

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN REGARDING NEEDS BALANCED NUTRITION FOR EARLY CHILDREN

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Abstract

The purpose of making this journal is to analyze the important role of parents in meeting the nutritional needs of early childhood. The technique used is a literature review where this research focuses on how to increase people's knowledge of the needs of early childhood. By participating in this research, there is several kinds of information through journals, articles, guidebooks, newspapers and magazines that discuss the importance of the role of parents in the needs of early childhood.

Keywords: role, parents, nutrition, early childhood

Abstrak

Tujuan pembuatan jurnal ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana pentingnya peran orang tua memenuhi kebutuhan gizi anak usia dini. Teknik yang ini digunakan adalah literatur review dimana penelitian ini berfokus kepada bagaimana meningkatkan pengetahuan orang tua terhadap kebutuhan anak usia dini. Dengan partisipasi dalam penelitian ini, ada beberapa macam informasi melalui jurnal, artikel, buku pedoman, koran serta majalah yang membahas tentang pentingnya peran orang tua terhadap kebutuhan anak usia dini.

Kata kunci: peran, orang tua, gizi, anak usia dini

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INTRODUCTION

A balanced diet must be instilled in children from an early age because the child's growth and development phase is very important. The child's future quality of life will depend on this. Early childhood will experience physical growth and development and have a very strong brain capacity. Children will react and understand information quickly. Therefore, the differences experienced by children as children will have a large role in their lives later in life. (Inten & Permatasari, 2019).

In 2021 there will be 10,997 babies born, but 405 of them will have LBW cases. There are 881 children under five who are struggling with malnutrition and problems related to malnutrition. The very short and short categories compile nutritional status based on the Height for Age (TB/U) index. In Buleleng Regency, there were 203 newborns in the short-term group and 56 (0.2%) children aged 0 to 23 months were very short. The number of toddlers (059 months) in the short group was 821 people and the very short category was 183 people, according to Dr Sucipto (2021).

Maintaining a balanced diet that includes carbohydrates, protein, vegetables, fruit, milk and water is very important for older people. The body must receive all the nutrients it needs every

day to maintain healthy development and prevent diseases that can endanger life. Notice on Nutrition To ensure healthy growth and development of children and prevent diseases that can attack children throughout their lives, every day a person must consume nutrients that suit their body's needs.

Being a parent is a job full of challenges. You must understand how to support your child in learning about health and receiving nutritious foods for a lifetime. Because parents must understand the 4 pillars of balanced nutrition and how to meet children's needs for nutrition-related information about body functions and the impact of malnutrition on the body, parents must understand nutrition and the importance of maintaining children's optimal growth and development (Sari, Maulani, & Rizkiyani 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Parental Understanding

Early childhood children are still unable to meet their nutritional needs independently, and therefore, they still depend on the role of parents or adults. In meeting the nutritional needs of early childhood, parents have a very crucial role. Parents are the figures closest to children, being the first people to interact and allocate more time in caring for children, including meeting basic needs such as nutrition, as well as children's development in terms of fine motor skills, gross motor skills, language and social interaction.

Children's development in various aspects, such as motor skills and language, can occur quickly, normally, delayed, or without opportunity. Parents' understanding of providing good nutrition has a positive impact on children's nutritional status. Several factors that can improve children's nutritional needs involve good knowledge about toddler nutrition, providing quality food for all family members, the willingness to prevent nutritional problems in children, availability and affordability of health services, adequate income, as well as support from the family, posyandu cadres, and community figures.

Parents have a strategic role in educating, helping growth, and facilitating children's development. Therefore, parents need to understand several important things, including meeting children's nutritional needs according to standards, maintaining children's health, and providing emotional support through activities that are appropriate to the child's development, such as providing caresses, smiles, hugs, appreciation, and playing together. Apart from that, every parent has essential duties and roles, such as giving birth, nurturing, guiding them towards maturity, instilling principles and standards, and developing their children's potential with full responsibility and attention.

Nutrition

All aspects related to food containing six types of substances, such as water, carbohydrates, fat, protein, minerals and vitamins, form a definition of nutrition that is closely related to health. Nutrition has a very vital role in the child's growth and development process. Adequate nutrition in children, especially during childhood (0 to 6 years), has a significant impact on mental development, especially intelligence. Therefore, monitoring children's health and nutritional intake from year to year is very important. Because health and nutrition have a big influence on the child's growth and development process.

In general, nutrients have a function as a source of energy, building blocks and regulators. Daily foods, such as rice, fish, meat, eggs, milk, vegetables, fruit, sugar, margarine, and others, fulfill this need. Each group of nutrients, such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals,

vitamins, and water, has a specific function in the body. The following are the functions of various nutrients in food.

METHODS

This research is included in the literature review research category with the type of library study research. The method used is secondary review, because this research must be carried out by collecting several references to determine the content of a problem. In this case the research is the importance of parental knowledge about the nutritional needs of early childhood. This research focuses on how important parental knowledge is for early childhood. By participating in this research, there is various kinds of information through journals, articles, manuals, newspapers and magazines which discuss the importance of the role of parents in the nutritional needs of early childhood and literature. The writing technique using a literature review is useful for a researcher to see the position of the research reported in the article. This means you can compare literature with the results of other research in the same field. This research will also determine the extent to which researchers provide answers to the problems that have been researched. Not only that, the scientific approach is also used as a theory to be developed, and the method for solving it is also a benchmark for researchers in carrying out their research. From this literature review, researchers will get an idea for conducting their research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Importance Of Parental Awareness Of The Nutritional Needs Of Early Childhood

Parental awareness in understanding and meeting the nutritional needs of early childhood has a crucial role. Parents need to have a deep understanding of their children's nutritional needs, choose food carefully, and stay away from the influence of an instant lifestyle and excessive promotion of children's food products. In the era of the trend towards instant consumption, including packaged food, children tend to like it. Although this can make children reluctant to eat healthy foods such as vegetables and fruit, parents have a big responsibility in preventing and providing understanding so that this bad habit does not continue.

In facing the negative impact of instant food consumption on children's development and health, parents also need to have adequate digital literacy to access nutritional information effectively via the internet. With a thorough understanding of children's nutritional needs, parents can adapt their nutritional intake patterns to their children's special needs, ensuring that children can grow and develop optimally according to their potential.

Increasing parents' understanding of children's nutritional needs is an important step. Previously, many parents were not aware of the benefits of healthy foods such as vegetables and fruit, which were often thought to only be useful for increasing the body's immunity. However, this research aims to provide an understanding that fruit and vegetables also have a positive impact on children's brain intelligence and other benefits that are essential for their growth and development.

The importance of parents understanding the impact of malnutrition on children, especially stunting which can inhibit body and brain growth, is the focus of this research. Therefore, fulfilling children's nutrition should start in the womb, not just after birth. This awareness is the key to ensuring that children's growth and development is in accordance with balanced nutritional needs.

Strategy to Meet the Nutritional Needs of Early Childhood

To ensure the nutritional needs of early childhood are met, there are several strategies that can be implemented : *first*, eating with Parents. Inviting children to eat together with the family brings a number of positive benefits. Through this moment, children feel involved and emotionally connected to their parents and other family members. This closeness helps reduce fear or hesitation in communicating. Eating together can also reduce the risk of eating disorders in children, with parents able to monitor and ensure balanced nutritional intake. This creates an environment conducive to healthy eating and close relationships among family members. *Second*, process food ingredients according to age stages. Preparing food that is appropriate to the child's age stage is key. Each developmental phase requires different nutrients to support growth and development. Parents need to prepare food that suits the nutritional needs of children at a certain age, ensuring adequate and balanced intake to support optimal growth and development. *Third*, Provide Healthy Food with Balanced Nutrition. It is important to provide healthy food that contains balanced nutrition, such as carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals. Balanced nutrition supports optimal health and growth. The right proportion of carbohydrates as an energy source, protein for body tissue growth, fat as a reserve energy source, and vitamins and minerals that support body functions, are all essential to meet the nutritional needs of early childhood. *Fourth*, the practice of providing food in small portions and frequently is highly recommended for young children. Because their stomachs are small, giving them large portions of food can make them feel full quickly. Providing small, frequent meals helps ensure children get adequate nutritional intake throughout the day, reduces the risk of digestive disorders, and maintains their digestive health.

Discussion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be seen that the parenting and education approach in the family is an important part of developing parental understanding and fulfilling nutritional needs for developing children. This is in accordance with the opinion of Akhyadi & Mulyono (2018) that education in the family is able to develop various life skills for children and establish closeness between parents and children, so that emotional involvement is deeply bound and is able to develop emotional balance as well as support the growth and development of children to meet their development needs in the future. In addition, based on the approach taken, the family education program has a correlation with the family's understanding of nutrition for their children. Thus, this approach meets the standards of study in the field of community education. This is in accordance with the opinion of Ardiwinata & Mulyono (2018) which states that community education does not only prioritize efforts to provide training and education alone, but also efforts to improve the quality of community life, including the quality of family health and awareness of various efforts to fulfill nutrition that must be given to children. This approach cannot be done directly and momentarily, but must be done continuously. Because the quality of community life is a continuous and ongoing process. Therefore, community education must continue to contribute to efforts to improve the quality of community life (Saepudin & Mulyono, 2019)

CONCLUSION

Strengthening character through the storytelling method "Pinokio the Wooden Doll" in children at PGRI Tegalsari Kindergarten shows good character, namely children behave honestly, do not lie, and are trustworthy. The challenges faced by teachers in improving children's character at PGRI Tegalsari Kindergarten include: 1) parental neglect of children's welfare and academic progress, 2) inconsistent homework assignments between home and school, and 3) insufficient learning resources. The use of storytelling techniques at PGRI Tegalsari Kindergarten is very

useful in fostering children's character development. Storytelling is very popular with children and is easy to understand and apply in everyday life.

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