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THE NEW NORMAL: Creating a Pleasant Virtual Communication

## Family care and reproductions health for teens: Applying 8 family functions during the transition growth

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“As the spearhead of national development, sometimes teenagers are required to be perfect. What people don't even know is that sometimes we teenagers also have stories to tell. Share a laugh and be cheerful, that's what we are. In the end, life is not about being perfect but how we want to learn and grow together. It's okay, you are not alone, we are always there for you“. Those are words I thought of when I saw teenagers. In the world, it is estimated that the youth group is 1.2 billion, or 18% of the world's population (WHO, 2014). You really can imagine how much '1.2 billion is. But before that, let's talk about who a teenager is. Adolescence is a period where the transition from childhood to adulthood, which includes all the developments, experienced in preparation for entering adulthood. These changes in development include physical, psychological, and psychosocial aspects (Pusdatin Kemenkes RI, 2015).



*Figure 1. Election of ambassadors in the youth community*

Exactly like the picture of the two teenagers above, you can see that they are certainly different from when they were still a kid. Growth has occurred rapidly, even including psychosocial. Figure 1 shows two teenagers, participating in an ambassador event for the youth community in Indonesia, Palangka Raya, to be precise, last October. They fill their adolescence with productive activities. Yes, like the thoughts that always crossed my mind in the first paragraphs, teenagers will not be alone. An example is the presence of teenagers in the youth community ambassador, which aims to provide counseling to other teenagers about how to behave, how to build a future, and how to build a prosperous family.

Adolescents are the spearhead of national development; therefore teenagers need to carry out productive activities. But it is not enough just from productive activities, the quality of teenagers is also determined by their families. How the family can provide a basic understanding to adolescents before they face the world outside to avoid reproductive health problems.

According to the Ministry of Health of Republic Indonesia (1988) defines family as: "The family is the smallest unit of society which consists of the head of the family and several people who gather and live under one roof in a state of interdependence". The smallest unit means everything that underlies everything. Without guidance, teenagers can fall into a dark hole called reproductive health problems. Three problems are often encountered in adolescents; there are early marriage, premarital sex, and drug abuse.

For information, I quote from UNICEF (2019) that the number of early marriages in Indonesia is second place in ASEAN. There are more than one million underage women who are married at a young age. Early marriage, sex before marriage, and drug abuse will affect their reproductive health. Why? There are a lot of bad effects that we get from these three reproductive problems. Start from pregnancy problems such as preeclampsia, placenta previa, fetal death, and childbirth problems such as maternal mortality. This happens because the growth of the reproductive organs has not yet matured. Premarital sex also has the same effect, one of which is the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents, including HIV. Drug abuse will make a person desperate to do anything to get that item; this is the forerunner to damage the social function and personality of a teenager apart from the negative effects that we know from drug abuse.

Then what should the family do to prevent this happen? Apply these 8 family functions:

1. *Functions of religion*; a family is a place where religious values are given, taught, and practiced. Here, parents play a role in instilling religious values as well as giving religious identity to children. A family that succeeds in applying religious values through example in everyday life can provide a strong foundation for each member of the family.
2. *Functions of compassion*; since the baby was born, since then he has known love. The feeling of being loved is very important for a child because one day he will grow up to be someone who can love too. This will be an asset for all family members to foster a sense of compassion in a wider context and be able to reduce the emergence of seeds of hostility and anarchism in society.
3. *Functions of protection*; ideally, a family is capable of being a place where its members feel safe and secure. Therefore, no matter how bad the conflict that occurs in the family, avoid acts of verbal or physical violence, discrimination, and coercion of the will.
4. *Function of social and culture*; a family also has an important role in introducing children to the socio-cultural values that exist in society. Manners are highly respected, with various kinds of norms, customs, and manners that apply in society. It is from family members that children can learn how to behave towards older people and learn what is appropriate and inappropriate in their culture. In this case, the family must also be wise in filtering socio-cultural conditions with the needs of children in this advanced era. If socially and culturally tend to allow children to marry at an early age, it is the family who has to consider and find other alternative solutions.
5. *Reproductive function*; one of the goals of most humans to have a family is to have offspring. Through a legal marriage, the family becomes an entity capable of producing the next generation of the nation. Early sex education and respect for the opposite sex need to be instilled in the family.

6. *Function of education*; the family is the first place a child learns to socialize with other people, parents, and siblings. In the family, the education process is accepted for the first time by the child. All of this is caused by the intensive interactions that occur so that the educational process occurs naturally and effectively.
7. *Economic function*; the economic condition of a family usually affects family harmony. Therefore, teaching children to save money and foster an entrepreneurial thing will make them financially smart.
8. *Environmental function*; an environmentally friendly lifestyle can be realized if it is instilled in the family early on. Likewise, the habit of caring about the environment, such as neighbors and society in general. Cultivate nature by loving the environment, not wasting electricity, clean water, and food, and also make it a habit to dispose of garbage in its place from an early age, because only from nature do we exist.

And you can take a look at this picture. What a happy big family gathering on the wedding procession. The ideal age for marriage suggests for an adult is 21 years old for a woman and 25 years old for a man (BKKBN, 2018).



**Figure 2. Large families at weddings with the ideal age (My sister wedding)**

So by applying these eight family functions, we will achieve the highest state of reproductive health for our teens. And what was it all done for? Is it to achieve the goals of all nations in preparing to enter an era of demographic bonus that will only occur once in the history of a nation? The demographic bonus is a condition in which the productive age is more than the non-productive. With qualified teenagers, they will turn their demographic bonus into a golden generation. Especially in Indonesia, it is called 'Indonesia Emas Tahun 2045'

**“Love your family, love your teenager, and love the future of your nation”**

Figure 3 shows the teenagers who become a winner of a teenager’s ambassador. In our society, it is perceived an idea how a teenager should be. Reach the highest goals, rich in knowledge, and then form a happy family that can avoid adolescents from reproductive health problems.



**Figure 3. Teenagers who achieved achievements and avoided the triad of krr problems**

As a manifestation of caring for the future of adolescents, I have been a resource person for reproductive health education for adolescents. It's all started with my election in the same event as the teenager in the first photo as an ambassador for peers (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Providing education about adolescents and prosperous families**

From there I learned to find out the health status of the world's population, one of which was by participating in an international congress (Figure 5). There I found teenagers of the same age and saw for themselves the characteristics of youth from various countries. Participants at that time were from Indonesia, the Philippines, Nigeria, Japan, and America.



*Figure 5. International Health Congress in St. Petersburg Paul Philippines, 2018*

Figure 6 is also one of the things teenagers can do to carry out anti-substance abuse movements, including tobacco and tobacco products such as cigarettes.



*Figure 6. Commemorating World No Tobacco Day, 31 May 2018*

### Consent

The adults (identifiable) photographed have given their consent for their pictures to be used in the dissemination and publication of this research.

### **Conflict of Interest**

None.

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