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Education On The Importance Of Exclusive Breastfeeding For Pregnant And Breastfeeding Women In Hamlet I, E Village, Wonokerto, Tugumulyo District, Musi Rawas Regency, 2025

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Abstract. Exclusive breastfeeding is the provision of breast milk as early as possible after delivery, given without a schedule and no other food, even water, until the baby is 6 months old. Exclusive breastfeeding is an ideal source of nutrition because its composition is naturally balanced and in accordance with the growth and development of the baby, so that exclusive breastfeeding is the most perfect food for babies in terms of quality and quantity, in addition to being cheap, easy to obtain and can also be given at any time of the day, the best and most perfect first food for babies. The purpose of this community service activity is to increase the knowledge and understanding of mothers about the importance of providing exclusive breastfeeding to babies and teach the correct breastfeeding techniques. This activity is carried out by providing counseling with leaflets to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers about breast milk and its benefits for the growth and development of babies. This counseling was carried out on June 9, 2025 in Dusun I, E. Wonokerto Village, Musi Rawas Regency, which was attended by 8 pregnant and breastfeeding participants. As a result, after the counseling, 8 pregnant and breastfeeding participants experienced an increase in knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and the correct way to breastfeed. It is hoped that after this activity, all pregnant women and mothers who have babies aged 0-6 months can provide exclusive breastfeeding until the baby is 2 years old because breast milk contains nutrients and various immune substances that babies need so that it can protect babies from diseases such as diarrhea, earache, respiratory tract infections and allergies.

Keywords: *Benefits of Exclusive Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding, Techniques*

INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is the ideal nutrition for babies, containing the nutrients most suited to their needs and a range of protective substances to fight disease. The first two years of a child's life are crucial, as optimal nutrition during this period reduces morbidity and mortality, reduces the risk of chronic disease, and promotes overall better development. Therefore, optimal breastfeeding, from 0-23 months of age, is crucial because it can save the lives of more than 820,000 children under 5 years of age each year (WHO, 2020).

Exclusive breastfeeding is a key strategy to reduce infant mortality. By breastfeeding for six months, infant mortality can be reduced by up to 13%. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the percentage of infants aged 0-23 months who were still breastfed in Indonesia was 81.37% in 2021. Compared to urban areas, where breastfeeding rates were 79.06%, rural areas had a higher rate of 84.32%. When broken down by province, West Nusa Tenggara has the highest percentage of infants aged 0-23 months who are still breastfed, at

89.55%. Yogyakarta and Central Java are second and third, with 87.96% and 87.54%, respectively. The provinces with the next lowest percentages are Gorontalo at 69.72% and Riau Islands at 69.97% (NTB Provincial Health Office, 2022).

During the first six months of a baby's life, exclusive breastfeeding is a crucial step in infant care, widely recognized by various health organizations worldwide. The term "exclusive breastfeeding" refers to breastfeeding without any other food or drink, and without the introduction of formula, other solid foods, or water (Kebo et al., 2021). According to recommendations from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), infants receive only breast milk from birth to six months of age and should be fed frequently and without any time limit. From six months of age and above, babies receive age-appropriate supplementary breast milk (MP-ASI). However, babies should continue breastfeeding until they are two years old (Asnidawati & Ramdhan, 2021).

According to data reported by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the number of babies receiving exclusive breastfeeding under six months of age has continued to increase over the past five years. The proportion of babies receiving exclusive breastfeeding has also shown a consistent increase. In 2019, the percentage of babies receiving exclusive breastfeeding reached 66.69%. The following year, this percentage increased to 69.62%. In 2021, exclusive breastfeeding reached 71.58%. Over the past two years, the national exclusive breastfeeding rate has increased by 2.68%, from 72.04% in 2022 to 73.97% in 2023 (Bapenas, 2023).

UNICEF and WHO continue to support the government in its efforts to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding practices. They collaborated to provide the tools and resources necessary to implement the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, increase government capacity in providing high-quality breastfeeding counseling services, and gather evidence supporting the need for stronger action against the marketing of inappropriate breast milk substitutes. By providing counseling or education to mothers about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, the likelihood of successful breastfeeding practices is greater. This is due to the close relationship between knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding practices, where mothers with better knowledge are more likely to exclusively breastfeed their babies than those with less knowledge. This has been shown to provide numerous benefits for the health and development of both babies and mothers when implemented consistently and exclusively (Hansen & Rostgaard, 2005).

Based on analysis in Hamlet I, E Village, Wonokerto, there are still pregnant and breastfeeding mothers who are unaware of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. Therefore, the authors were interested in conducting counseling on exclusive breastfeeding for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers with babies aged 0-6 months in Hamlet I, E Village, Wonokerto, Musirawas Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

This KKN-T program uses the Counseling and Practice Method. Partners in this program are residents of Hamlet 1 consisting of Hamlet I, E Village, Wonokerto, Musirawas Regency. Which was held on Saturday, June 9, 2025. Which involved around 8 mothers, 4 pregnant women and 4 breastfeeding mothers and all Village officials and Cadres in this activity. Counseling activities were carried out starting from providing material on the meaning of Exclusive Breastfeeding, the purpose of providing Exclusive Breastfeeding, the Content of Exclusive Breastfeeding, the Benefits of Exclusive Breastfeeding, Techniques and Attachment of Exclusive Breastfeeding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data obtained from the E. Nawangsasi Community Health Center in Tugumulyo District, Musirawas Regency, in Hamlet I, E. Wonokerto Village, there are pregnant

and breastfeeding women, and there is low awareness of health check-ups. The Community Service Program (KKN) team attempted to conduct outreach on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for pregnant and breastfeeding women, specifically in E. Wonokerto Village, Hamlet 1, Musirawas Regency. Health outreach activities are crucial for increasing public knowledge, and the knowledge gained can foster awareness and behavior in accordance with the information provided. Health education is a crucial step and an effective method for raising public awareness about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. Outreach activities serve as a health promotion effort.

Problem Solving

Counseling on the Importance of Exclusive Breastfeeding

Counseling on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding was conducted in the yard of the Head of Hamlet 1, E Village, Wonokerto. The community participated in the counseling activity, from the beginning to the end. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers also participated in a series of activities, including a question-and-answer session led by students from the Faculty of Health Sciences, Dehasen University, Bengkulu. Door prizes were awarded to those who answered the questions. The pregnant and breastfeeding mothers enthusiastically participated in the counseling from beginning to end. It is hoped that this counseling activity on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding will be beneficial for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Counseling on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding plays a crucial role in raising awareness of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, especially for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.



Figure 1. Educating Pregnant and Breastfeeding Mothers About the Importance of Exclusive Breastfeeding in Hamlet I, E. Wonokerto Village

Leaflet Distribution

Several studies have shown that leaflets are an effective medium for increasing public understanding of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. A study in Indonesia revealed that distributing leaflets accompanied by educational materials can significantly increase the knowledge of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Because they are easy to distribute and inexpensive, leaflets are suitable for use in areas with limited internet access. Visual support in the form of pictures or illustrations is particularly helpful for groups with low literacy levels in understanding the information. In addition to being cost-effective, leaflets can also reinforce other educational activities such as health campaigns, direct counseling, and community activities. However, their effectiveness can be reduced if the community is reluctant to read or does not understand the leaflet's contents, so integration with other educational methods is necessary. Continuous evaluation of leaflet design and content, such as the use of easy-to-understand language and attractive displays, is crucial to increasing the effectiveness and reach of health messages regarding the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.



Figure 2. Leaflet Distribution



Figure 3. Stages of Implementation of Extension and Q&A Activities

CONCLUSION

The collaboration between the UNIVED 2025 Community Service Program (KKN) Team and the government of Hamlet I, E Village, Wonokerto, Musi Rawas Regency, to increase the knowledge of pregnant women and mothers with infants aged 0-6 months regarding the importance of exclusive breastfeeding has proven the effectiveness of an integrated approach in increasing exclusive breastfeeding. The outreach activities have been proven to increase knowledge among pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, so that with increased knowledge, it is hoped that pregnant and breastfeeding mothers will be able to provide exclusive breastfeeding for their babies and optimize their growth and development. This approach can foster positive behavioral changes towards exclusive breastfeeding. These steps are expected to serve as a model for other villages to follow in their success in implementing exclusive breastfeeding.

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