



# ***Family Fun Program : Transforming the Roles of Fathers and Mothers in Optimizing Child Growth and Development in Dadaprejo Village, Junrejo District, Batu City***

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## **Abstract**

The role of parents in parenting plays a crucial role in supporting child growth and development. However, fathers' and mothers' involvement in daily family activities is often suboptimal. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Family Fun Program* in increasing father and mother involvement and its impact on child development in Dadaprejo Village. This study used observation, survey, and practice methods involving forty families participating in the *Family Fun Program* in Dadaprejo Village. The results showed that active parental involvement in program activities improved children's social and emotional skills. Fathers and mothers who were actively involved in the program reported more positive interactions with their children. The *Family Fun Program* has been shown to be effective in increasing parental involvement and supporting child development. The program also encourages the formation of more equal, responsive parenting patterns that support children's social and emotional development. These findings suggest that a family-based activity-based approach can be an effective strategy in building a healthy and collaborative growth and development environment at the community level.

**Keywords:** role of father and mother, child growth and development

## **1. Introduction**

Development and growth are crucial elements in creating a healthy, intelligent, and productive future generation. Child development is closely linked to the responsibilities of parents and family. Parents and those closest to a child have a significant impact on their growth and development (Irma, Nisa, & Sururiyah, 2019). Childhood development is a crucial and valuable phase, serving as a formative stage for human development. This period is often referred to as the golden age, a fundamental phase for individual development. Every parent hopes their child can grow and develop according to existing growth and development standards (Rustiana, 2021).

Children are a vital asset that can determine the survival, quality, and success of a nation. Early childhood is considered a golden age because it is during this period that the initial foundation for determining human competence begins (Fatima et al., 2022). This means that early childhood significantly influences the abilities that will be seen in later life (Saputri & Widyasari, 2022). Therefore, children need to be conditioned to grow and develop optimally and given the best possible education to become the next generation with good personalities in the future. Child development is a process of behavioral transformation from immaturity to maturity, from simplicity to perfection, and from dependence to greater independence. As parents and educators, we need to contribute to supporting children's development (Putri, SA, Bariah, O., & Makbul, M. 2023).

The role of parents in guiding their children so they have the freedom to discover their identity and become good and independent individuals (Achmat, 2020). This is not only a

physical need but also crucial in character formation, psychological and cognitive development. Parents are a source of learning for children from birth, even while in the womb, they have a significant influence on their development. Parents play a crucial role in guiding children towards success and developing positive character traits. Parents should take advantage of early childhood by providing appropriate stimulation so that all aspects of child development can develop well and optimally according to the child's age and progress (Birhan et al., 2021). The role of parents, especially fathers and mothers, will be optimal when both parties work together.

Fathers and mothers must play an active role in providing love, guidance, and positive values that will shape a child's personality and mindset. However, over time, with the advent of technology, the importance of parents' roles has shifted. As a result, many parents face the challenges of adapting to the needs of today's modern children. The better the quality of the parent-child relationship, the better the child's growth and development (Nurhadi, 2020).

Several studies have shown that children learn many different things from their fathers and mothers. From fathers, children learn assertiveness, masculine traits, wisdom, kinesthetic skills, and cognitive abilities. Meanwhile, from mothers, children learn things like gentleness, emotional control, and compassion. Therefore, parents must understand child stimulation and aspects of child development so that the stimulation provided at school can be continued at home with parents, achieving optimal child growth and development (Danauwiyah & Dimiyati, 2021).

The research location, Dadaprejo Village, is one of the areas facing challenges in optimal childcare. Based on the data provided, this is due to many families where both parents work, resulting in limited time for direct childcare. This has the potential to impact the quality of interactions between parents and children in optimizing child development. The *Family Fun program* is designed to address and find solutions to existing problems by providing a forum for parents to transform their roles in accordance with current developments. Through interactive activities involving fathers, mothers, and children, this program aims to increase the involvement of fathers and mothers in the child's development process. In addition, this activity includes child development screening, which is the main program to help parents determine the extent of their child's development, which is of course carried out by an expert institution in the field, *Alpha Psychology*.

## 2. Method

In carrying out this community service activity, the author used qualitative methods, namely observation, surveys, and practice. This service was carried out in Dadaprejo Village, Junrejo District, Batu City with children aged four years and above as subjects. The design of this activity is direct observation and practical activities. Observation is carried out as a systematic observation process to determine whether the location is suitable for use in research activities based on existing problems. Direct practical activities that focus on parents and children by providing knowledge in the form of socialization and in the next stage are play learning activities for children to train fine and gross motor skills and can optimize child growth and development. Both methods are carried out to support this community service program.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Results

*Family Fun* program is a form of research aimed at analyzing changes in parental involvement in child development. The following are the results of an analysis of data obtained through observations, surveys, and practical sessions with 30% of the 40 families who agreed to participate in the program until its completion.

### **Increasing Father and Mother Involvement**

Based on observations from a socialization program attended by 40 families, only 50% of parents were involved in their children's development. Furthermore, 30% of the 40 program participants agreed to complete the program, an increase of 80% from before the program.

### **Increasing Interaction in the Family**

Thirty percent of the 40 families, meaning 12 families who successfully completed the program, reported a 70% increase in interaction through communication and activities with their children. This was achieved after child development screening.

### **Formation of Positive Values in the Family**

*Family Fun* program has also successfully instilled positive values within families. Based on evaluations of learning and play activities, 10 out of 12 parents reported an increase in positive values within the family. Parents observed that during their children's learning and play at home, they became more responsible and obedient.

### **Impact of the Program on Child Development**

Observations show that this program contributes to children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Children participating in the program experienced increased selfconfidence and improved social interaction skills.

### **Participant Satisfaction with the Program**

A satisfaction survey showed that 90% of the 12 families who participated in the program were satisfied with the *Family Fun program*. They found it to be very helpful in helping parents understand the key aspects of child development.

## **3.2 Discussion**

Research, conducted through the *Family Fun program*, analyzed the program's effectiveness in helping optimize child development in Dadaprejo Village, Junrejo District, Batu City. This program is expected to help transform the roles of fathers and mothers in increasing their involvement in child development. The *Family Fun program* includes a series of interconnected activities, including parenting outreach, child development screening, and learning to play.

The parenting outreach activity is designed to introduce the program's objectives and to observe the community's enthusiasm for the program. Furthermore, the activity includes material on child development to raise parental awareness. Furthermore, there's a child development screening activity to determine the extent of their development. This activity involves more than just observation; it also includes a survey conducted by an expert in the field.

Furthermore, the final activity is learning and playing, which is a direct practical activity to see the extent of improvement from before the program to the impact of this program itself. The results presented show that there has been an increase relevant to the objectives of this program. This is based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, which has the following principles: 1) interactions between individuals and different systems are the primary mechanism for human development; 2) the nature of the relationship between individuals and their environment is two-way and mutually influential; thus, 3) individual development varies depending on the individual, time, and their interactions (Dharma, 2022). The above assumptions indicate that the environment, especially parents, greatly influences a child's personality. Furthermore, there is a theory relevant to this research, namely Baumrind's parenting theory, which develops parenting styles by dividing them into four main types into two dimensions: *responsiveness* (warmth) and *demandingness* (control or demands).

Analyzing the above, we then found a discussion of the results outlined previously, namely increased involvement of fathers and mothers, increased interaction within the family, the formation of positive family values, the program's impact on child development, and participant satisfaction with the program. The increased involvement of fathers and mothers indicates that the program has successfully increased the involvement of both parents in parenting activities. Prior to the program, fathers' involvement in stimulating children's growth and development was very limited. This is because most people still hold the traditional perception that parenting is the mother's responsibility. However, after the program, there has been a significant improvement. Fathers who are involved in the child's development process can increase children's self-confidence and social skills, as well as foster positive mindsets. Furthermore, maternal involvement helps children manage their emotions well and show compassion to others.

The results also show that increased family interaction makes children happier because they can interact with their parents, indirectly providing them with informal education. Furthermore, increased family interaction helps children grow more openly, making them more confident in expressing their feelings. Furthermore, this family interaction also helps children develop their listening skills and process the information they receive. *The Family Fun* program also successfully fosters positive family values through educational and enjoyable activities, naturally and without coercion. Positive family values are the foundation for building a strong character in children. This is demonstrated through games that require cooperation, where children learn to prioritize the common good and appreciate the hard work of each family member. The values acquired through the *Family Fun program* have the potential to equip children for interacting in broader social environments, such as school and the community. Children who are accustomed to practicing cooperation and responsibility within the family will be better prepared to face social situations outside the home, where respect for others and responsibility are essential.

The results then showed that the program had an impact on children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Support from both parents helped children feel accepted and encouraged to explore their own abilities, which ultimately encouraged children's cognitive development. A safe and supportive environment made children feel more confident to try new things and learn from every challenge they faced. A safe and supportive environment made children feel more confident to try new things and learn from every challenge they faced.

The satisfaction of participants in the *Family Fun program* demonstrates that it not only meets the needs of families in Dadaprejo Village but also provides valuable benefits and experiences. The fun-designed program engages parents and children with enthusiasm. Positive participant feedback indicates that the program fills the gap in educational family activities while remaining fun and interactive. With high levels of satisfaction, it is hoped that this program can serve as a model for similar programs in other areas.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion in the article *Family Fun Program: Transformation of the Role of Fathers and Mothers in Improving Child Growth and Development in Dadaprejo Village, Junrejo District, Batu City*, it can be concluded that the active involvement of parents in specially designed activities, such as *Family Fun*, has a positive impact on child development. The participation of fathers and mothers in these interactive and educational activities not only strengthens the relationship between parents and children but also supports the child's overall growth and development, both socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

*Family Fun* program has successfully promoted a transformation in parenting roles, with fathers and mothers actively involved in building a family environment that supports communication skills, empathy, and discipline in children. This shared experience allows children to learn positive values and build strong emotional bonds with their parents.

Furthermore, the program demonstrates that collaborative parenting, combining the roles of fathers and mothers in a balanced and synergistic manner, can boost children's self-confidence and build a strong moral foundation, which impacts their ability to face social and learning challenges.

Overall, the success of the *Family Fun Program* in strengthening family relationships and supporting child development underscores the importance of responsive and active parental roles in parenting. It also demonstrates that a structured, activity-based parenting approach can provide long-term benefits for child development, particularly in creating a healthy, supportive, and loving family environment.

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