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## Introducing simple farming methods at home for children during a pandemic

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### ABSTRACT

Children prefer to play games on gadgets rather than explore the environment around the house. This situation is exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic that is happening around the world, which has caused the children's play environment to become more limited. The passivity of these children is, of course, very bad for their development and growth. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce fun activities that can be done around the house to avoid the coronavirus. The activity introduced in this community service activity is farming in polybags. The plant introduced was ginger because this plant has many benefits, including as a body warmer. This service activity received a positive response from the children who took part in the event. This introductory activity is expected to raise children's interest in simple farming around the house.

### ABSTRAK

Saat ini anak-anak lebih memilih untuk bermain *game* di gawai dibandingkan dengan melakukan eksplorasi lingkungan di sekitar rumah. Keadaan itu diperparah dengan pandemi Covid-19 yang terjadi di seluruh dunia, yang menyebabkan lingkungan bermain anak menjadi lebih terbatas. Kepasifan anak-anak tersebut tentunya sangat berdampak buruk bagi perkembangan maupun pertumbuhan mereka. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan pengenalan aktivitas yang menyenangkan sekaligus dapat dilakukan di sekitar rumah agar terhindar dari virus korona. Aktifitas yang diperkenalkan dalam kegiatan pengabdian ini adalah bercocok tanam di polibag. Tanaman yang diperkenalkan yaitu jahe karena tanaman tersebut memiliki banyak manfaat, di antaranya sebagai minuman penghangat tubuh. Kegiatan pengabdian ini mendapat respon positif dari anak-anak yang mengikuti acara. Kegiatan pengenalan ini diharapkan dapat memunculkan ketertarikan anak-anak untuk bercocok tanam secara sederhana di sekitar rumah.

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## 1. Introduction

Farming is an activity that has many benefits for children, including raising independence [1], developing sensory abilities, introducing various kinds of textures, introducing parts of plants, and encouraging children to be more active [2]. These multiple benefits will undoubtedly help children to reach a higher level of thinking, namely creative and critical. However, children are more interested in playing games on their devices than in physical activities, such as exploring the house. This situation is getting worse with the world experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic, so the environment for children to play is increasingly limited.

The Covid-19 pandemic started at the end of 2019 and started to enter Indonesia in early 2020. In March 2020, schools began implementing distance or online learning to prevent the spread of the coronavirus among children [3]. Therefore, students' physical activity is decreasing, and their home range is getting narrower. Of course, this decline is of concern to many people. Various parties have started campaigning for physical activity at home to be intensified



so that the body stays healthy. Some of the suggested activities during a pandemic are exercising [4], reading books [5], cleaning the house [6], making batik [7], reading the Koran [8], and learning new things [9].

Simple farming without land can be carried out during a pandemic. Children can grow crops in simple media, namely polybags [10]. This method is straightforward because the tools needed are easy to find around the house: polybags, soil, red ginger seeds, gloves, spray, a small shovel, and fertilizer. Therefore, this service activity focuses on introducing simple planting methods to children to increase their activities at home. Red ginger is the plant that was introduced in this activity because it has many benefits. Namely, it does not require a large area of land, can be grown in polybags, is used as a body-warming drink, and has economic value. The place where this activity was carried out was in Paninggilan Utara Village, Tangerang City.

## 2. Method

The stages carried out in this service activity are preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The planning stage is carried out by making plans regarding the time and place for distributing red ginger seeds and creating a work plan and division of tasks. The implementation phase is the distribution of red ginger seeds to children and guiding children on how to plant good red gingers. At the evaluation stage, the team gathers and discusses what has been done and records the deficiencies and obstacles. In addition, short interviews were also conducted with the children regarding their impressions after participating in this activity.

The method used to properly teach how to plant red gingers is the demonstration method. The team distributed red ginger seeds to the children, then demonstrated how to care for red gingers properly and also gave manuals to the children. The red ginger seeds distributed were placed in polybags and given wooden support. After that, the children were given short questions about caring for red gingers to ensure that the children well understood the information provided by the team.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The distribution of red ginger seeds was carried out on 6 August 2021 at RT. 01/RW. 09 and RT. 02/RW. 07 in North Paninggilan Village, Ciledug District, Tangerang City. The seeds were distributed in the afternoon, around 16.30 until it was finished, because, at that time, the children were not active. When distributing the seeds, the community service team provided brief training on caring for the red ginger seedlings so they could grow well. The team also provided a guide sheet on caring for red ginger seedlings so that children could read the guide if they needed to remember.

The distribution of plant seeds aims to increase children's productivity during the Covid-19 pandemic. This activity can also introduce children to how to care for plants, love the environment, and teach about the benefits of red ginger herbs. The expected goals of this activity are to encourage children to be more productive in filling their days, introducing simple farming methods at home, learning about the environment, and increasing knowledge.



Figure 1. The service team distributed chilli seeds to the children.

## 4. Conclusion

This service activity has been running smoothly and received a positive response from the children. The activity occurred in Paninggilan Utara Village, Ciledug District, Tangerang City. The distribution of plant seeds aims to increase children's productivity during the Covid-19 pandemic. This activity can also introduce children to how to care for plants, love the environment, and teach about the benefits of red ginger herbs. The expected goals of this activity are to encourage children to be more productive in filling their days, introducing simple farming methods at home, learning about the environment, and increasing knowledge.

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