

## Educating First-Grade Elementary Students to Soap Handwashing to Enhance COVID-19 Readiness during the New Normal Era

Edukasi Mencuci Tangan Sabun bagi Siswa SD Kelas 1: Tingkatkan Kesiapsiagaan COVID-19 Era *New Normal*

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### Abstract:

The age group of children is at risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19, so education is needed to build preparedness on the importance of washing hands to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in the new normal era. The purpose of community service is to improve the preparedness of school students. Community service was carried out on June 16, 2021, to 27 students of elementary school X aged 6-7 years. Information is conveyed through short stories for kids. Hand washing movements are conveyed through videos and hand washing songs so that children become more interested and easier to follow. The materials presented included the prevention of COVID-19 in the new normal era, an explanation of hand washing with soap according to the Ministry of Health standards as a form of preventing COVID-19 transmission, and video playback of the 6-step handwashing movement. Post education was found that 95% students (38 of 40) level of knowledge was high which proven by the ability to recall all the steps of soap handwashing. The children's knowledge about washing hands using soap to prevent COVID-19 is increasing, and children are able to wash their hands in the right steps according to Ministry of Health standards. Education for school-age children requires the right method so that children want to participate in education comfortably.

**Keywords:** handwash, soap; children; short stories method; education; COVID-19

### Abstrak:

*Kelompok usia anak berisiko tertular dan menularkan COVID-19, sehingga diperlukan edukasi untuk membangun kesiapsiagaan akan pentingnya mencuci tangan untuk mencegah penularan COVID-19 di era new normal. Tujuan pengabdian kepada masyarakat adalah untuk meningkatkan kesiapan siswa sekolah. Pengabdian masyarakat dilaksanakan pada tanggal 16 Juni 2021 kepada 27 siswa sekolah dasar X berusia 6-7 tahun. Informasi disampaikan melalui cerita pendek untuk anak-anak. Gerakan cuci tangan disampaikan melalui video dan lagu cuci tangan agar anak menjadi lebih tertarik dan lebih mudah diikuti. Materi yang disampaikan antara lain pencegahan COVID-19 di era new normal, penjelasan cuci tangan pakai sabun (CTPS) sesuai standar Kementerian Kesehatan sebagai bentuk pencegahan penularan COVID-19, dan pemutaran video gerakan 6 langkah cuci tangan. Pasca pendidikan ditemukan 95% siswa (38 dari 40) tingkat pengetahuannya tinggi yang dibuktikan dengan kemampuan mengingat seluruh langkah cuci tangan sabun. Pengetahuan anak tentang mencuci tangan menggunakan sabun untuk mencegah COVID-19 semakin meningkat, dan anak mampu mencuci tangan dengan langkah yang tepat sesuai standar Kementerian Kesehatan. Pendidikan untuk anak usia sekolah membutuhkan metode yang tepat agar anak mau mengikuti pendidikan dengan nyaman.*

**Kata Kunci:** *cuci tangan, sabun; anak; metode cerita pendek; pendidikan; COVID-19*

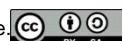
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## INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 declared a world pandemic by WHO and determined by the Government as a non-natural disaster in the form of disease outbreaks that need to be carried out in integrated countermeasures (RI Ministry of Health, 2020). Various policies and efforts have been made by the government to reduce the transmission rate of COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic until now in the new normal era. Since it was declared a pandemic in Indonesia, almost all sectors of life have been paralyzed, including education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Schools have been conducted online since the beginning of the pandemic until entering the new normal era for non-green zone areas.

The number of positive cases of COVID-19 as of February 21 2021 reached 1,278,653 cases with the number of recovered patients reaching 1,087,076 people, active cases of 157,088, the number of patients who died was 34,489 people (Covid-19, 2021). Entering the new normal era during the COVID-19 pandemic triggered changes in lifestyle with new normal arrangements and adaptations so that we can live productive lives and avoid transmission of COVID-19 (Permenkes RI KMK No. HK.01.07/MENKES/382/2020, 2020). Compliance with health protocols remains the main key in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the new normal era.

Elementary school students experience online learning in the current new normal era. The age group of children can potentially contract COVID-19. If immunity is good, it can occur without symptoms so education is needed to build understanding and awareness of the importance of washing hands to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic which lasted for a long time forced people to adapt to the new normal era, namely living side by side with COVID-19. The new normal era requires people to remain productive but health protocols must still be obeyed. Various violations of the implementation of health protocols still occur in various areas during the new normal period. People who don't practice clean and healthy living behaviors, including washing their hands, keep the number of COVID-19 cases in Indonesia rising every day. Cases that occur experienced all walks of life and age groups. Ages at high risk are children, pregnant women and the elderly (elderly) (Yuliana, 2020).

The Ministry of Health initiated three campaign waves to fight the pandemic, one of which is the Handwashing with Soap campaign. The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder that one of the most effective and simple ways to stop the spread of viruses and other infectious diseases is: wash your hands with soap and water. Hand hygiene can save lives (Ministry of Health, 2020). Handwashing with Soap education needs to be encouraged for all elements of society, especially for children who are an age group that is vulnerable to neglect of health protocols.

People who do not comply with health protocols can transmit COVID-19 to their children at home through family clusters. Therefore, it is necessary to educate children in the form of preventive measures that can break the chain of transmission, namely by washing hands with soap. The group

at risk of having low knowledge about preventing COVID-19 is the children group (Power, 2020). The purpose of the community development is to deliver health education of washing hands with soap and get knowledge about its benefits for elementary students.

## IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

### Situation Analysis

The target population (population) is grade 1 students of the Integrated Islamic Elementary School X. The number of students in one class is 40 people. The average age of students is 7-8 years. All students have not been able to perform the technique of washing hands with soap sequentially. Students wash their hands with soap when asked by the teacher or parents. There has been no initiative from students to wash their hands with soap. This is probably because students do not understand the concept of washing hands with soap. The teacher has tried to teach the concept and technique of washing hands with soap, but students have not understood it.

### Partner Problems

Problems experienced by service target partners public 1st grade students namely:

1. This is an age group that is at risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19.
2. Vulnerable age groups have less knowledge about preventing COVID-19 in the new normal era.
3. Age groups at risk have less knowledge about handwashing with soap according to the standards of the Indonesian Ministry of Health to prevent COVID-19.

### Solutions Offered

Solutions to problems experienced by Community Service partners, namely elementary school X in Sidoarjo are:

1. Problem 1: This is an age group that is at risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19.  
The solution is conducting education to improve behavior to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 through washing hands with soap.
2. Problem 2: Vulnerable age groups have less knowledge about preventing COVID-19.  
The solution is to provide information about preventing the transmission of COVID-19 in the new normal era.
3. Problem 3: The age group at risk has less knowledge about handwashing with soap according to the standards of the Indonesian Ministry of Health to prevent COVID-19.  
The solution is to explain and demonstrate through a video the 6 steps of handwashing with soap according to the guidelines of the Indonesian Ministry of Health to prevent COVID-19.

### Science and Technology overview

Education about handwashing with soap to prevent transmission of COVID-19 to elementary school students is a health promotion effort in the form of health communication, information and education (IEC). This health promotion effort was initiated as a form of support for the Indonesian Ministry of Health's campaign on the importance of washing hands with soap where the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing in the new normal era.

The health education that will be carried out at this community service uses media and methods that are adapted to the target conditions, namely grade 1 elementary school children. The method of conveying information is done by lecturing using language that is easily understood by children. The hand-washing movement is conveyed through videos and hand-washing songs so that children become more interested and easier to follow. The expected end result after this community service is that children's knowledge about washing hands with soap to prevent COVID-19 is increasing, and children are able to wash their hands in the right steps according to Ministry of Health standards.

Short stories for kids is a storytelling method that contains health education material content. In this community service, the content of the material provided is washing hands with soap. The stories given are in the form of videos and fairy tales given by the speakers. Each story contains characters that are easy for children to understand. The characters used are a pair of school-aged children who look Muslim. The purpose of selecting these figures is for students to relate to themselves.

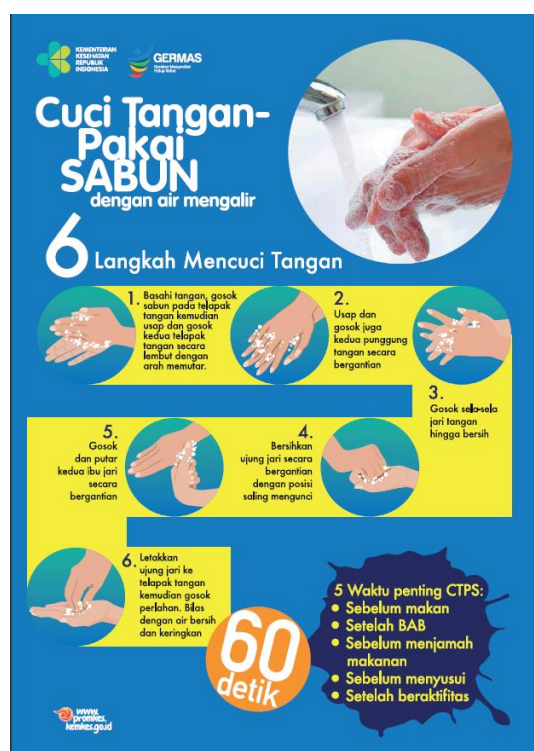


Figure 1. Poster of Handwashing with Soap (RI Ministry of Health, 2021)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community service will be held on June 16, 2021. Handwashing with soap education carried out online using the Zoom application. Each child is in front of their own Zoom screen and accompanied by their parents. There were 40 students who took part in the education. Students are male and female equally. Post education was found that 95% of students (38 of 40) level of knowledge was high, which was proven by the ability to recall all the steps of soap handwashing.

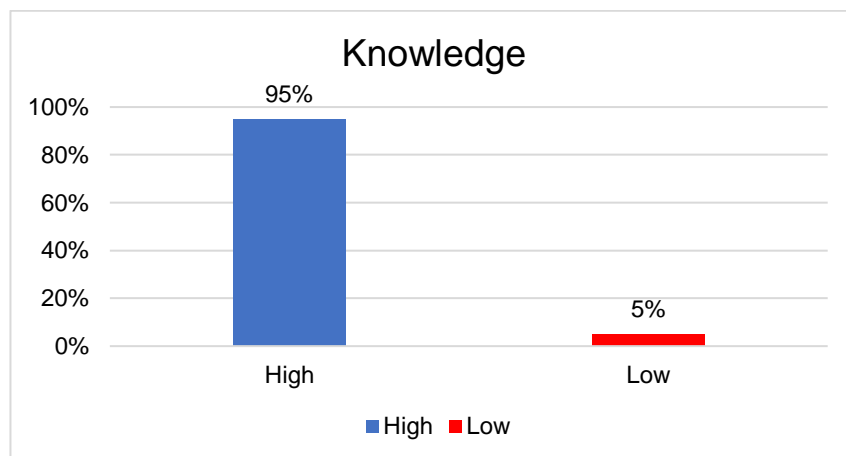


Figure 2. Portion of Student Knowledge

During the implementation of student education accompanied by teachers who also entered the Zoom room. The process of providing material went smoothly with several obstacles. The obstacle that occurs is the students are busy and joking between friends. Some students could not be controlled so the teacher took over the Zoom room and invited the students to shout.

The provision of handwashing with soap material was carried out using electronic methods in the form of presentation slides and posters made by the Indonesian Ministry of Health (RI Ministry of Health, 2021) given to the teacher to be pasted in the school. The presentation material contains a story that describes a school-age child who receives an explanation from his parents and teacher about COVID-19. In the story it is described that the Sars-Cov-19 virus is an evil germ that causes coughing and sickness. The characters in the story are taught to wear masks, keep their distance, and wash their hands with soap. Research says that the best method for transferring information with children is to use storytelling. This is thought to be caused by children having difficulty concentrating on information when the information transfer process uses only one sense. The more senses used in the process of transferring information, the easier it is for children to grasp it. In the study it was found that it was easier for children to remember information when the teacher told stories using the media of fairy tale books and finger puppets. This illustrates that the process of



transferring information uses 3 senses, namely the senses of hearing, sight, and touch (Bartan, 2020).

There were obstacles in the educational process where the students were not conducive and crowded with friends and did not heed the speakers. Until the teacher took over and invited the students to do their class yells. The students immediately demonstrated their respective yells with enthusiasm. After that the teacher told the students to focus on listening to the material. This incident was caused by the introductory process at the beginning which was less attractive to students. At the beginning of the education, the presenter was not able to win the hearts of the students so that students were not interested in the speaker who was a foreigner. The speaker is less enthusiastic in starting the story so that students are not moved to listen to the story. Research says that short stories do not necessarily make students interested in learning. What keeps students interested is not the story but the way the story is told and the content of the story. Stories that are not interesting will not make students interested in listening. A story must contain interesting content and an impressive way of telling the story (Yang, 2009).

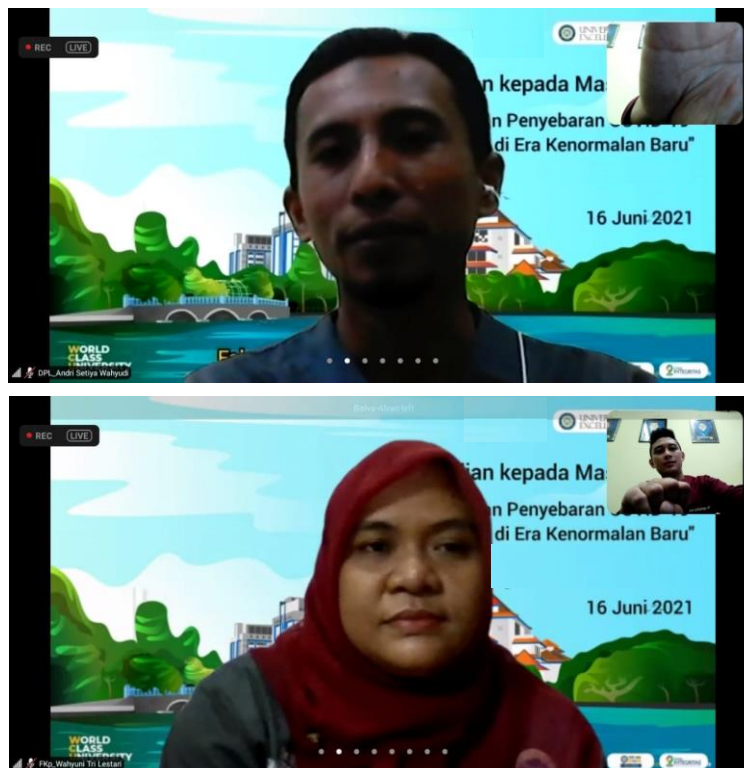


Figure 3. Screenshot of the educational presenter

The six steps to washing hands are not interesting for students aged 7-8 years to remember. At this age students prefer to remember fun things, especially those related to games. The speaker has prepared a method to bridge this problem. A song about the six steps of washing hands was created by the presenters so that it can be sung together with the students in the hope that it will be

easier for students to remember. Singing is one method of binding good information. This is because in the process of singing the right and left hemispheres of the brain are involved so that more parts of the brain are used to digest information. With more parts of the brain involved, information retention is also better. Research reports that by teaching wayang games in which there is music (Yulsyofriend, 2018).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this activity is that school-age children are a vulnerable group who are easily infected with COVID-19. So, they must be educated on infection prevention protocols. If young children have difficulty receiving information regarding this matter, the task of parents and teachers is to provide education with the right method. The method that parents and teachers can use for young children is the method of short stories and singing. This technique is very applicable and can be applied in any setting. Education for school-age children requires the right method so that children want to participate in education comfortably.

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