

## Rehat Dulu: Healthy youth mentoring for boarding school girls group at Muhammadiyah 2 senior high school

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### ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a colorful and dynamic period, accompanied by a series of emotional upheavals that adorn the journey of a human being about to grow up. Adolescents, the largest age group in the Indonesian population structure, are the focus of attention and a strategic intervention point for human resource development. The most important step that must be taken is to increase attention to adolescent girls, because they face greater risks and are more vulnerable to the social environment. In addition to being the largest group (23% of the total population), adolescents have never received comprehensive and consistent attention. The group of adolescents who are in Islamic boarding schools or pondok environments, also known as boarding schools, are groups that often receive less attention, especially in terms of health. Reproductive health and mental health in adolescent girls are issues in Islamic boarding schools or pondok environments. Reproductive health is a state of perfect physical, cognitive, and social health, not only in the absence of disease or disorders, but also in terms of sexual and reproductive well-being. This includes the right of every individual to have a safe, satisfying, and fulfilling sexual life, as well as the right to have the ability to reproduce and the freedom to decide their own will in terms of reproduction without discrimination, pressure, or coercion. Adolescent reproductive rights are increasingly becoming an important topic to study in the modern era. This community service program aims to provide health education on reproductive health, mental health, and PHBS through "take a break" assistance. The purpose of implementing this program is for groups of students to be independent and effective in improving their health status through increased knowledge and changes in good practices, as a result of the program in the form of improving the quality of services to the community (groups of students) and scientific publications.

**Keywords:** Boarding School Girls; Healthy Teenagers; Mentoring.



## INTRODUCTION

According to WHO, adolescents are residents in the age range of 10-19 years, according to the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25 of 2014, adolescents are residents in the age range of 10-18 years and according to the Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) the age range of adolescents is 10-24 years old and unmarried. Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. At this time, it is experiencing rapid growth and development, both physical and mental [1]. Adolescence is a critical transitional stage marked by major physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes. According to WHO, it spans ages 10–19 and is often associated with reproductive and mental health issues [2]. Social and environmental factors such as social media, peer influence, and family support significantly shape adolescent health and behavior [3]. While social media may increase risks like anxiety and depression, positive peer and family environments can foster healthy habits [4].

Adolescents face physical changes and challenges in identity, morality, and social roles [5]. The identity exploration phase can lead to internal conflicts, especially for those who are mentally or spiritually vulnerable, potentially resulting in deviant behavior. Understanding these risks is essential for creating effective health interventions (Arna et al., 2024). Adolescents are very sensitive to the influence of new values, especially those who do not have resilience [7]. They tend to be easier to adjust to the flow of globalization and the free flow of information, which can cause deviant behavior changes due to adaptation to values that come from outside [8]. Deviant actions are a problem that often occurs in adolescents, both in the family, school, and community environment. Adolescents' key thoughts often revolve around life's meaning, happiness, and behavioral standards. Teens may equate life's purpose with wealth in secular, materialistic environments and adopt distorted behavior norms [9].

Media and technology heavily influence their perceptions, while a high lifestyle, promiscuity, and poor communication with parents or teachers contribute to behavioral issues. As a result, adolescents are vulnerable to reproductive and mental health problems [10]. Reproductive health is often considered taboo for adolescents, leading to a lack of knowledge and increased health risks such as promiscuity, unplanned pregnancies, abortions, STIs, HIV/AIDS, and drug abuse [11]. Education on reproductive health is crucial to prevent sexual deviance and gender-based violence. Limited knowledge can result in harmful behaviors. Institutions, parents, and families are key in delivering this education. The University of Pekalongan collaborates with IMBS Miftahul Ulum High School to support this effort [12].

SMA IMBS Miftahul Ulum Pekajangan is a Muhammadiyah Islamic boarding school in Pekalongan, Central Java, founded in 1997 on a 2.5-hectare waqf land. It began as a non-formal Islamic study program (Takhasus) from 1995 to 1997. Since 1997/1998, it has offered formal education at MTs, MA (social sciences), and SMA (natural sciences) levels. By the 2023/2024 academic year, it housed 500 students in dormitories. The pesantren is led by a kyai who assigns senior students, called village heads, to help manage dormitory life. Education emphasizes Islamic teachings, Arabic, and character values like simplicity and self-control. Students live away from their families to deepen spiritual ties. However, issues like poor hygiene, skin diseases, and unhealthy habits

persist. A January 2025 study found low student awareness of reproductive health, PHBS, and mental health.

## METHOD

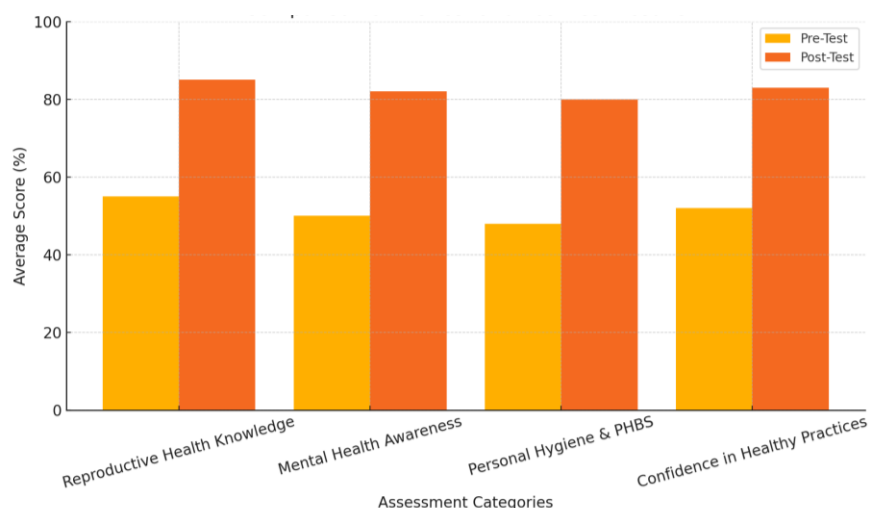
Community service activities are carried out in IMBS Pekajangan Pekalongan boarding school. Implementing this community service activity is carried out through educational activities, health counseling, health check-ups, and gymnastics practice. The education provided consists of 3 topics: reproductive health, mental health, and education about PHBS (clean and healthy living behavior). The education involved 3 resource persons. Examination activities were carried out to measure the fitness condition of the students. The health check-up is done through weight, height, and blood pressure measurements. This activity involved 30 participants who were students from IMBS Pekajangan Pekalongan boarding school.

## RESULT

This activity was carried out on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at IMBS Pekajang, Pekalongan Regency. This gymnastics activity was guided by a gymnastics trainer from the Physiotherapy study program of the University of Pekalongan and attended by 25 participants (IMBS Pekajangan Pekajangan students, Pekalongan Regency). During the activity, the enthusiasm of the students was evident. At the end of the gymnastics session, a "sharing section" or heart-wrenching session was conducted, guided by the Lecturer of Community Health at the University of Pekalongan (Yulis Indriani, M.Kes), related to the benefits felt after participating in gymnastics activities. From the workshop discussion session, information was obtained that gymnastics activities were 100% supposed to provide benefits in relaxing the bodies and minds of the students. The following is the documentation of the First Rest gymnastics activity.



**Figure 1.** Rest Gymnastics Activities First



**Grafik 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results**

A series of community service activities at IMBS Pekajangan Pekalongan Regency also provides health education related to reproduction and mental health for young women in the IMBS environment. This activity was carried out from the beginning of the pretest to the end with the posttest. Testing the difference in score between pre-test and post-test using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test with a significance value of 0.012, meaning that there is a difference between pre-test and post-test scores. Thus, the education provided related to reproductive health using lectures and interactive discussions can be concluded to be effective. The purpose of this activity is to give knowledge on reproductive health. Provide health education on caring for the body and reproductive organs. Providing health education for mental health disorders in adolescents. Providing health education to maintain the quality of life by maintaining reproductive and mental health.

During the educational activities, the students were enthusiastic about following and answering the questions submitted during the break session. The goal is to gain validation of increased knowledge related to reproductive health and mental health. The pretest and posttest results carried out in 25 participants showed significant results. It can be concluded that providing reproductive health and mental health education can improve adolescents' knowledge related to reproductive health and mental health. Thus, it is hoped that efforts to enhance health can be realized through continuous education. The following is documentation of health education activities at IMBS Pekajang, Pekalongan Regency. Community service is an effort to disseminate science, technology, and art to the community. These activities must provide added value for the community regarding economic activities, policies, and behavioral (social) changes. Describe how service activities have made changes for individuals/communities and institutions, both in the short and long term.

## DISCUSSION

The community service activities conducted at IMBS Pekajangan demonstrate a significant improvement in students' understanding and awareness across key areas of adolescent health. The increase in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores across all categories indicates that the educational interventions delivered during the program were highly effective.

**Reproductive Health Knowledge.** Before the intervention, students showed limited understanding of reproductive health, which is consistent with previous findings that topics related to sexuality and reproductive rights are often considered taboo in many traditional environments, including boarding schools [13]. After the interactive lectures and discussions, students displayed a much-improved comprehension of the subject. This was evident in the 30% increase in average scores. This indicates that combining structured presentation with open dialogue helped break the stigma and improved engagement. Reproductive health is a critical yet often overlooked aspect of adolescent development, particularly among female students in boarding school environments. In the context of the "Rehat Dulu" program at IMBS Pekajangan, the issue of limited reproductive health knowledge was evident before the intervention [14]. Many students demonstrated minimal understanding of reproductive anatomy, menstrual hygiene, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and the concept of reproductive rights. This aligns with broader cultural challenges, where discussions about reproductive health are frequently considered taboo, especially in traditional and religious educational settings [15].

The educational intervention, delivered through structured lectures and interactive discussions, was designed to address these knowledge gaps in an age-appropriate and culturally sensitive manner [16]. During the sessions, students were encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences, and engage in scenario-based learning, which helped normalize the conversation around reproductive health. Combining formal instruction and informal dialogue created a safe learning space that fostered openness and curiosity. The effectiveness of this approach was evidenced by a 30% increase in post-test scores. This improvement demonstrates enhanced factual understanding and a shift in attitudes toward reproductive health issues. Students showed greater confidence in discussing topics they had previously avoided, and many expressed appreciation for gaining personally and socially relevant knowledge [17].

**Mental Health Awareness.** Mental health remains a sensitive and under-addressed topic among adolescents, particularly in religious boarding schools. The significant improvement in post-test results reflects the growing openness of students to discuss and learn about emotional well-being, stress, and coping mechanisms. The program's success in this domain underscores the importance of creating safe spaces for dialogue and emotional expression, especially during the formative teenage years.

Mental health awareness among adolescents is increasingly recognized as a public health priority, especially in high-pressure environments such as boarding schools [18]. In the "Rehat Dulu" community service program at IMBS Pekajangan, mental health was identified as a key area for intervention. Before the program, many students exhibited low awareness of mental health concepts, including stress management, emotional regulation, and signs of common psychological disorders such as anxiety or depression.



Cultural factors often contribute to the stigma surrounding mental health in traditional educational institutions. Discussions about emotions, trauma, or psychological well-being are frequently avoided, and students may lack both vocabulary and safe spaces to express what they feel. The program sought to break this silence through structured education sessions and interactive discussions led by public health professionals. During the intervention, students were introduced to basic mental health concepts, including the importance of emotional balance, the effects of stress on the body and mind, and healthy coping strategies. Group discussions and reflective exercises encouraged participants to identify personal stressors and share experiences, helping to normalize mental health conversations [19].

Post-intervention evaluations showed a substantial improvement in students' understanding of mental health, with increased participation and openness noted during the sessions. Many students expressed relief at having a platform to discuss their feelings and reported that the information provided helped them better manage emotional challenges in their daily lives. This shift is significant, as improved mental health literacy enables adolescents to seek help, support peers in distress, and build resilience. Furthermore, fostering mental health awareness in a boarding school context contributes to a more empathetic and supportive school culture [20].

Personal Hygiene and PHBS (Clean and Healthy Living Behavior). The educational session on hygiene and PHBS helped correct misconceptions and poor hygiene practices among students, such as sharing personal items or improper clothing care. The improvement in knowledge in this category demonstrates the effectiveness of practical education in promoting healthy habits, particularly in communal living environments like pesantren.

Clean and healthy living behavior (PHBS) prevents disease and promotes well-being, especially in communal environments like boarding schools. At IMBS Pekajangan, observations revealed several unhygienic practices among students, such as sharing personal items (e.g., towels, combs), improper clothes drying, and limited awareness of sanitation habits. The “Rehat Dulu” program provided targeted health education to address these issues. The sessions emphasized the importance of personal hygiene, proper handwashing, menstrual hygiene, and maintaining clean living spaces. Visual aids and real-life scenarios made the information relatable and actionable. Post-education feedback and knowledge assessments showed a clear improvement in students' understanding of hygienic practices [21]. More importantly, there was a visible shift in their attitudes, with many expressing commitment to adopting healthier habits in their daily routines. Improving hygiene behavior among adolescents in pesantren settings reduces health risks such as skin infections or gastrointestinal illnesses and builds lifelong habits contributing to broader community health. The success of this component highlights the importance of continuous, practical, and context-sensitive hygiene education [22].

Confidence in Healthy Practices. Integrating physical activity through the “Rehat Dulu” aerobic exercise session improved physical fitness and positively influenced students' self-confidence and mood. Post-exercise sharing sessions revealed that students felt more relaxed and motivated to maintain healthy routines. This experiential learning approach helped bridge theoretical knowledge with daily practice, reinforcing sustainable behavior change [23].

Confidence in applying healthy practices is vital to any health education program. In the “Rehat Dulu” intervention at IMBS Pekajangan, this aspect was nurtured through practical activities, most notably the structured aerobic exercise session designed for adolescents. Held in a supportive and energetic atmosphere, the session encouraged students to participate, enjoy, and recognize the benefits of physical activity. The post-exercise sharing session revealed that many students felt more relaxed, motivated, and inspired to maintain healthier routines. This indicates that experiential learning, rather than only listening, significantly boosted their self-confidence regarding health management.

In addition, the program emphasized self-care, body awareness, and making informed health decisions. As students became more knowledgeable about reproductive health, mental well-being, and hygiene, they expressed increased agency in adopting and maintaining healthy behaviors. Developing confidence in health practices empowers adolescents to act responsibly, resist negative peer influence, and become role models for their peers. This confidence can spread in a boarding school environment, where students live collectively, reinforcing positive health norms across the institution. The consistency of improvements across all categories affirms that a multi-method approach combining lectures, interactive discussion, physical activity, and health assessments can significantly enhance adolescents’ health literacy. Moreover, the enthusiasm and engagement displayed by the participants highlight the readiness and potential of youth, even within structured religious environments, to embrace health-promoting behaviors when supported by appropriate education and facilitation. Nevertheless, future programs could be strengthened by incorporating periodic follow-up sessions, parental involvement, and peer-led health advocacy initiatives to ensure the long-term sustainability of the behavioral improvements observed.

## CONCLUSIONS

The “Rehat Dulu” program significantly improved students' reproductive and mental health knowledge, as shown by pre- and post-test comparisons. Physical activities like aerobic exercise also enhanced students’ fitness and emotional well-being. Health education raised awareness of personal hygiene and clean living habits (PHBS), addressing behavioral challenges in the boarding school environment. Ongoing education, support, and institutional collaboration are essential for lasting impact. Overall, this program effectively promoted adolescent health and can serve as a model for similar initiatives in boarding schools.

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