

Parents' Strategies in Preventing Stature Stunting

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses short stature (stunting) which becomes the most common problem in Bulujaya Village, Jeneponto Regency. The purpose of this research was to study the description of short-statured children, the obstacles faced by parents in preventing short stature, and the strategies used by parents to prevent short stature. The type of research used was descriptive qualitative with a phenomenological method. Data sources consisted of four families, one nutritionist and one family planning instructor from Bulujaya Village. The instruments used were observation guidelines, interview guidelines and documentation tools. Data analysis techniques used data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. To test the validity of the data, extended observations, increased researcher persistence, source triangulation, and time triangulation were used. The results of the study showed that: (1) short-statured children have the characteristics of a short body, lower body weight compared to other normal children, less enthusiastic, and short-statured children can be seen in the child's KIA book, (2) obstacles for parents in preventing short stature are children who have no appetite, poor food intake patterns, lack of clean water, economic factors, inadequate vehicles and immunization locations quite far from the parents' environment (3) parental strategies in preventing short stature and providing nutritious food, vitamins, and routine immunization. The implications of the study are: (1) children receive good care so as to prevent stunting; (2) parents pay attention to food intake, health, and the child's environment; (3) nutritionists can consider the distance between the parents' house and the immunization location; (4) the community can support growth and development in children; (5) further researchers can consider the limitations in this paper

Keywords: Parental Strategy, Short Stature (Stunting)

1). INTRODUCTION

One of the main nutritional problems that has an impact on the social and economic life of the community is short stature. Short stature can also occur since the fetus is in the womb due to protein intake problems when the mother is pregnant and can also be affected by environmental conditions. This problem is one of the issues that can affect children's growth and development. Lack of energy and protein for a long time will cause stunted growth of children. The condition of food fulfillment in Indonesia as a whole is still weak (Khomson, 2021).

Stunting is a chronic nutritional problem caused by multifactorial and intergenerational. In Indonesia, people often consider short growth as a hereditary factor. The results of the study prove

that the influence of hereditary factors only contributes 15%, while the biggest element is related to the problem of nutrient intake, growth hormone and the occurrence of recurrent infectious diseases in toddlers (Unicef, 2022). There are several factors related to the incidence of short stature, including the sex of the child, weight at birth, birth order, number of siblings, parents' employment status, parents' education level and average income of parents (Kusumawati, Marina, & Wuryaningsih, 2019).

In Indonesia, the common indicators used to measure short stature in children are by using weight by height (BB/TB), height by age (TB/U), and weight by age (BB/U). The birth weight classification is divided into two parts, namely the birth weight of babies <2500 grams, which is called Low Birth Weight (BBLR), and the birth weight of >2500 grams, which is called normal birth weight (WHO, 2021). Short stature is a condition that fails in the growth of children, both body and brain growth, which is caused by chronic malnutrition. One of the socio-economic factors that affect short stature is the economic status of parents and family food security. The cause of short stature itself is that the nutritional intake consumed during the womb and toddler period is relatively low. Mother's knowledge about health and nutrition before pregnancy, as well as the postpartum period, is still low, limited health services such as antenatal services, postnatal services and low access to nutritious food, low access to sanitation and clean water are also the causes of short stature. (Yuwanti, 2022). The problem of short stature is considered a case that needs to be dealt with specifically, considering that its impact is not only on the health of a child but also affects the development of Human Resources (HR) productivity in an area (Nirmalasari, 2022).

Based on observations that have been made by researchers in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jenepono Regency, researchers found a fact that many children are affected by short-statured disease. In addition, the parental environment around the house is not clean, and the understanding of nutritional intake in children is still lacking because many parents are still poorly educated, and there are economic factors that affect it. The case of short stature in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jenepono Regency is the highest in the Jenepono area, with a total of 259 stunted children and 296 families at risk of stunting (KRS). Therefore, the Health Office prioritizes Bulujaya Village to reduce the stunting rate by providing nutritious food that can be consumed by children every day, such as eggs per shelf per family that has stunted children and monitored by the Family Assistance Team (TPK) formed by BKKBN.

2). METHODS

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This type of research is qualitative research (Field Research) which is descriptive or narrative. This research describes the status of a group of people, an object, a system, and a condition. Descriptive qualitative research is research that only describes situations and events. The data collected is in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. Thus, the research report will contain data citations to provide an overview of the presentation of the report (Molelong, 2021). This research was conducted in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency. The selection of this location is based on the high number of children who are short in stature and at risk of short stature, and this location strongly supports the research topic. The data collected in this study consisted of primary data obtained from direct interviews with parents, as well as secondary data obtained from parents, nutritionists, and family planning counselors.

The data collection methods used in this study include observation, namely direct observations to obtain data related to the object of research, and interviews in which data are collected face-to-face, where questions are delivered and answered orally. Interview is a meeting of two people to exchange information through questions and answers, so that meaning can be constructed in a certain topic (Sugiyono, 2010). The type of interview in this study is a structured interview that contains questions that have been prepared beforehand. In addition, documentation is also used as a data collection technique that aims to complement additional data in the research, such as photos during interviews with sources and various literature used in this study.

Data analysis techniques in qualitative research are carried out before entering the field, during the field, and after finishing in the field. The steps for data analysis after data collection include: (1) Data reduction, which means summarizing, researching the main things, focusing on important things, and looking for patterns; (2) Data presentation, namely compiling information so that it allows drawing conclusions. In qualitative research, data presentation can be carried out in the form of brief descriptions, charts, or flowcharts; (3) Drawing conclusions, that is, the conclusions made must be credible or accountable.

To test the correctness of information in this methodology, credibility tests can be used. Some ways to test the credibility of qualitative research are: (1) Extension of observation, namely research back to the field, making observations, and re-interviewing data sources, both found and new. This is done to strengthen the relationship between researchers and resource persons, create familiar

conditions, and build mutual trust so that they can dig up more appropriate information; (2) Increase in perseverance, namely making observations more carefully and continuously so that the certainty of data and sequence of events can be recorded with certainty and systematically; (3) Triangulation, which is carried out in three ways: first, source triangulation, which is to look for information from other sources so that the information obtained is more accurate; second, triangulation techniques, which is checking the credibility of data by collecting data from the same source but with different techniques; Third, time triangulation, because often the data is more credible when the resource person is still fresh, for example during the interview in the morning when the resource person is more focused. Data credibility tests can be carried out by means of observation, interviews, or other techniques at different times or situations. In this study, triangulation techniques were used by matching the results of observations, interviews, and documentation.

3). RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the investigation through the observation stage and the interviews with the people who are involved in the Bulluljaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto ReGENCY in this case, that is, the tula people and the safety service in the face of the implementation of the stunting, then the data on the implementation of the training:

1. Description of Children with Short Stature (stunting) in Bulu Jaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency

Short stature is a condition in which the height and weight of a child do not match the standard of height or weight of a normal child in general. For this reason, the researcher got an overview of a child with a short stature in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency. From the results of observations and interviews conducted with parents, health service workers, and family planning extension workers in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency, researchers found that the description of short stature (stunting) in children includes weight and height that is not in accordance with normal children, lack of appetite, and lack of enthusiasm when playing. This is reflected in the results of the interview as follows:

a. Height

Stunting is one of the causes of stunted height growth of children, so that children have a lower height than their peers. Stunting usually begins to occur when the child is still in the womb and is

increasingly visible when the child enters the age of 2 years. This can be seen from the results of observation and height recording in the child's KIA (Maternal and Child Health) book. According to the results of the interview with Mrs. RD, she said, "My child's height at birth was 49 cm and weighed 2.9 kg. At that time, I did not know that this measure indicated the risk of stunting, but after the examination was completed, my child was declared at risk of stunting. Currently, he is 71.4 cm tall and weighs 7.1 kg, and he has been categorized as stunted (Rosdiana, 2023)". Based on the results of observations and interviews, researchers found that some parents rarely bring their children for immunization and provide less nutritious food. However, there are also parents who routinely bring their children for immunization but their children are still stunted, which is caused by the disease experienced by the mother. During the interview process, the researcher also had time to see firsthand that the child was given snacks such as crackers "Upin & Ipin".

Based on the data obtained, the height of children who are stunted at birth is 49 cm, 52 cm, 48 cm, and 46 cm. Meanwhile, the child's current height is 71.4 cm, 62.5 cm, 71.7 cm, and 74.3 cm. The child's weight at birth is 2.9 kg, 3.4 kg, 2.6 kg, and 1.5 kg, while the child's current weight is 7.1 kg, 6.9 kg, 8.1 kg, and 7.6 kg. Children who experience stunting have stunted growth, as explained earlier, that stunting is a nutritional condition that is assessed based on the index of Body Length by Age (PB/U) or Height by Age (TB/U), which is the equivalent of the term stunting. The Z-score for the stunting category is between -2 Standard Deviation (SD) to less than -3 SD, while very stunting is below -3 SD. Growth disorders in children due to lack of nutritional intake for a long time can cause stunting, which is reflected in the lower height of children compared to the height of children of their age (P2PTM, 2020).

b. Less Happy

Children who experience stunting often show changes in their social-emotional aspects, such as a lack of happiness in daily activities, including in playing with their friends, and a lack of enthusiasm. This can be seen from the results of observations and interviews in Bulluljaya Village, where stunted children look less happy in their daily lives, such as when playing. One of the causes is the lack of nutritional intake provided by parents that is not in accordance with the needs of the child's age. As stated by Mrs. NV in an interview, "I usually notice that my child plays differently from his other

friends, he also plays but not as many stories as his friends are excited, sometimes he doesn't even want to play" (Nova, 2023).

The results of the interviews are in line with the results of observations in the field, where researchers found that there are parents who provide nutritious food for their children, while there are also those who have difficulty when giving nutritious food because children do not want to eat healthy food. In the interview process, the researcher also had time to see firsthand the child who seemed to be less enthusiastic in his daily activities. If the child is not given the food he wants, the child will cry. According to Trisnawati, (2021) Children with short stature tend to have attitudes that can change such as being unhappy due to changes in the child's social psyche such as being unhappy with daily life with friends, less excited, not talking much, and rarely laughing or smiling. As explained above, children with short stature who experience a lack of nutritious food tend to be weak, inactive, less excited, and less enjoyable when playing, so that there is a decrease in interaction with their environment which causes poor development, characterized by decreased activity, more fussy, and feeling unhappy, and not showing much curiosity (exploration instinct). Of course, these things can hinder children from developing their potential to adapt and get to know their social environment.

c. More Fussy

Children who experience stunting tend to have a more fussy attitude compared to normal children. This is caused by a lack of nutrition that affects the child's energy level and development. Stunted children are often less active, feel more discouraged, and cry more easily, and even have longer tantrums, especially if parents do not understand how to deal with them. According to the results of the interview with Mrs. KM, she stated: "If my child is fussy daydreaming, if there is something he wants, it must be there immediately, it is also normal to have tantrums" (Kamma, 2023). The results of the interview are in line with the results of observation, that is the researcher found that stunted children tend to cry and are more fussy when they play with their friends. During the interview process, the researcher also saw a child who was stunted playing with his other friends, but this child did not really like to play with his friends. He gets bored more easily, more emotional, more hyperactive, and if this child is invited to play with his friends, he will cry and call his mother.

According to Walker (2022), children who have the opportunity to experience stunting show behavioral changes, less emotional when playing, so that children often suddenly cry even though they are not bothered by their friends or not according to their wishes, and tantrums such as less happy,

more apathetic, and more fussy. As explained above, stunted children have severe malnutrition in childhood that shows more emotional behavior changes, tantrums, less happiness, more apathy, more fussy, aggressive, less attention, and poor social relationships when they reach school age. In high-risk children in developed countries, psychosocial stimulation in early childhood reduces antisocial behavior and juvenile delinquency. Improved psychosocial functioning in mothers can be beneficial for children in stimulation thereby contributing to better emotional outcomes. Stunted children are vulnerable to psychosocial disorders in three aspects, they are internalization, externalization, and attention. They often feel isolated in their social group, have negative perceptions, withdraw socially, are inferior, and often engage by being the target of ridicule for their peers.

2. Obstacles in Preventing Short Stature for Children (Stunting) in Bulu Jaya Village, West Bangkala District

The adverse impact caused by children who are stunted is in the short term (disruption of brain development, impaired physical growth, and metabolic disorders in the body) and long-term (such as decreased cognitive ability and learning achievement, decreased immunity so that it is easy to get sick, high risk of diabetes, disorders, heart disease, blood vessel, stroke, and disability in old age). All of these impacts can reduce the quality of Indonesia's human resources, productivity, national competitiveness, and community welfare. However, there are several obstacles experienced by parents in the stunting prevention process, namely:

a. Lack of Understanding of Parents on the Characteristics of Stunting

Stunting is a condition of failure to grow in children under five due to chronic malnutrition so that the child is too short for his age. Therefore, parents need to know the characteristics or signs of stunting in children so that they can more quickly deal with stunting problems. Based on the results of an interview with Mrs. KM, who stated: "I found out that my child was stunted because when I was pregnant and checked the pregnancy at the health center, I was told that my child was at risk of stunting because I had hypertension. During pregnancy, I rarely ate nutritious foods and rarely took vitamins for pregnant women because my husband forbade me to take medication, considering my hypertension condition. I realized that my child was stunted because his growth was not the same as other normal children. My child is indeed malnourished from the womb to birth, so that is what makes

me think that the cause of my child being stunted is from my congenital disease during pregnancy (Kamma, 2023)”.

Based on the results of the interview, which is in line with the results of observation, the researcher found that parents do not know about the characteristics and symptoms of stunting in children. Parents only think that their children who are actively playing means that there are no problems in the child and also do not pay attention to their food intake because they think the most important thing is that the child wants to eat, even though the food according to a pediatrician or nutritionist cannot be given to the child. In addition, parents also pay less attention to KIA books.

Stunting is a condition of failure to grow in children under five due to chronic malnutrition so that the child is too short for his age. Therefore, parents need to know the characteristics or signs of stunting in children so that they can more quickly deal with stunting problems in children. Every parent must understand the characteristics or signs of stunting in order to more quickly overcome the problem of stunting in children. However, there are some parents who do not understand stunting. Parents who understand the needs of their little ones, ranging from adequate nutrition, parenting, to lifestyle, can minimize the risk of children being stunted. Children who are not affected by stunting and their growth is maintained certainly have the best opportunity to develop their talents optimally. As explained above, at the golden age, there is an extraordinary transformation in the child's brain and body, so this age is important for the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social development of the child according to their respective characteristics. Therefore, education and the right environment to develop children at an early age are very necessary (Mulyasa, 2021).

The family can influence the form of early childhood behavior, because early childhood actually learns from seeing, imitating, and imitating the behavior around them, so the role of parents is very important. Parents must be good role models for early childhood education. So, parents need to understand about children's education and health so that children do not get stunted or can avoid stunting, so that children can develop aspects that include social emotions, religious and moral values, cognitive, language, physical, motor, and art (Suriati, 2021). In addition to education about nutrition, parents should also understand parenting and a healthy lifestyle. The best parenting style is one that prioritizes the growth and development and health of children. This includes the importance of consulting a doctor and continuing to find out the nutritional needs of children according to their age and activities.

b. Lack of Nutritious Food and Beverage Intake

Currently, Indonesia still has a fairly high stunting prevalence rate, which is 24.4%. The number is still above the standard tolerated by WHO, that is below 20%. The high rate of stunting is caused by anemia and malnutrition in adolescent girls before marriage so that when pregnant, they produce stunted children. Children under five years old (toddlers) are a group that is vulnerable to malnutrition that has an impact on their growth and development (Kemenkes, 2021). One of the impacts of malnutrition is stunting. Based on the results of an interview with RD's mother who said: "My son is very lazy to eat, sometimes he eats only 3 spoons, after that he doesn't want to eat anymore. But if the snacks of the stalls are like Upin Ipin's [snacks], my son likes it very much, so I let him eat the food of the stalls that he likes because if he eats rice with vegetables, my son must only eat a little (Rosdiana, 2023)".

The results of the interview are in line with the results of observation. The researchers found that indeed parents do not pay attention to the intake of nutritious food and drinks given to their children, so this is the cause of stunting in children. Economic limitations also make parents unable to buy nutritious food, so they can only afford to give potluck food to their children. Most parents also give stall snacks to their children, even though according to child nutritionists, these foods are not suitable for children under 5 years old.

According to Harti, et al. (2019), the results of the interview are in line with the results of observations, where researchers found that some parents do not pay attention to the intake of nutritious food and drinks given to their children. This is one of the causes of stunting in children. In addition, economic limitations make parents unable to afford nutritious food so they can only provide potluck food. Most parents also tend to give stall snacks to their children, even though according to nutritionists, the food is not suitable for children under the age of 5 because of its nutritional content that is not enough for their growth and development needs.

c. Limited Access to Healthcare

One of the causes of stunting is because parents rarely take their children to the nearest health services. This causes parents to be unable to monitor their child's growth and development regularly. Therefore, it is very important to routinely take children to health services or *posyandu* so that parents can know the condition of their children and monitor their growth and development every month.

This finding can also be seen from the results of observations and interviews with parents of children who experience stunting.

The results of interviews and observations with a mother, NV, revealed challenges for parents in bringing their children to health services. Mrs. NV said: "I often go to migrate with my husband because my husband's work is not settled, so it requires us to migrate outside the area. When I go abroad, sometimes I leave my child with his grandmother, or sometimes I take him with me. However, even though my child was entrusted to my mother's house, my mother still could not take her to the *posyandu* because the location of the health service was far away and there was no vehicle to take her there. When I was overseas with my son, I also rarely took him to the *posyandu* because I didn't know the location there (Nova, 2023).

The results of the interviews that are in line with the observations show that access to health services is very far and the limitation of private vehicles are the main obstacles for parents to bring their children to the nearest *posyandu* or health services. In addition, some parents also often migrate with their spouses, which makes them rarely take their children to *posyandu* or health facilities. This is one of the causes of stunting, because parents rarely monitor the development and growth of children routinely, which should be done at the nearest health service.

According to Davi (2024) One of the causes of stunting is because parents rarely bring their children to the nearest health services, which is caused by the difficulty of access and the distance from residential areas. This results in parents not being able to monitor their child's development and growth regularly every month. Therefore, it is very important for parents to take their children to health services, including *posyandu*, in order to monitor their child's condition and ensure their development and growth every month. Based on the explanation above, health services have a very important role for the community, because they can improve health and prevent diseases.

d. Dirty Environment

A clean environment has a great effect on children's health. Parents must pay attention to the cleanliness of children's clothes, objects that children often reach, as well as food and intake given to children so that they are not susceptible to disease. Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers to parents of children affected by stunting, several factors that affect the occurrence of stunting were found. In line with this, KM's mother said: "The condition of my house is not clean because I rarely clean it due to my hypertension which often recurs, but my child's food

and drink intake is quite good because I always try to provide nutritious food and drinks for my child, even though my child has no appetite and only eats food that he likes." This statement shows that even though nutritional intake has been considered, poor home hygiene conditions and children's difficulties in consuming nutritious food are factors that contribute to the problem of stunting in children (Kamma, 2023).

The results of the researcher's interview are in line with the observation results, where the village environment is very dense and it is difficult to access clean water, as well as the absence of facilities such as toilets and bathtubs, causing human and animal feces to be close to the child's environment. This is certainly a risk to children's health. From there, it can be concluded that a clean environment has a great influence on children's growth and development. In addition, parents need to pay attention to body hygiene and children's food and drink intake to support their health.

According to Khairunnisa (2021), a clean environment plays a very important role in children's health. Parents must pay attention to the cleanliness of children's clothes, objects that are often reached by children, and the food intake given so that children are not susceptible to disease. Parents also need to be more vigilant and take care of their children while playing, because sometimes parents are negligent and do not pay attention to the cleanliness of their children's bodies after playing, especially if children play in dirty places. Based on the explanation above, environmental cleanliness has a very important and inseparable role in human life. A clean environment can create healthy conditions, thus preventing various diseases (Slamet, 2021). Environmental health is also one of the sciences and arts in achieving a balance between the environment and humans, so that clean, healthy, comfortable, and safe conditions can be achieved and various diseases can be avoided.

3. Strategies in Preventing Short Stature (Stunting) in Bulu Jaya Villag , West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency

Stunting is a condition in which the height of a child/toddler turns out to be shorter than the height of other children in general or children of the same age. Chronic nutritional problems in toddlers can be caused by insufficient nutritional intake for a long time due to parents/families not knowing or not being aware of providing food that is in accordance with their child's nutritional needs.

The problem of stunting is currently a special concern in Jeneponto Regency. The local Health Office appealed to the public to be aware of stunting. The Jeneponto Regency Government is making

great efforts to overcome the stunting problem by carrying out several programs. Programs that have been carried out in an effort to overcome the stunting problem are the provision of Supplementary Food (PMI) to toddlers and pregnant women, such as SGM milk for children, SUN biscuits for toddlers, TJ Joybee honey, and Dhavit syrup food supplements. Meanwhile, the administration of Neo Blood Supplement Tablets (TTD) to adolescent women and pregnant women, increasing the coverage of complete basic immunization in infants and toddlers, the administration of vitamin A, and the administration of zinc in cases of diarrhea, especially in pregnant women and toddlers. In line with the statement delivered by Mrs. Diany Maulid, a nutritionist in Bulluljaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency, who said that:

“Strategi yang kami lakukan selaku pihak tenaga kesehatan setempat yaitu telah memberikan beberapa edukasi kepada orang tua maupun keluarga anak yang terkena *stunting* dan memberikan makanan tambahan berupa biskuit, vitamin, dan susu. Adapun data yang kami dapatkan di kelurahan Bulujaya ada beberapa anak yang terkena *stunting*”.

There is also a strategy given by parents to their children, which is in line with the statements of RD, NV, and RK mothers who are experiencing economic shortages, namely:

“Saya sudah melakukan strategi agar anak saya bisa keluar dari zona *stunting* yaitu berusaha memberikan makanan yang bergizi seperti sayur kelor, sup wortel, ikan, serta buah papaya, apel, anggur, dan pisang, sedangkan minuman yang bergizi seperti susu SGM, Sirup Dhavit, dan madu. Namun karena saya juga mengalami kekurangan ekonomi jadi makanan dan minuman diatas hanya saya berikan saat ekonomi saya berkecukupan atau adanya bantuan dari Penyuluh KB dan Ahli Gizi”.

The results of the researcher's interview were strengthened from the results of observations, where the strategy in preventing short stature in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency, from the family planning extension agency, has provided several food and beverage assistance for children who are included in the stunting group. Parents in Bulujaya Village have also tried to prevent short stature, but some parents are constrained by economic costs and disease factors experienced by parents during pregnancy.

The problem of stunting is currently a special concern in Jeneponto Regency, especially in the Bulujaya Village area, which is recorded to have the highest stunting rate in Jeneponto. The Jeneponto

Health Office urges the public to be vigilant against stunting. The Jenepono Regency Government is making great efforts to overcome the stunting problem by implementing several strategies to overcome stunting problems, namely the provision of Supplementary Food (PMT) to toddlers and pregnant women, the provision of Blood Supplement Tablets (ITD) to adolescent women and pregnant women, the increase in complete basic immunization coverage for infants and toddlers, the provision of vitamin A, and the provision of zinc in cases of diarrhea, especially for pregnant women and toddlers.

Based on the explanation above, strategies in preventing short stature are focused on the First 1000 Days of Life (HPK) because this period is the most responsive time for children to receive all interventions related to overcoming growth and developmental disorders (KG & K, 2020). When entering the age of 9-11 months, the child's ability to receive food has gotten better and mothers have also been more courageous to be creative in processing various food ingredients to make complementary foods. Providing more diverse foods will support the fulfillment of children's nutritional needs. Foodstuffs that are usually processed into complementary foods at an early age are usually in the form of meat, liver, various types of vegetables, and so on.

Based on the explanation above, researchers also concluded that one of the things that mothers cannot prevent from causing stunting, is that when in the womb, parents (especially mothers) experience hypertension. Apparently, hypertension can cause children to be short stature, and hypertension experienced by mothers can also cause miscarriage during pregnancy. The causes of stunting occur due to infections in the mother, teenage pregnancy, mental disorders in the mother, short birth distances, and hypertension.

In addition to low access to health services, including access to sanitation and clean water, it is one of the factors that greatly affects children's growth (Kemenkes, 2023). So, in addition to the factors mentioned above, strategies that parents can do to prevent stunting are maintaining a balanced diet, getting enough rest, checking their health frequently, taking vitamins, giving Complementary Foods (MPASI), Blood Supplement Tablets (ITD), and keeping the environment clean. The above strategies must be considered by parents, because many cases of stunting start in the womb.

4). CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research that has been carried out, the researcher can conclude several things, namely:

1. The description of children with short stature (*stunting*) in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency obtained the findings that the description of short stature (*stunting*) is a child who has a weight and height that is not in accordance with the Other normal children, their appetite is reduced, they are unhappy, cranky, and unenthusiastic when playing.
2. Obstacles in preventing short stature for children in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency are:
 - a. Lack of understanding of parents about the characteristics of *stunting*.
 - b. Lack of intake of nutritious food and drinks.
 - c. Access to hard-to-reach healthcare.
 - d. Less clean environment.
3. Strategies to prevent short stature in Bulujaya Village, West Bangkala District, Jeneponto Regency are the provision of Supplementary Food (PMT) to toddlers and pregnant women, the provision of Blood Supplement Tablets (TTD) to adolescent girls and pregnant women, and the increase in complete basic immunization coverage in infants and toddlers, the administration of vitamin A, and zinc learning in cases of diarrhea, especially in pregnant women and toddlers.

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