

Efforts to Protect and Prevent Sexual Abuse of Children

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Abstract

The rise of sexual abuse cases against minors is alarming to society. How could it not be that children who are the next generation of this nation are damaged in their infancy. In addition, people also become restless and worried about the security that exists in the environment around their children. This shows that children have not received protection for security in their daily lives. Thus, through the socialization of state constitutional policies in the protection and prevention of sexual violence against women and children in Palopo City, families no longer ignore the mentality of adolescents and only focus on the material needs of children. Efforts to prevent sexual violence against children are carried out through socialization on how to prevent sexual violence against children, including 1) parents conducting open communication and establishing emotional closeness with children. 2) Parents are advised to provide children with an understanding of their bodies and things that other people should not do to their body parts, as well as the involvement of law enforcement officials. However, PTPAS faces obstacles in efforts to prevent sexual violence against children; namely, children cannot understand the motives of the perpetrators of sexual violence, so the vital role of parents and adults who are around children is to have intensive communication with children.

Keywords: Protection, Prevention, Sexual Violence, Children

1. Introduction

Women and children are vulnerable to violence (Walker-Descartes, Mineo, et al., 2021). To stop violence against women and children and end injustice in economic access, Jokowi administration has implemented the "Three Ends program", namely ending violence against women and children, ending human trafficking, and ending injustice in economic access for women. The program is expected to increase public awareness of the importance of protecting women and children to create a women- and child-friendly Indonesia (Wismayanti et al., 2019). However, the issue of protecting women and children from violence is not only part of the duties of the central government and local governments (Baba et al., 2018; García-Moreno et al., 2015; Lloyd, 2018). Still, it needs to be supported by all parties, especially the community, the business world, and the mass media, to prevent violence, exploitation, and discrimination against women and children (Mutia Azizah, 2019).

The protection of children that has been carried out so far has not provided guarantees for children to get treatment and opportunities following their needs in various fields of life so that in carrying out efforts to protect children's rights by the Government must be based on human rights principles, namely respect, fulfillment and protection of children's rights (Walker-Descartes, Hopgood, et al., 2021). Therefore, Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection, which has substantively regulated several matters, including the issue of children who conflict with the law, children from minority groups, children who are victims of economic and sexual exploitation, children who are trafficked, children who are victims of riots, children who become refugees and children in situations of armed conflict, for this reason, child protection is carried out based on the principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, respect for the child's opinion, the right to live, grow and develop.

Although legal instruments have been owned, Law No. 23/2002 on Child Protection has not been able to run effectively because there are still overlapping sectoral laws and regulations related to the definition of children. On the other hand, the rise of crimes against children in the community, one of

which is sexual crimes, requires increased commitment from the Government, Regional Governments, and Communities, as well as all stakeholders related to the implementation of Child Protection (Savage & Windsor, 2018). Then, to effectively supervise the implementation of Child Protection, an independent institution is expected to support the Government and Local Governments in implementing Child Protection. Thus, the amendment of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection also emphasizes the need for aggravation of criminal sanctions and fines for perpetrators of crimes against children to provide a deterrent effect and encourage concrete steps to restore the physical, psychological, and social of child victims and child perpetrators of crimes (Rout, n.d.; Sirait & Rosmalinda, n.d.). This needs to be done to anticipate child victims and child perpetrators of crimes in the future, not to become perpetrators.

Thus, considering that women, especially girls, cannot be avoided from the topic of sexual violence, it is necessary to make comprehensive preventive efforts so that women do not become victims of sexual violence. Lately, many women have ventured to report incidents of sexual violence experienced, so it is hoped that the socialization of "State Constitutional Policy in Efforts to Protect and Prevent Sexual Abuse of Women and Children in Palopo City" can be an effort to prevent sexual violence against children.

2. Method

The type of research to be conducted uses normative-empirical legal methods. Normative research is based on normative legal science in law, comparative law, applicable principles, and existing theories. At the same time, empirical is based on facts and reality. The normative-empirical research method was chosen because it combines a normative legal approach with additional empirical elements to implement normative law on every societal and legal event.

3. Results And Discussion

Child sexual abuse is an act of an adult or older person using a child to satisfy their sexual needs. The forms of sexual abuse are diverse, such as asking or pressuring a child to engage in sexual activity, providing indecent exposure of a child's genitals, displaying pornography to a child, having sexual intercourse with a child, physical contact with a child's genitals, and viewing a child's genitals without physical contact outside of medical measures (Caucus, 2017). Meanwhile, according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), a sexual offender is a person who likes to demean or belittle others regarding sex (gender) or matters of intercourse between men and women.

Sexual violence is still common in everyday life, whether in the family, community, school, or office environment. According to data from the online information system for the protection of women and children initiated by the ministry of women's empowerment and child protection, in 2022, 11,686 cases of sexual violence occurred in Indonesia. Quoted from the same source, women are the most victims compared to men. Violence experienced by women is not only sexual violence but there are also sexual intrusions that are included in indirect sexual violence. Various kinds of sexual harassment, such as gender harassment, seduction, bribery, sexual coercion, and sexual imposition. Sexual harassment is dominated by behavior that seduces and tempts women to be able to fulfill the sexual desires of men. Child sexual abuse is any act that includes harassment and violence against a minor (Rumble et al., 2020). Various forms of sexual violence can occur in children (Chiesa & Goldson, 2017; Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2019).

1. Exhibitionism, or exposing one's genitals to minors.
2. Making physical contact, such as holding or touching
3. Having intercourse with a child.
4. Masturbating in the presence of a minor or forcing a minor to masturbate.
5. Obscene conversations, phone calls, text messages, or other digital interactions.
6. Producing, possessing, or sharing child pornographic images or movies.
7. Sex trafficking.

Child sexual abuse is not always easy to recognize, and some survivors may not show obvious signs, and the perpetrator could be someone they have known or trusted for a long time. However, several conditions can be prevented if this happens (Chiesa & Goldson, 2017; Russell et al., 2020), including:

1. Bleeding, bruising, or swelling in the genital area.
2. Bloody, torn, or stained underwear.
3. Difficulty walking or sitting
4. Frequent urinary tract or yeast infections.
5. Pain, itching, or burning in the genital area
6. In addition to physical symptoms, children can also show behavioral changes, such as:
 - a. Changes in hygiene, such as refusal to bathe or excessive bathing
 - b. Developing phobias.
 - c. Showing signs of depression or post-traumatic stress disorder
 - d. Expressing suicidal thoughts, especially in adolescents.
 - e. Having problems at school, such as absenteeism or falling grades.
 - f. Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior.
 - g. Nightmares or bedwetting.
 - h. Overprotectiveness and care for siblings, or taking on the role of caregiver.
 - i. Reverting to regressive behaviors, such as thumb sucking.
 - j. Running away from home or school.
 - k. Self-harm.
 - l. Seems threatened by physical contact.

If this happens to a child, parents should suspect that the child is being sexually abused and immediately report it to the authorities. In addition, there are other forms of child sexual abuse other than those committed by adults, divided into several types (Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2019; Tener & Murphy, 2015), namely:

1. Incest

Sexual behavior that is carried out within the scope of a close family where a close family or marital relationship is not allowed, for example, father with child, mother with child, sibling, grandfather or grandmother with grandchildren, and also applies between uncle and nephew or aunt with nephew. In addition to blood relations, this also applies to marital relations, such as children with fathers or stepmothers.

The impact of incest, in addition to leaving trauma disrupting the development of children because it is not time to engage in sexual activity, will also damage the bloodline if the child victim of sexual harassment becomes pregnant, of course, will experience confusion in the family tree and will get ridiculed by the surrounding community.

2. Pedophilia

A sexual disorder is characterized by a sense of sexual attraction to children who have entered adulthood. This can result from 2 factors, namely due to a person's childhood experience that does not support their level of development or the experience of a person who in his childhood was a victim of abuse by a pedophile as well. Pedophiles do not necessarily tend to commit acts of sexual abuse against children because some of them only have an interest but do not commit criminal acts such as child sexual abuse.

3. Child pornography

Like pornography in general, child pornography is also almost the same. It's just that children are the object or subject of pornography. A simple example is that children are forced to see or hear pictures, videos, or actual sexual acts, even including reading writings that lead to sexual activity. This is because it should be suspected that a child is not supposed to receive sexual information.

Pornography in Indonesia itself is regulated in Law No. 44 of 2008 concerning Pornography, which in Article 1 number 1 states that "Pornography is images, sketches, illustrations, photographs, writings, sounds, sounds, moving images, animations, cartoons, conversations, gestures, or other forms of messages through various forms of communication media and public performances, which

contain obscenity or sexual exploitation that violates the norms of decency in society." So pornography can be included in the ranks of child sexual abuse if the child is forced to see or become the things mentioned in Article 1 number 1 above.

4. Extrafamilial sexual abuse

Unlike incest, the difference lies in the perpetrator of the crime. Extrafamilial sexual abuse is committed not within the family sphere but in public areas such as schools, daycare centers, or playgrounds. In this category, many examples have occurred in the community, for example, the case of sexual abuse at the Jakarta International School (JIS), which was carried out in the bathroom. In general, it can be stated that the factors that cause sexual crimes against children are divided into 2 (two) parts, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are psychological factors, biological factors, and moral factors. Meanwhile, external factors are socio-cultural, economic, and mass media (Nainggolan et al., n.d.). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are several ways to prevent sexual violence (Spangaro et al., 2021), including:

1. Individual Approach by:

- a. Designing programs for perpetrators of sexual violence where perpetrators must be responsible for their actions, such as determining appropriate punishment for perpetrators of sexual violence;
- b. Providing education for the prevention of sexual violence, such as reproductive health education, socialization of sexually transmitted diseases, and self-protection education from sexual violence.

2. Developmental Approach

The developmental approach is to prevent sexual violence by instilling education in children from an early age, such as:

- a. Education about gender;
- b. Introducing children to sexual harassment and the risks of sexual violence;
- c. Teaching children how to avoid sexual violence;
- d. Teaching children boundaries for private body parts; and

3. Teaching the limits of sexual activity during the child's developmental period.

- a. Community Social Prevention such as:
- b. Organizing anti-sexual violence campaigns;
- c. Providing sexual education in the social environment
- d. Socialize the prevention of sexual violence in the social environment.

4. Health worker approach, namely:

- a. Health workers provide Health Document Services that have a role as medical evidence for victims who experience sexual violence;
- b. Health workers provide health training on sexual violence to detect sexual violence early;
- c. workers provide protection and prevention against HIV disease; and
- d. Health workers provide care and protection for victims of sexual violence.
- e. Legal and Policy Approaches to Sexual Violence, namely:
- f. Provide a place to report and handle acts of sexual violence;
- h. Provide legal regulations on sexual violence and punishments for perpetrators to protect victims of sexual violence;
- i. Enter into international agreements for legal standards against sexual violence; and
- j. Organize anti-sexual violence campaigns.

These actions are, of course, only preventive. Nevertheless, at least by making the above efforts, it is hoped that the leading cases of sexual violence can be prevented as much as possible. As for the prevention program carried out by PTPAS in general in each region, namely socialization on how to prevent sexual violence against children.

1. Parents open communication and establish emotional closeness with children. By taking the time to play with the children.
2. Parents are advised to give children an understanding of their bodies and what others should not do to their body parts. For example, children understand that if someone else kisses them on the cheek, they must be careful because it is not allowed, especially if the other person is unknown. Introduce

to children the difference between strangers, acquaintances, friends, and relatives. For example, strangers are people who are not known at all. Children should not be too friendly, familiar, or trusting towards them. Relatives are family members who are closely known. If the child is past toddler age, teach them to be ashamed of being naked. And, if they have their room, teach them to close the doors and windows when sleeping permanently.

3. The involvement of law enforcement officials, namely investigators, prosecutors, and judges, in handling cases of sexual harassment on children so that they have a perspective on children is expected to have a deterrent effect on the perpetrators of criminal acts of harassment so that no more children become victims of sexual harassment.

In line with the program, prevention is taking action before an event based on data or information sourced from observations / epidemiological research. Then, the underwear rules program was also reinforced, a guide for parents and educators in teaching sex education to children at an early age (Brooks, 2019). This program makes it easy to open conversations about sex with children so that they can protect themselves from perpetrators of sexual violence (Smyth & Katz, 2016).

However, there are obstacles faced by PTPAS in efforts to prevent sexual violence against children, namely that children cannot understand the motives carried out by perpetrators of sexual violence. Sometimes, with different motives, the perpetrator will commit the act. Therefore, the critical role of parents and adults around children is to have intensive communication with children. PTPAS urges parents always to maintain communication with their children when they are outside the home. Educate children on how to deal with strangers who act unnaturally. When children are at school, teachers are expected to pay close attention to their students. When the child starts acting strangely, the teacher must ask about it. Teach children to continually communicate if a stranger asks them to leave or anyone who does things that lead to sexual violence.

4. Conclusions

In general, it can be stated that the factors that cause sexual crimes in children are divided into 2 (two) parts, namely internal factors and external factors. The prevention program carried out by PTPAS in general in each region is the socialization of how to prevent sexual violence in children, including 1) parents' open communication and establishing emotional closeness with children. 2) Parents are advised to provide understanding to children about their bodies and things that other people should not do to their body parts, as well as the involvement of law enforcement officials. Even so, there are obstacles faced by PTPAS in efforts to prevent sexual violence against children, namely that children cannot yet understand the motives carried out by perpetrators of sexual violence, so the vital role of parents and adults who are around children is to have intensive communication with children.

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