

Adolescent mental health and bullying

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Editorial

Adolescence is a stage of human development that is characterized by physical and mental growth.¹ Healthy mental development can result in lifelong health and well-being, so it is crucial to recognize mental health issues in adolescents.²

Adolescent health issues require serious attention. These issues are a major cause of death and disability among adolescents; the number of cases was reported to increase after the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental disorders in adolescents who required medical assistance increased by 24.6% between 2016 and 2018, with an increase in adolescent suicides reaching 70.3% between 2008 and 2020.² These findings have proven that adolescent mental health issues are not merely a local issue, but global health challenges.

Bullying is widely reported among adolescents; it involves perpetrators, victims, and environmental factors.³ Bullying among adolescents are often found in school environments, with verbal bullying being the most frequently reported form of bullying. There are various reasons for bullying among adolescents, including individual characteristics, family, school environment, and social factors.⁴ Bullying is also affected by poor self-control, motives of rejection, and environment.³

Emotional distress in bullying victims is caused by negative feelings, prejudice against the perpetrator, and fear of offensive behaviour. Anxiety and emotional distress can lead to changes in daily activities, in which victims tend to withdraw from their environment and family, feel sad, and become easily irritated.^{5,6}

Data from WHO (2021) show that millions of adolescents experience stress, anxiety, and depression every day.¹ Major depression is the most commonly reported mental disorder in adolescents up to the age of 17.² Several studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between bullying and the prevalence of depression and intimidation in adolescents.^{7,8} Victims of bullying have a higher risk of depression than those who are not bullied,⁹ so bullying is a risk factor for depression.⁷

To prevent bullying, schools and families need to first identify potential bullying as early as possible. It is important for both schools and parents to work together to take preventive measures through counseling, education, and training.^{2,5,10} Bullying management should be directed towards establishing a comprehensive anti-bullying system, where victims are also given interventions to reduce trauma by involving parents, health workers, and the victim's social environment.¹⁰ This is in line with a study by Demetriou, showing that family plays a highly important role in maintaining adolescent health.¹¹ Another study highlighted successful interventions in adolescent mental health cases with a combination of cognitive and supportive therapy.¹² The relevance of adolescent mental health issues is growing, especially when considering the limited resources of health workers in Indonesia, so a community-based educational approach becomes a very potential solution.

December 2025 Issue

This December edition presents 14 articles on the topics of early detection, health services, and biodiversity. The first article on maternal and child health highlights the high cesarean section rates due to clinical conditions, including a history of previous cesarean sections, preeclampsia, and premature rupture of membranes. This indicates the necessity for considering risk factors in pregnant women.

The next two articles present chronic disease studies that investigate the regulation of leptin-ghrelin hormones and hearing function in people with diabetes mellitus. Both studies offer a perspective on the need for lifestyle modifications that may have an impact on multiple organs, including the sensory system.

The fourth article examines the use of Peguero Lo Presti criteria on ECG to detect left ventricular hypertrophy in hypertensive patients. The findings show that a simple and affordable diagnostic approach is still highly relevant and optimal in primary care, in the middle of the development of artificial intelligence-based health technology.

The fifth article discusses the importance of mental health among adolescents, where community-based education can increase knowledge to prevent depression in adolescents. This issue is increasingly important particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic. The approach in the study offers an appropriate intervention model, especially in areas with limited health workers.

Another article investigates the biodiversity of native Indonesian plants through laboratory and in-silico perspectives. An in-silico study of the plant *Peronema canescens* Jack shows the potential of flavonoid compounds in inhibiting VEGF-2 in cancer therapy. This information has scientific contributions based on biological resources for pharmaceutical innovation.

From the clinical and surgical perspectives, two studies conducted clinical trials to compare gabapentin and lorazepam as premedication in pediatric patients and another study assessed the effectiveness of carbazochrome sodium sulfonate to reduce the effects of bleeding in TURP surgery. Another operative study is trichloroacetic acid and electrocautery therapy for verruca vulgaris. These three studies confirm that the quality of clinical practice is not always associated to the use of the latest technology, but it is achievable through the optimization of simple, evidence-based, and easy-to-apply classical methods.

This edition also presents four articles that review several rare cases, such as spinal cord compression, fibrosarcoma in adult, Pfeiffer syndrome, and erythroderma due to generalized pustular psoriasis in infants. These studies demonstrate the importance of integrating various examinations, such as radiological and histopathological examinations and various multidisciplinary approaches, including genetic testing, especially given the limited availability of advanced diagnostic facilities in Indonesia.

In general, the December edition conveys the message that improving health quality in Indonesia can be achieved by promoting early detection and interventions that are relevant to local conditions as well as optimizing both classical and modern technologies. The use of artificial intelligence, multidisciplinary approaches, and biodiversity-based innovations serve as the foundation of policies to improve health in Indonesia.

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