

# Hyperactive Children Are Not By Any Mean Less Smart

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About 10 percent of primary school age children in Indonesia have hyperactive behavior. Hyperactive children refer to the inability to control behavior so that the activity exceeds those in average children. This hyperactive behavior can harm him/her and other people because sometimes children can not estimate the impact of his/her behavior. "Hyperactive children do not always correlate with stupid or less intelligent quality. However, they do not concentrate very well," said Dr. M.G. Adiyanti, M.S, a child psychologist from the Psychology Faculty of UGM, who was met on the sidelines of the seminar *Is My Child Hyperactive?* at Faculty of Psychology, Saturday (9/7).

According to Adiyanti, hyperactive children have high risk to fail in performing structured tasks that require continuous regularity and perseverance. At school, things that were often encountered are the failure in following the teaching and learning activity, both inside and outside the classroom. "Even in everyday social communication, hyperactive children often have difficulty, especially in maintaining friendships," he said.

Furthermore Adiyanti explains that hyperactivity has three major symptoms, namely inattention -unable to concentrate, impulsivity- reacting quickly without further thinking and hyperactivity, excessive physical activity above the average of the same age children. In addition to physiological and neurological factors, the impact of consumption patterns of certain drugs is also factor of hyperactivity. If both of the cause are not found, according to Adiyanti, it is likely that the child not getting the appropriate education of behavior norms. Therefore, parents and teachers at school must be able to set the pattern of communication with the children as well. The habit of acting rude and speaking loud in children should be avoided.

The same opinion is delivered by a pediatrician, dr. Ratih, Sp.A. According to Ratih, hyperactive children are caused by concentration and hyperactivity disorder, occurring in 4-6% of school-age children and 2-4% in adulthood. "More common in men than in women, usually this is found in children before 7 years old," said the 1983rd graduate of Faculty of Medicine.

Ratih mentions seven factors causing child hyperactivity, among others, genetic factors, dietary sugars and preservatives, poor parenting, family problems, ineffective school, the influence of tobacco and alcohol during pregnancy, as well as the injury in the brain. To determine whether a child is hyperactive or not, parents should know the symptoms of a hyperactive child that is characterized by easily frustrated behavior, crying easily, over action, and getting angry easily. Furthermore, it also appears in the low self-esteem, difficulty in making friends, difficulty to adapt, and being less mature socially. "In addition to counseling therapy and medication, the role of parents and schools should be present in providing good education to children," she said.

Particularly for parents, to prevent children from becoming hyperactive, Ratih advised parents to always respect the child as he/she is, spend more time with them, always speak softly and use positive language, but do not tolerate inappropriate behavior. According to Ratih, a hyperactive child cannot be cured simply by way of drug treatment, but also therapy from psychologists, pediatricians, child development team, as well as family support and a good school teacher. Moreover, a hyperactive child can become as successful as normal children if the hyperactivity can be controlled.

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