

Empowering Youth for Peace: Advancing Child-Friendly and Violence-Free Schools in Kubu Raya

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Abtract

Violence against children in school environments constitutes a violation of human rights and poses a serious threat to children's growth and development. The increasing prevalence of violence—whether physical, verbal, psychological, or digital (cyberbullying)—highlights the urgent need to raise awareness among students, teachers, and schools. This community service activity aimed to strengthen students' understanding of the various forms of violence, their impacts, and the roles students can play in preventing violence at school. The activity was conducted in two schools, namely SMA Negeri 3 and SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya in Kubu Raya Regency, through face-to-face socialization sessions, the presentation of legal and social materials, and interactive discussions. A total of 94 students participated in this program. The results showed that students gained a better understanding of the types of violence, their psychological and legal consequences, and the reporting mechanisms available at school. Furthermore, the program encouraged students to speak up and take action when witnessing violence around them. This initiative is expected to foster a sustainable culture of child-friendly, inclusive, and violence-free schools.

Keywords: Anti-Violence, Legal Empowerment, School, Children

INTRODUCTION

Children are the future of the nation. They deserve to be treated with dignity and humanity. The way we educate and treat children as the next generation will determine the quality of our future as a society and as a nation (Faisal & Simatupang, 2021). As mandated in Article 28B paragraph (2) of the Indonesian Constitution, which states that “Every child has the right to live, grow, and develop, as well as the right to protection from violence and discrimination,” it reflects the state’s full commitment to protecting children’s rights, particularly from all forms of violence that may threaten their future.

Violence against children refers to behaviors or actions that harm or endanger children physically, emotionally, psychologically, or sexually. It encompasses various forms of treatment that are inconsistent with the needs, rights, and well-being of children, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation, or threatening and intimidating behavior. Such violence may be perpetrated by parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, peers, or other individuals within the child’s environment (Oley, Siburian, & Aritonang, 2024). The responsibility to protect against all forms of violence rightfully lies with both individuals and families, especially toward children, who are the most vulnerable group as they are still in the process of growing and developing (Prastini, 2024).

Violence is an act committed by an individual or a group of individuals in a position of power (or who perceive themselves as powerful) against another individual or group perceived to be in a weaker position, using their superior physical or non-physical strength with the deliberate intention of causing suffering to the target of the violence (Rianawati, 2015). According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately one in four children experiences physical violence, which can harm their development and overall well-being (Hasibuan, Balqis, Octriliyanti, & Suryadi, 2024).

Violence against children is a violation of human rights, a crime against human dignity, and a form of discrimination. Such violence is increasingly prevalent in school environments and can have severe consequences for both victims and perpetrators. Victims may suffer physically, mentally, and emotionally, as well as experience negative impacts on their health, economic conditions, social relationships, and even political participation. Perpetrators of violence may face social exclusion and rejection from their peers.

Regulations concerning child protection are outlined in Law Number 2 of 2022 on Child Protection in conjunction with Law Number 35 of 2014. Violence against children is a complex issue that is not easily resolved. It requires awareness and firm action from all parties to ensure that no space is given for violence to occur within school environments. Legally, this regulatory framework provides protection for all children, regardless of their location. Every child has the right to protection within educational institutions from sexual crimes and violence committed by educators, education personnel, fellow students, or other individuals. This regulation is crucial, as it not only ensures protection but also serves as a legal prohibition against the use of violence toward children (Aryani et al., 2024).

In Kubu Raya Regency, 85 cases of child violence were reported in 2024, marking an increase from the previous year. This indicates a rise in the number of incidents occurring in the region (Isnaini, 2025). The reported cases only reflect those that were formally reported, while there may be many unreported incidents due to reluctance or fear among victims or the community. Therefore, the increase in reports is interpreted as a sign of growing public awareness in reporting various forms of violence against children.

To address violence against children, it is essential to foster awareness and take firm action from teachers, students, and all parties within the school environment. It is expected that they possess knowledge of clear policies and procedures for preventing and handling cases of child violence in schools. This community service activity focused on encouraging the

active role of schools—including teachers and students—by providing education on the prevention of violence against children in schools located in Kubu Raya Regency.

The activity was carried out by a team from the Law Study Program, Faculty of Law, OSO University, and was conducted at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya and SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya. The purpose of this legal education and outreach in Kubu Raya, particularly at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya located in Desa Permata Jaya—an area formed as a result of the administrative division of Desa Sungai Asam and a relocation site for victims of the 1999 Sambas conflict—is to raise awareness and build a foundation for child protection in schools

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This community service activity was conducted at two school locations in Kubu Raya Regency: SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya, located at Jalan Parit Zakia TR 2, Sungai Asam, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan, and SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya, located at Jalan Dura Rajawali, Sungai Raya, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan. The activities were carried out through face-to-face socialization sessions, involving 40 students from SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya and 54 students from SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya.

The sessions consisted of the presentation of materials on raising awareness and taking action against child violence in schools, using both social and legal perspectives. These presentations were followed by interactive discussions with students to explore whether they had experienced or witnessed issues related to child violence within their school environment.

IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS

Early Detection and Prevention of Violence in Student Interactions at School

Efforts to provide education on children's awareness of acts of violence aim to help them understand the importance of recognizing the threats and risks associated with violence. Without realizing it, some students may have experienced being either victims or perpetrators of violence within school or family environments. Therefore, education is delivered to raise awareness of the dangers of violence through several key approaches:

- a. Raising Awareness of Violence: Students become more sensitive to various forms of violence that may occur in the school environment, including physical, verbal, emotional abuse, and bullying.
- b. Strengthening the Courage to Report: This outreach encourages students to report incidents of violence they experience or witness, enabling timely intervention.
- c. Enhancing Psychological Safety: With knowledge and understanding of self-protection, students will feel safer and more secure within the school environment.
- d. Developing Empathy: Students learn to be more empathetic and caring toward peers who may be victims of violence, thereby helping to create a more supportive and inclusive school environment.
- e. Reducing the Risk of Violence: By increasing awareness of the harmful impacts of violence, students are expected to avoid violent behavior and maintain healthier, more positive peer relationships.

In addition, for schools as partners in the program and as facilitators of student learning, they are expected to be able to:

- a. Create a Safe and Conducive Environment: Schools can foster a safer and more comfortable atmosphere for all members of the school community, supporting the teaching and learning process without fear.
- b. Enhance the School's Reputation: Schools that are proactive in addressing child violence will be more appreciated by parents and the community, thus improving the school's image as an institution that cares about student well-being.

- c. Reduce Cases of Violence in Schools: With increased awareness and knowledge among students, the number of violence cases in schools can be reduced, thereby creating a more harmonious environment.
- d. Encourage Positive Collaboration among Students, Teachers, and Parents: This outreach can serve as a starting point for collaboration among various parties to jointly prevent and address child violence in schools, fostering more open and effective communication.
- e. Improve Teachers' Competence in Handling Violence: Teachers will be better prepared to handle or prevent violence cases using appropriate methods, making the school more responsive to issues of child abuse and violence.

In essence, violence against children cannot be addressed unilaterally; it requires various approaches such as prevention, care, and rehabilitation of victims, so they need to be accompanied and supported throughout the process (Saepi, Kulsum, Salim, Kurnia, & Kania, 2023). In various cases of violence against children, there are several obstacles that prevent victims from reporting the incidents they have experienced. This reluctance is generally caused by deep psychological impacts following the violence, which hinder the child's ability to speak out. Several factors that contribute to a victim's silence include:

- a. Tonic Immobility, a temporary state of paralysis that occurs involuntarily due to extreme fear, rendering the victim unable to resist or respond during the incident, and making it difficult for them to recount the experience afterward.
- b. False Accusation, the victim's fear of being perceived as making a false report, often interpreted as a bid for attention, blackmail, or a desire for fame, leading them to remain silent to avoid negative stigma.
- c. Fear of Retaliatory Reporting, where the victim is afraid that their report will result in legal retaliation from the perpetrator, such as being accused of defamation, which ultimately weakens the victim's willingness to seek justice.

To prevent acts of violence, such incidents should ideally be reported. However, in reality, many victims hesitate to report their experiences due to psychological barriers. Therefore, it is essential for schools, peers, families, and the community to play an active role in supporting and accompanying the victims. Such support can help raise the victim's awareness and encourage them to speak out. This approach is crucial to breaking the cycle of violence, preventing it from recurring, and minimizing prolonged effects caused by unaddressed cases of abuse.

The importance of legal protection for victims lies in the effort to fulfill their rights and provide assistance, which can offer them a sense of safety. (Panggabean, Eddy, & Sahari, 2024). Therefore, if any form of violence occurs, our role as friends, family, schools, and society is to provide first aid by calming and attentively listening to the victim's complaints; not forcing advice upon them; not being judgmental; and guiding or accompanying them to the appropriate place to report the incident. This way, they will gradually open up psychologically and gain the courage to report the violence

Figure 1. Presentation Materials



Source: Activity Presentation Documentation

Violent behavior should not only be viewed from the victim's perspective, but also from the perpetrator's. This activity is also intended to reduce the emergence of potential perpetrators of violence, because in any condition, if it leads to violent acts, it will ultimately result in a violation of the law (Pramono & Hanandini, 2022) Violent behavior is considered a deviation from established rules, and therefore must be controlled so that children understand that violence against children is not a minor issue, but rather an act that can lead to legal violations and criminal penalties.

Implementation and Collaborative Roles in Building a Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment

The community service activity at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya, Kubu Raya Regency, was held on Thursday, September 12, 2024. This activity aimed to provide legal education and awareness to students, teachers, and parents at the school. The main topics presented in the session were “Bullying in the School Environment” and “Mitigating Sexual Violence in Schools”, which were central to the purpose of this event.

The session began with an introduction emphasizing the alarming rise in cases of violence against children occurring in schools. Forms of school-based violence such as bullying and sexual abuse were highlighted. The speaker underlined the unfortunate reality that schools—meant to be safe havens—can instead become places of fear and threat. It was further emphasized that if bullying behavior goes unaddressed, it can escalate into more severe forms of violence and even lead to criminal conduct.

Figure 2. Presentation Delivered by the Speaker at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya



Source: Field Documentation

In the presentation on mitigating sexual violence in schools, it was conveyed that sexual violence is one of the most difficult forms of violence to prove, mainly because many victims are reluctant to report their experiences. The implementation of this activity was divided into two sessions: the first session was delivered to the students, and the second session was conducted with the parents of the students at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya.

Figure 3. Socialization Session with Students at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya



Source: Field Documentation

Figure 4. Socialization Session with Parents of Students at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya



Source: Field Documentation

The community service activity held at SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya was attended by 40 students, consisting of 14 students from Grade X, 16 students from Grade XI, and 10 students from Grade XII. During the discussion and Q&A session, it was revealed that several students had experienced repeated bullying at school and sexual violence outside of school by peers.

Based on the discussions, most participants were already familiar with the different types of child abuse. Moreover, data from the questionnaire showed that 82% of the 40 students had a fair understanding of the forms of violence against children, while 18% had limited knowledge on the matter. This activity, therefore, served as a valuable platform for raising their awareness and strengthening their capacity to take anti-violence actions within their environment.

The next community service activity took place at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya on Thursday, 19 September 2024. It was attended by 54

students and 6 teachers. During the discussion and Q&A session, it was found that some students had experienced bullying at school, and one female student reported experiencing sexual violence outside of school or in her residential area. It was also noted that, on average, the participants had prior knowledge of the different types of violence against children.

Figure 5. Presentation of Materials by the Resource Person at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya



Source: Field Documentation

Figure 6. Discussion and Q&A Session with Students



Source: Field Documentation

Based on the data obtained from the students, out of the 60 students who attended, 2% of students were well-informed about the forms of violence and the appropriate responses, 83% had a moderate understanding, and the remaining 15% of students had limited knowledge and understanding regarding issues related to violence against children.

Figure 7. Group Photo with Students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya



Source: Field Documentation

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the key achievement of this awareness-strengthening activity was to foster anti-violence attitudes in schools by focusing on how to create a safer and more comfortable school environment—free from violence and intimidation. This environment enables students to learn and develop optimally while reducing the number of child violence cases in schools by raising awareness and encouraging preventive action among students and school staff.

Based on the outcomes of the activity, the following key achievements can be summarized: 1) Students of SMA Negeri 3 Sungai Raya and SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Raya are able to identify various forms of violence against children, including physical, verbal, psychological abuse, and cyberbullying; 2) Students are aware of the harmful effects of violence on children's physical and psychological development, as well as the potential legal implications; 3) Students understand their role in preventing violence,

both as individuals and as members of a community; and 4) Students are informed that their schools provide support mechanisms for the prevention and handling of violence, including safe and confidential reporting channels.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.