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Cultivating Movement for Students with Special Needs Through Creative Gymnastics to Maintain Physical Fitness

Dwi Gansar Santi Wijayanti*, Cahyo Yuwono, Ayutisa Rizqanada, Dinar Berlianti,
Armayta Dwi Tadita, Dimas Bagus Aji Pamungkas, Ngatinah

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: dwigansarsanti@mail.unnes.ac.id

Abstract

Children with Special Needs (ABK) are children with their own characteristics, so that is what distinguishes them from other children. Special attention to the education and health aspects for students with special needs is very important. Various efforts have been made by the local government to provide great attention to this by establishing educational unit facilities, namely the State Special School in Semarang Regency. Physical Education can be used as one way to cultivate movement for students with special needs. The methods of implementing this service include coordination and socialization, implementation of creative gymnastics and assistance. Creative gymnastics activities are carried out and adjusted to the abilities of students with special needs. Starting from warm-up, core, and cool-down movements. Creative gymnastics combines movements that are easy to do so that students can imitate and move actively. Gymnastics movements are able to stimulate all aspects of cognitive, affective, psychomotor or sensory abilities responsively. Cultivating movement in students with special needs will help them maintain their physical fitness. So that they are not only healthy but they are also able to carry out other activities without feeling tired.

Keywords: Movement Culture, Students with Special Needs, Gymnastics, Fitness

INTRODUCTION

Children with Special Needs (ABK) are children with their own characteristics that distinguish them from other children (Mustad, 2019). Children with Special Needs are also defined as children with physical, psychological, cognitive, or social abilities who are late in achieving life goals like children in general (Triana & Husni, 2017). ABK must be recognized early and identified according to age group because each ABK certainly requires special attention and services. ABK in the adult category certainly requires special treatment that is different from the children category (Lestari & Widyawati, 2020). As of 2021, the national disability rate for children aged 5-19 years is 3.3%. Meanwhile, the population at that age is 66.6 million people. Thus, the number of children aged 5-19 years with disabilities is around 2,197,833 people. Including in Central Java, the Number of People with Disabilities (ADK) is also quite high, namely based on male gender as many as 12,806 and female reaching 9,361 people.

One of the characteristics of ABK development is by carrying out imitation models, namely imitating the behavior patterns of people around them (Astini et al., 2018). Therefore, the environment is an important factor in creating ABK habituation or habits towards better development. The special services provided are not only directed at emotions or behavior, but also related to physical exercise. Children with Special Needs (ABK) have a higher risk of contracting diseases than children in general (Kurniawati et al., 2022). Various diseases or health disorders that attack children are generally caused by bacterial and viral infections originating from the surrounding environment. One effort that can be made is to provide varied exercises or gymnastics so that ABK not only get health benefits but they also do not get bored quickly (Resita et al., 2022). If the ABK feels comfortable, safe, fun and not bored, then a culture of gymnastics or sports will emerge to stimulate all aspects of their cognitive, affective, psychomotor or sensory abilities responsively and actively (Lutfiana et al., 2022).

Children with Special Needs (ABK) must also receive proper education in special and inclusive

schools (Yumaika & Ardisal, 2020). This is as mandated by the Law that all citizens have the right to receive proper education. This has also been regulated in Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities, and Government Regulation Number 13 of 2020 concerning Appropriate Accommodation for Students with Disabilities. Special schools for ABK are known as SLB or Special Schools. Special education is education for students who have difficulty in following the learning process due to physical, emotional, mental, social differences, and/or have the potential for intelligence and special talents. In this case, the students in question are people with disabilities. As of 2021, the number of national students in the Special School (SLB) and inclusive pathways is 269,398 children. Special attention to the educational aspect for children with special needs in SLB is very important. Various efforts have been made by the local government to pay great attention to this by establishing SLB educational unit facilities, one of which is in Semarang Regency.

The regulations governing the guarantee of special and inclusive education for children with special needs in Semarang Regency are contained in Regional Regulation Number 6 of 2009. Semarang Regency with its capital Ungaran is one of 35 regencies/cities that are part of the Central Java Province. Located at 110° 14' 54.74" - 110° 39' 3" East Longitude and 7° 3' 57" - 7° 30' 0" South Latitude. This regency has an area of 95,020.674 Ha or around 2.92% of the entire Central Java area. Administratively, the district is divided into 19 sub-districts, 27 urban villages and 208 villages. Semarang Regency has 9 SLBs consisting of 1 public SLB and 8 private SLBs.

Table 1. List of Special Schools (SLB) in Semarang Regency

No	District	Name Of School
1	Ungaran Barat	SLB Negeri Ungaran SLB Putera Mandiri Ungaran
2	Bergas	SLB Dharma Bhakti
3	Ambarawa	SLB Bina Putera
4	Bringin	SDLB Wahid Hasyim
5	Banyubiru	SDLB Muhammadiyah Surya Gemilang
6	Pabelan	SLB Erha Pabelan
7	Suruh	SLB NU Reksosari
8	Susukan	SLB Muhammadiyah Susukan

Therefore, considering how important inclusive efforts are to the educational aspect for ABK, the focus of this service is to cultivate the movement of students with special needs through creative gymnastics to maintain physical fitness at SLB Negeri Ungaran, Semarang Regency. This SLB was chosen as a role model in inclusive education for students with special needs as well as an implementation of government regulations and rules.

METHODS

The implementation of this creative gymnastics was carried out on Friday, August 30, 2024 at 07.30 - 08.00 WIB at the Ungaran State Special School yard. The target of this creative gymnastics is all students with special needs. This activity is carried out using the coordination and socialization method, creative gymnastics training and mentoring which aims to cultivate students to always be active so that students' physical fitness will be maintained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of this Community Service activity carries the theme "Cultivating Movement". Every healthy person is certainly able to carry out daily activities. However, that is not enough, because they must have energy reserves to carry out other activities. This also applies to students with special needs. Even though they have disabilities, they must be able to maintain their physical fitness.

Through fun physical activities, it can certainly eliminate boredom and fatigue. Creative gymnastics is one of the activities that can be done. Besides being fun, this activity is also easy to do.

Warm-up movements start from head to toe. Movements must be done sequentially so that no muscle stretching is missed. So that you are ready to do more complex core movements. For example, turning your head, bending your body and bending your arms and legs.

Core movements are movements that are the mainstay of gymnastics, because they are combined movements. In this case, the movements chosen only combine 2 movements. Because the target of this activity is students with special needs. However, the repetition is added so that there is an increase in the quality of the students' lung capacity. For example, raising both hands up and pulling your legs back.

Cooling movements are done to restore the body's muscles after doing movements with a fast tempo. So that students can be more relaxed and avoid injury after exercising. For example, the movement of swinging the arms while breathing.



Figure 1. Implementation of Creative Gymnastics

Movement culture must be done by everyone, including students with special needs. Through movement culture, students will have more active movement experience. So that it can trigger the metabolism process and blood circulation becomes smoother. The result is a healthier and stronger body, and is not easily attacked by disease. Not only preventing diseases in general, an active body can prevent the risk of chronic diseases



Figure 2. Group photo with all participants pengabdian

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Community Service targeting students with special needs shows. Effective efforts in cultivating movement for them. Through this activity, education is provided on the importance of physical activity in daily activities. Starting from warm-up activities, core movements, to stretching. Cultivating movement in students with special needs will help them maintain their physical fitness. So that they are not only healthy but also able to carry out other activities without feeling tired.

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