



## **Communicative Parenting Workshop in the Digital Era : Reducing Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents and Early Childhood Children**

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**Abstract:** The use of gadgets and internet access opens up great opportunities to obtain educational content, enriching children's cognitive stimulation and creativity. However, a series of studies shows that digital parenting interventions practices and strategies parents use to maximize benefits while minimizing the risks of their children's interaction with digital media still face various challenges, especially during early developmental stages. Data from the Operational Curriculum of TK AN-NUR Sabah Balau Tanjung Bintang Lampung Selatan indicates that literacy including digital literacy is considered a basic need in the learning and communication process. This community service aims to reduce children's dependence on gadgets by enhancing parents' digital literacy, strengthening dialogic communication between parents and children in the digital context, raising awareness and skills related to digital safety and health, and integrating local values into digital parenting practices. The activities are carried out in two stages: Focus Group Discussions (FGD) involving interactive dialogues between the service team and participants to identify their initial knowledge about communicative parenting, and training sessions that provide comprehensive knowledge and understanding of communicative parenting for early childhood in the digital era, particularly in facing the challenges posed by the digital world. Evaluation results from pre-tests and post-tests showed a significant improvement in participants' understanding after the training. Before the training, most participants were in the very low understanding category, but after the training, the majority improved their knowledge, with 76.92% of participants in the 'adequate' understanding category and 23.08% in the 'good' category. No participants were in the 'very low' or 'low' category after the training, indicating the success of the program in making a tangible impact.

**Keywords:** communicative parenting, challenges and solutions, early childhood.

### **▪ INTRODUCTION**

The development of digital technology in recent decades has fundamentally transformed the way families interact and how children learn, play, and communicate. The distribution of internet users in Indonesia indicates that children and adolescents represent the largest user group, reaching 65% in 2018 (<http://www.apjii.or.id>, 2019). The use of gadgets and internet access provides significant opportunities to obtain educational content, enrich cognitive stimulation, and foster children's creativity. However, a series of studies has shown that digital parenting interventions defined as parental practices and strategies aimed at maximizing the benefits while minimizing the risks of children's interaction with digital media continue to face various challenges, particularly during the early stages of development.

Siti Nurina Hakim et al. (2017) found that internet addiction generates more negative than positive impacts ([jurnal.unissula.ac.id](http://jurnal.unissula.ac.id)). Similarly, Silvia Fardila Soliha reported a positive and significant correlation between social anxiety and the level of dependence on social media (<https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id>). Noviana Dewi et al. (2016)

found a correlation between internet addiction and communication anxiety with cooperative character among university students (<https://jurnal.ugm.ac.id>). A study by Andy Corry, Hestin Oktiani et al. (2016) on adolescents (senior high school students) in Bandar Lampung revealed the presence of internet addiction among students, with a high potential for media consumption patterns leading to addictive behaviors. Similarly, research on internet consumption patterns among students by Hestin Oktiani et al. (2017) reported that more than 30% of students were indicated to meet 7 out of 8 criteria for internet addiction.

A recent scoping review revealed a knowledge gap regarding the effectiveness of digital parenting interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where access and infrastructure are often limited. Other studies highlight the negative effects of excessive screen time on children's cognitive, language, and socio-emotional development, emphasizing the critical role of parents in guiding, monitoring, and engaging in dialogue with their children about gadget use. The World Health Organization (WHO) further underscores that young children should reduce sedentary screen time and instead engage in physical activities and creative play to support healthy growth and development.

Recommendations from health institutions such as the American Academy of Pediatrics also encourage a more flexible and contextual approach. Rather than merely setting numerical limits on screen time, they emphasize the quality of interactions and parental involvement when children engage with digital media. In the context of LMICs, digital parenting interventions face additional barriers such as unstable internet access, limited availability of devices, disparities in parents' digital literacy, and risks to children's physical and mental health due to age-inappropriate content or excessive screen time. A scoping review focusing on LMICs further highlights the urgent need for culturally and economically relevant research and programs that remain accessible to families with limited resources. Despite the increasing penetration of smartphones, limited data quotas and internet speed remain major constraints, suggesting that digital parenting strategies must adapt to restricted access conditions and integrate offline or hybrid solutions.

On the policy side, Law No. 19 of 2016 on Electronic Information and Transactions (Articles 40, Paragraphs 2 and 3) stipulates the government's obligation to protect public interests from the misuse of electronic information and to prevent the dissemination and use of electronic content prohibited by legislation. These efforts require the involvement of higher education institutions in community empowerment, particularly in strengthening digital literacy.

In addition, parental digital literacy in such areas often varies widely, ranging from those already familiar with educational applications to others who are using digital devices for the first time. Therefore, empowerment initiatives must be inclusive and structured in stages. This issue is particularly evident in rural areas of South Lampung, where gadget use among young children is becoming increasingly common. However, it is often accompanied by concerns regarding screen time duration, exposure to inappropriate content, and the lack of communicative dialogue between parents and children about what they consume digitally.

Data from the Operational Curriculum of TK AN-NUR Sabah Balau, Tanjung Bintang, South Lampung, indicate that literacy including digital literacy is considered a fundamental need in both learning and communication processes. Nevertheless, the socio-economic profile of the surrounding community, in which most parents work as farmers

and livestock breeders with lower-middle economic conditions, affects access to devices and internet connectivity, even though parental concern for their children's education remains high.

Based on the needs analysis, the school identified the necessity of providing parental assistance in addressing changes in children's play and learning patterns in the digital era. This includes enhancing parents' digital literacy, guiding them in selecting educational content, establishing a dialog-based "family digital contract," and applying practices of digital safety and ethics for early childhood. In response to these needs, a Community Service Program (PKM) in the form of a workshop entitled "Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era" was designed to address these issues gradually and contextually. The workshop is expected to empower parents to navigate the digital era wisely, foster healthy communication with their young children, and collaboratively face challenges while seeking solutions to ensure optimal child development within the local context of South Lampung.

#### ▪ **METHOD**

The community service activity on the 'Communicative Parenting Workshop in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children' for the teachers and parents of TK An-Nur Sabah Balau was conducted through several methods, namely: 1) Measuring the understanding level of Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era at the beginning of the TOT event. 2) Providing material on Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era. 3) Measuring the understanding level of Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era at the end of the TOT event. 4) Monitoring.

#### **Target Audience**

The target audience for this community service includes the teachers and parents of students at TK An-Nur Sabah Balau.

#### **Partner Participation**

The implementation of this community service activity involves the collaboration partner, FISIP Unila, namely TK An-Nur Sabah Balau. This activity is expected to assist the partner in implementing Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era. The forms of collaboration with the partner in this community service are as follows: 1) Providing a venue for the PKM activities and training that can accommodate the entire sequence of the service from start to finish. 2) Selecting PKM and training participants fairly from the FISIP Unila collaboration partner. 3) Distributing official invitations in the form of assignment letters to the participants of the PKM activities and socialization.

#### ▪ **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The community service activity titled 'Communicative Parenting Workshop in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children' was carried out in two stages: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and the delivery of materials. The FGD was held on June 14, 2025, at the Meeting Room of TK AN-NUR SABAH BALAU, located at Jl. Langgar 1, Sabah Balau, Kec. Tj. Bintang, South Lampung Regency, Lampung 35122, and involved all relevant invitees. The FGD was intended as a meeting between the service team and all participants to conduct an interactive dialogue in order to gather participants' knowledge about the challenges of parenting early childhood children in the digital era and to collect initial data on

participants' understanding, particularly regarding how they create and promote an individual's self-image or identity consciously and strategically, reflecting who they are, what they offer, and how they want to be recognized by others in the individual context. This in-person FGD was attended by approximately 13 participants, including parents of students, and 7 school staff members, including the principal, teachers, and educators.

During the FGD, several key issues were identified that had emerged during the activity, particularly related to the challenges of parenting early childhood children in the digital era: 1) Screen duration & rhythm. Frequent screen exposure at daily transition points such as before meals, before bedtime, and while waiting disrupts the child's routine. The biological rhythm becomes unstable: bedtime is delayed, the process of calming down before rest is interrupted, and the natural breaks between activities disappear. This shift triggers emotional reactivity when the screen is turned off, making the transition to other activities more difficult and weakening the child's ability to maintain focus without visual stimulation. 2) Content quality & speed. The fast-paced video streams, short clips, and autoplay create high and immediate entertainment expectations. Children become accustomed to rapid scene changes and intense stimuli, so slower-paced activities such as listening to a long story, constructive play, or tasks requiring perseverance feel exhausting. This pace imbalance leads to short attention spans and difficulty maintaining engagement in non-screen activities. 3) Language & two-way interaction. The dominance of media consumption replaces the critical responsive conversation necessary for language development. Children lose the opportunity to practice turn-taking in speech, enrich contextual vocabulary, and interpret nonverbal cues. This results in shallow understanding of instructions and short personal narratives. 4) Emotion regulation & behavior imitation. The screen, present whenever a child feels uncomfortable, creates an association of "discomfort = screen," reducing tolerance for frustration. Content that highlights instant victories, mocking humor, or unrealistic conflict resolution offers easy-to-imitate behavioral models. This combination leads to emotional outbursts when screen requests are denied and impulsive response patterns that spill over into daily interactions. 5) Age-inappropriate content & inconsistent moderation. Cross-platform recommendations and links in comment sections may lead children to disturbing or adult content, even with basic settings enabled. This unexpected exposure triggers reactions like anxiety, nightmares, or questions they are not ready to answer, while also eroding the child's sense of security with devices previously considered "safe.". 6) Consistent parenting. Inconsistent rules between home, grandparents, caregivers, and school create confusion about screen time limits. The misalignment of consequences leads to repeated conflicts during transition points (turning off screens, going to bed), and devices increasingly become perceived as bargaining tools rather than parts of a clear routine.

Based on the results of the FGD, the core issue is communicative and cross-caregiver in nature therefore, it is essential to hold a workshop titled 'Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children.' This workshop is necessary to align perceptions regarding the risks arising from screen duration/pace, content quality imbalance, the erosion of two-way conversation, weak emotion regulation, content curation leakage, and the inconsistency of rules among caregivers. Its main goal is to build a shared language and mutual understanding across home and school settings about what is happening, where the vulnerabilities lie, and how the indicators for improvement will be collectively recognized.



**Figure 1.** The community service team with the head of the TK An-Nur sabah balau foundation, Dr. Ra. Emi Sulasmi, M.Pd (far right), at the opening of the activity 'communicative parenting *"workshop in the digital era: navigating challenges and finding solutions for parents of early childhood children."*

This training session was opened by Dra. Ida Nurhaida, M.Si., who invited the participants to map the digital landscape of the family: children's habits in interacting with gadgets, how platforms encourage viewing through recommendations and autoplay, and the impact on daily routines, attention span, and children's emotional state. She emphasized that the main issue is not just the duration, but rather the moments when the screen appears and the quality of exposure.

The next training session was led by Andi Windah, S.I.Kom., MComn&MediaSt, who presented on 'Enhancing Digital Literacy for Parents and Teachers: Basic to Practical Skills through the Introduction of Family Link.' The session began with a simple premise: adult digital literacy serves as the first barrier that determines the quality of a child's experience in the digital space. Andi Windah introduced Family Link as a tool to establish clear 'ground rules' while also monitoring children's device usage without stifling their curiosity. The focus is not just on limiting, but rather on organizing the rhythm, selecting content, and more strategically understanding the child's digital habits. Several principles of digital parenting have been outlined by Yulia Palupi (2015), as follows:

1. What matters most is not what type of digital media is used, but when it is needed, according to the child's age and maturity level, along with mutually agreed rules regarding the use of digital devices.
2. Quality is more important than quantity, which requires parental supervision and dialogue with children, ensuring that media use is limited to beneficial purposes (<http://repository.upy.ac.id>).

Continuing from the previous session, Hestin Oktiani, S.Sos, M.Si, presented on Communicative Parenting Strategies and Family Digital Contracts. Hestin emphasized that media exposure has both short-term effects—lasting hours or days—and long-term effects that can persist into adulthood. These impacts encompass cognitive (knowledge), affective (emotion), and psychomotor (behavioral) domains. The presentation also highlighted the criteria for good content: free from violence, pornography, and mysticism; not merely entertaining, but providing information and education that shape intellect, character, morals, and maintain unity and religious-cultural values; quality is not



**Figure 2.** Presentation on 'enhancing digital literacy for parents and teachers: basic to practical skills through the introduction of family link' by Andi Windah, S.I.Kom., M Comn & Media St.

determined by being "viral" or trendy. This material is intended to help parents develop an understanding of digital media literacy. According to Potter (2001), the core of media literacy is "taking control." Parents, as audiences and users, are expected to be able to control the influence of media on its users.

As a practical guide for parents and children, Hestin recommended regular reflection: how many hours of screen time per day, age appropriateness, relevance and understanding of the content, as well as its positive and negative impacts accompanied by efforts for self-control. The main recommendations include selecting enjoyable content that is age-appropriate, avoiding violence, prioritizing educational games (puzzles/language), and limiting total screen/play time to a maximum of two hours per day.



**Figure 3.** Presentation by Hestin Oktiani, S.Sos, M.Si.

The next presentation was delivered by Puspendari Setyowati Sugiyanto, M.I.Kom, and Drs. Sugiyanta, M.Pd. In the section on online safety, Puspendari mapped out the most common sources of risk encountered by children: exposure to age-inappropriate content, interactions with strangers, easily imitated behavioral patterns, and commercial

aspects disguised as entertainment. In addition, children are also confronted with the threat of media addiction, which must be prevented. An individual can be considered addicted when they are unable to control the desire to use something, leading to negative impacts both physically and psychologically (Badudu, J.S. & Zain, M., 2005).

The speakers further highlighted how automated recommendations, comment sections, and direct messages can serve as entry points for problems, even when basic settings are enabled. Digital footprints, app permissions, and data-sharing practices were also discussed as part of an interconnected ecosystem not limited to a single application, but rather the interrelation of features that increase children's vulnerability if adults lack an understanding of how these mechanisms work.

Puspandari also linked screen usage patterns with children's sleep rhythm, focus quality, and emotional state. She highlighted often-overlooked signs: delayed bedtimes, complaints about eye strain and posture due to close viewing distances, decreased motor activity, and mood changes after the screen is turned off. In the psychological realm, she emphasized the cycle of 'always needing new stimulation' that makes slow-paced activities feel boring, as well as the effects of social comparison that emerge even in child-themed content. Rather than just focusing on screen time duration, Puspandari stressed the importance of analyzing patterns when peak usage occurs, how transitions before/after screen time happen, and how children's behavior changes both at home and in the classroom.

Taking over the session, Drs. Sugiyanta invited the participants to shift from understanding to evaluating the implementation. Drs. Sugiyanta outlined a realistic step-by-step approach starting with aligning terminology and identifying key points of vulnerability, followed by establishing basic rules with a shared language between home and school, and then conducting a brief monitoring period with scheduled feedback. He emphasized the importance of clear communication pathways: who records what, when it is shared, and how improvement decisions are made collectively. With this approach, change does not stop in the training room; it extends into everyday practice, is reflected in simple indicators, and is reinforced through coordination among caregivers.

The evaluation results showed that the participants were highly enthusiastic throughout the training. This enthusiasm was evident not only in their attendance but also in their active participation in each session. The participants didn't just listen; they also boldly questioned the new concepts presented. This reflects their eagerness to understand the material in depth and apply it in their professions. This level of engagement also highlights the relevance of the training topic in addressing the challenges of being parents of young children in the digital age.

Both participants also showed remarkable engagement during the Q&A session. The participants, parents of students from TK An-Nur Sabah Balau, were very active in the Q&A session. This enthusiasm remained consistent from the beginning to the closing, indicating that the training topic was relevant to their daily needs and truly captured their interest.

The results after the training showed an improvement in the participants' knowledge, understanding, and skills about 'Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Young Children.' The participants not only understood the concept of communicative parenting but also how to adjust their parenting styles to the rapidly advancing technology, especially in the digital era. This can be seen from the pre-test and post-test results conducted during the implementation of this community service activity.



**Picture 4.** Participants of the 'workshop on communicative parenting in the digital era: navigating challenges and finding solutions for parents of young children.

**Table 1.** Percentage of training participants' pretest evaluation scores

No	Score	Number of Participle	Percent	Criteria
1	40-50	11 people	84.61%	Very Low
2	51-60	1 people	7.69%	Low
3	61-70	1 people	7.69%	Middle
4	71-80	-	-	Good
5	81-100	-	-	Very Good
Total		13 people	100%	

The table above shows the percentage of pre-test evaluation scores of the training participants, indicating their level of initial understanding before the training began. A total of 11 participants (84.61% of the total participants) were in the very low category, indicating that the majority of participants had very limited basic understanding before the training. This suggests that most participants started with very little knowledge about 'Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Young Children.' One participant (7.69% of the total participants) was in the low category, indicating that they had a low understanding of the training topic and still needed to improve their knowledge. One participant (7.69% of the total participants) was in the moderate category, indicating that they had a moderate or intermediate level of knowledge before the training. Participants in this category had a relatively stronger initial understanding. The total number of participants was 13, and based on this data, almost all participants needed significant improvement in their understanding, while a small portion had a relatively good or sufficient understanding before the training began.

The results of the training can serve as a basis for demonstrating the level of success of the program. This context is also reflected in the results of the evaluation after the training activities (post-test) were completed. The significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results can indicate the success of the 'Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Finding Solutions for Parents of Young Children' workshop. Furthermore, it will also determine the success of the training process that has been carried out. The following presents the post-test evaluation results in the table below.

**Table 2.** Percentage of training participants' post-test evaluation score

No	Score	Number of Participane	Percent	Criteria
1	40-50	-	-	Very Low
2	51-60	-	-	Low
3	61-70	10 people	76.92%	Middle
4	71-80	3 people	23.08%	Good
5	81-100	-	-	Very Good
Total		13 people	-	

Based on the table above, the post-test results show a significant improvement in the participants' understanding and skills compared to the pre-test. Unlike the pre-test results, where there was a significant percentage in the very low category, the post-test results indicate that no participants scored between 40-50 or 51-60. This suggests that the training successfully elevated participants with low understanding to a better level. 100% of participants scored above 60, reflecting an overall improvement in the participants' understanding. A total of 10 participants (76.92%) were in the 'fair' category with scores between 61-70. This indicates that while there was an increase in knowledge, nearly half of the participants still remain at a moderate level.

This means that they have understood the basic concepts of Parenting Communicatively in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Seeking Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children, but may still require a deeper understanding or further practical application in order to reach the 'good' or 'excellent' categories. Meanwhile, 3 participants (23.08%) achieved scores in the range of 71-80, indicating that about half of the participants reached a good level of understanding after the training. This category shows that the training was effective in enhancing participants' understanding, particularly regarding Parenting Communicatively in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Seeking Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children. It also suggests that most participants were able to apply the training content effectively. However, the relatively low percentage in this category indicates that although the training successfully improved the understanding of the majority of participants, further training may be necessary to achieve broader mastery among them.

It can be concluded from the post-test results that this training has been significantly successful in enhancing participants' understanding of Parenting Communicatively in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Seeking Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children. Although the majority of participants have reached the 'adequate' category, only 23.08% of participants were in the 'good' category. This indicates that some participants may require additional support or follow-up training to deepen their understanding and effectively implement communicative parenting strategies in the Digital Era. The success of this training is evident in the fact that no participants were in the 'very low' or 'low' categories, demonstrating an overall improvement in understanding across the entire group. 50% of participants successfully achieved a 'good' level of understanding, reflecting that the training materials and methods were sufficiently effective.

## ▪ CONCLUSION

The Communicative Parenting in the Digital Era: Navigating Challenges and Seeking Solutions for Parents of Early Childhood Children' workshop had a significant impact on the participants, particularly in terms of their understanding and skills related

to communicative parenting of young children in the digital era. The event was conducted in two stages: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and the delivery of training materials.

The first stage, the FGD, involved an interactive dialogue between the service team and participants to identify their initial knowledge about communicative parenting for young children in the digital era. From the FGD, it was found that most participants faced significant challenges in managing access to gadgets for their children, making the communicative parenting workshop for young children in the digital era an important strategic step for their adaptation in the digital age. The second stage was the training, which provided comprehensive knowledge and understanding of communicative parenting for young children in the digital era, particularly in addressing the challenges brought by the digital world. Parents are required to develop new skills, such as digital literacy, knowledge management, and interpersonal skills that cannot be replaced by technology. Additionally, this training also helped participants understand the importance of utilizing technology to support communicative parenting for young children in the digital era.

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test evaluations, there was a significant improvement in participants' understanding after the training. Before the training, the majority of participants were in the 'very low' understanding category; however, after the training, most participants were able to increase their knowledge, with 76.92% of participants falling into the 'adequate' category and 23.08% in the 'good' category. No participants were in the 'very low' or 'low' categories after the training, indicating the program's success in making a tangible impact. Overall, this training has helped parents prepare for a more strategic role in the digital and artificial intelligence era. In addition to enhancing their understanding of communicative parenting for young children in the digital era, the training also encouraged participants to continue improving their digital competencies through ongoing training and the wise use of technology.

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