

**APPLICATION OF HAND PUPPET PLAY THERAPY ON
HOSPITALIZATION-INDUCED ANXIETY IN PRESCHOOL-AGED
CHILDREN AT Dr. MOEWARDI GENERAL HOSPITAL**

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Preschool-aged children are a vulnerable group at high risk for experiencing anxiety during hospitalization. Factors such as separation from parents, unfamiliar environments, medical equipment noises, and invasive procedures may cause stress and anxiety. Hand puppet play therapy is a non-pharmacological intervention that can help reduce anxiety in children.* **Objective:** *This study aimed to describe the anxiety levels of children before and after the implementation of hand puppet play therapy and to compare the final outcomes of two clients undergoing this intervention at Dr. Moewardi General Hospital.* **Methods:** *This research used a case study design involving two preschool-aged children admitted to the Pediatric HCU (Cempaka Room) of Dr. Moewardi Hospital. The intervention was carried out for three consecutive days. Anxiety levels were measured using the Spence Children Anxiety Scale (SCAS) before and after each therapy session.* **Results:** *The findings showed a significant decrease in anxiety levels for both children. An. D's anxiety score decreased from 43 to 18 (low anxiety), and An. A's score decreased from 45 to 23. The decline occurred progressively and consistently throughout the intervention period.* **Conclusion:** *Hand puppet play therapy is proven to be an effective method for reducing hospitalization-related anxiety in preschool children. Factors such as age, presence of siblings, and duration of hospitalization may influence the effectiveness of the therapy.*

Keywords: *hand_puppet, hospitalization_anxiety, preschool_children.*