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## **DENTAL AND ORAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NGGELA VILLAGE**

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**Abstract:** Children are still in a period of growth and development. Therefore, efforts to maintain oral health and dental health are critical, especially in the school and preschool environment. The development of dental health in adulthood is influenced by past dental conditions. Through counseling programs, communities can actively contribute to increasing their self-defense efforts and better understand the importance of maintaining their oral and dental health. This study aims to educate children about the importance of maintaining oral and dental health. Thus, children who receive counseling will better understand oral health.

**Keywords:** Dental health, Mouth, Counseling, knowledge

### **INTRODUCTION**

Currently, the level of oral and dental health is inferior. One of the reasons for this is ignorance of the importance of maintaining oral health. Untreated oral health problems can lead to some serious issues, including tooth loss, chewing difficulties, appearance and speech problems, low self-esteem, and more. In a child's oral cavity, dental caries are a significant problem. The

action of small entities found in yeast carbohydrates causes problems and diseases of the hard tissues of the teeth, including cementum, dentin, and enamel. The destruction of dental organic matter and reduced mineralization of hard tissues are indicators of the caries process. (Fatimatuzzahro et al., 2016).

To maintain dental and oral health, students need to know several things related to dental health. Initially, students are introduced to the type and number of teeth. In addition, it also explains the causes of cavities, foods that are good for dental health, foods that are bad for dental health, frequency of brushing teeth, brushing time, and how to brush your teeth properly and correctly. The correct way to brush your teeth is to choose a toothpaste that fits your teeth, spread the toothpaste into your mouth with a late toothbrush, form a 45-degree angle, and use a Graham brush. Rub vertically. Brushing your teeth as often as possible is the best way to maintain healthy teeth (Putri and Suri, 2022).

Children in lower school need to be enlightened on the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and mouth. This is because baby teeth or deciduous teeth are more prone to fall out prematurely and are prone to caries, even though baby teeth or deciduous teeth have a significant role in a child's jaw growth and development. In addition, these elementary school students constitute a period of mixed teeth. So, knowledge about the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and mouth is undoubtedly critical as their provision to support and care for permanent teeth. At an early age, children begin to understand the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and mouth, as well as things not to do or habits that can affect the condition of their teeth. Therefore, dental and oral health knowledge should be imparted from an early age. In terms of dental and oral health management, elementary schools (SD) are a very strategic group (Chrismilasari et al., 2019).

The national development program seeks to change people's opinions toward more health-conscious behavior. Extension program planning consists of several methodically arranged and determined steps that work together to change people's behavior toward healthy behavior (Artini et al., 2002). Oral health counseling is an organized and focused effort to foster an environment in which individuals or community groups want to change old habits that are detrimental to their oral health and adopt new, healthier behaviors (Budiharto, 2013).

## **METHOD**

This method of community service activities involves direct visits to provide counseling and dental health checks directly at the Nggela Village Elementary School. The counseling provides information about dental health, including the requirement that teeth be cleaned three times a day, followed by a dental health check.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Oral and dental health is currently at a shallow level. One of the reasons for this is ignorance of the importance of maintaining oral and dental health. Poor oral and dental hygiene can lead to several serious problems, including tooth loss, chewing difficulties, phonetic and cosmetic issues, low self-esteem, and more. The main problem in children's oral cavity is dental caries. Caries is a disease that attacks the cementum, dentin, and tooth enamel. It is caused by the action of tiny organisms found in yeast carbohydrates. The caries process is characterized by the demineralization of the hard tissues of the tooth and the degradation of their organic substances (Fatimatuzzahro et al., 2016).

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## CONCLUSION

Maintaining and caring for children's teeth and mouths is very important because oral health is one way to help the nation's children have a bright future. This community service project has run well, thanks to the cooperation of all groups.

The author suggests that more counseling and training opportunities should be provided to help the younger generation understand the importance of maintaining oral and dental health. Parents should also be informed about this, and dentists should conduct oral and dental health checks.

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