taken was 165 parents who met the inclusion criteria. Data collection was carried out through the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two main parts: (1) parents' knowledge about stunting, and (2) parenting style in providing nutrition to toddlers. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire has been tested before. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Parents' knowledge about stunting and parenting patterns in providing nutrition will be processed into frequencies, percentages and graphs according to the characteristics of the data at hand.

## RESULTS

The ages of the parents participating in the study ranged from 20 to 39 years, with an average age of 29.97 years. Most of the respondents are in the productive age range. This indicates the inclusion of the younger age group in this study. The education levels of the parents who were sampled were SMA and SMP.

Table 1.  
Respondents' Education Level (n=165)

Education	F	%
Senior High School	80	48.5
Junior High School	85	51.5

In the context of parental knowledge about stunting, 128 respondents (77.6%) had knowledge that could be considered sufficient, while 37 respondents (22.4%) had low knowledge. This shows that the majority of parents have an adequate understanding of stunting in toddlers, although there are still a small number who need to increase their knowledge.

Table 2.  
Knowledge Level of Respondents (n=165)

Knowledge	F	%
Enough	128	77.6
Low	37	22.4

In terms of parenting style providing nutrition, about 15.2% (25 people) of parents reported applying good parenting style in providing nutrition to their children. About 57% (94 people) of parents adopted a parenting style that could be categorized as adequate, while 27.9% (46 people) faced difficulties in managing adequate nutritional parenting.

Table 3.  
Parenting Patterns of Respondents (n=165)

Parenting	f	%
Good	25	15.2
Enough	94	57.0
Not enough	46	27.9

Dari data z-score tinggi badan anak, terdapat 35,2% (58 anak) anak yang memiliki z-score -3 SD (stunting berat), 36,4% (60 anak) dengan z-score -2 SD (stunting sedang), dan 28,5% (47 anak) dengan z-score -1 SD (stunting ringan).

Tabel 4.  
Tinggi Badan Anak (n=165)

Child's height	f	%
-3 SD	58	35.2
-2 SD	60	36.4
-1 SD	47	28.5

The cross-tabulation results show that parents with low knowledge have parenting styles that tend to be less when compared to parents who have sufficient knowledge.

Table 5.  
Cross-tabulation of Parenting Style and Parental Knowledge (n=165)

Knowledge	Parenting			Total
	Good	Enough	Low	
Enough	20	75	33	128
Low	5	19	13	37

## DISCUSSION

This research provides an in-depth picture of parental knowledge, parenting patterns and children's nutritional status in the context of stunting in Kendal Regency. These findings have important implications for tackling the problem of stunting and improving the welfare of children under five in this region. The findings show a correlation between parental knowledge about stunting and children's nutritional status, as reflected in the crosstab analysis between knowledge and z-score. These results are in line with previous studies which show that parental knowledge about nutrition and growth is related to the risk of stunting (Sulistyo et al., 2021). Parents who have a better understanding of stunting tend to be more aware of the importance of adequate nutrition for their child's optimal growth.

This factor can be explained by the fact that parents who are more knowledgeable about stunting are more likely to seek information regarding balanced nutrition and implement appropriate parenting patterns. This knowledge can also motivate parents to access health services that provide nutritional guidance and better advice on child care. These findings have significant implications for the development of education programs and stunting awareness campaigns in Kendal District. Efforts to increase parents' knowledge about stunting must be increased through more intensive and easily accessible educational programs. A thorough public awareness campaign will help spread information about the risks of stunting, long-term implications, and the importance of good nutrition during the growing years of toddlers. However, in looking at this relationship, we must consider that knowledge alone is not enough to fully overcome

stunting. Socioeconomic factors, access to health services, and home environment also play an important role in a child's nutritional status. The family and environment have a major influence in determining access to nutritious food and adequate hygiene. This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, because this study uses a cross-sectional approach, it is not possible to identify direct causation. Other unmeasured factors such as daily diet and physical activity level of children can also affect nutritional status. Additionally, the data used in this study were based on parent self-reports, which may be prone to bias or inaccuracy. Based on these findings, recommendations for further steps can be identified. First, educational programs on stunting and good nutrition must be strengthened and made more accessible to the community. Training for local health workers and community facilitators can help convey this information effectively.

Apart from that, efforts to reduce stunting must also involve economic aspects. Programs that support families in terms of income and access to health services must be strengthened. In addition, interventions must be made to improve sanitation in the home environment to prevent infections and diseases that can affect children's growth. Providing proper nutrition to children with stunting has a very important role in efforts to improve children's growth and health. Stunting is the result of inadequate nutritional intake in the long term, which in turn can hamper the physical growth and development of children as a whole. Therefore, improving nutrition is an important factor in stunting prevention strategies. Providing a balanced nutritional intake is key. It includes proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals needed for healthy growth and development. Balanced nutrition helps meet a child's daily needs for energy and essential nutrients. Protein is very important for the growth of new cells in the body. Make sure your child gets enough protein sources from meat, fish, eggs, milk or vegetable products such as beans and tofu. Anemia is often associated with stunting. Iron is an essential nutrient needed for red blood cell production and body oxygenation. Make sure iron-containing foods such as red meat, liver and green leafy vegetables are included in your child's diet.

These nutrients are important for bone growth and tooth development. Milk, dairy products, leafy green vegetables, and foods fortified with calcium and vitamin D can help meet this need. Vitamin A is important for eye health and the immune system. Foods rich in vitamin A include carrots, pumpkin, spinach and liver. Vitamin C helps increase the absorption of iron from food. Fruits like oranges, strawberries and tomatoes are good sources. Feeding regularly at regular intervals is very important. Avoid long-term starvation and make sure the child gets enough fluids to maintain body hydration (Adani, 2017). Trying to provide a variety of different foods helps ensure that children get the variety of nutrients they need. Diversification also helps prevent oversaturation of certain foods that may not provide balanced nutrition. High-fat foods and fast food tend to be low in essential nutrients and high in empty calories. This can lead to being overweight or obese, which can also contribute to the risk of stunting. Every child has different nutritional needs depending on age, weight and health condition. Consultation with a nutritionist or pediatrician can help design a meal plan that suits the needs of children with stunting. The discussion is typed in capital letters [Time New Roman 12 bold font]. The discussion section presents the findings logically, linking them with relevant reference sources. The discussion of the results is argumentative in nature regarding the relevance between the results, theory, previous research and the empirical facts found, as well as showing the novelty of the findings. The discussion should contain 80% of primary references. [Times New Roman, 11, normal, single spaced]

## **CONCLUSION**

Apart from the nutritional aspect, factors such as good sanitation, access to health services and education also have an important role in efforts to overcome stunting. Integrated interventions involving various stakeholders, including families, communities and government, are needed to achieve significant results in reducing the prevalence of stunting and ensuring children grow healthily and optimally.

## **REFERENCES**

- Adani, F. Y., & Nindya, T. S. (2017). Perbedaan Asupan Energi, Protein, Zink, dan Perkembangan pada Balita Stunting dan Non-Stunting. *Amerta Nutr*, 1(2): 46-51
- Aridiyah OF, Rohmawati N, Ririanty M. (2015). Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Kejadian Stunting pada Anak Balita di Wilayah Pedesaan dan Perkotaan. *e-Jurnal Pustaka Kesehatan*, vol. 3 No. 1, Januari 2015
- Arikunto Suharsimi. Dr. Prof, (2013). *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, hal : 109-189.
- Dinas Kesehatan Kabupaten Kendal. (2020). *Laporan Tahunan Kesehatan 2020: Kabupaten Kendal*.
- Jones, R. E., dan rekan. (2019). Parental Knowledge and Child Feeding Practices in Relation to Undernutrition in a High-Risk Group in Southern India. *Bulletin Gizi dan Kesehatan*, 40(3), 335-344.
- Kementerian Kesehatan. (2019). *Strategi Nasional Pencegahan Stunting: Pemerintah Indonesia*.
- Rahmawati, R., & Pramono, A. (2022). Faktor Sosioekonomi yang Berkontribusi pada Stunting di Indonesia: Tinjauan Sistematis. *Jurnal Penelitian Kesehatan*, 11(1), 2361.
- Sulistyo, F. H., dan rekan. (2021). Faktor-faktor Ibu dan Rumah Tangga yang Berhubungan dengan Stunting pada Anak Balita di Indonesia: Pendekatan Komprehensif. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1-12.

