

The Effectiveness of the Preventive Policy of the PPA (Women and Children Protection) Unit of the Padangsidempuan City Police in Reducing Criminal Acts of Indecent Acts against Children

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Abstract

The crime of indecent acts against children is a form of sexual crime that has a serious impact on the physical, psychological, and social development of children. The high potential for sexual violence against children demands effective preventive measures from law enforcement officers, especially the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA). This study aims to analyze the form of preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police in suppressing criminal acts of indecent acts against children and to determine the effectiveness of these preventive policies in reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City. The research method used is empirical juridical research with a legislative approach and a sociological approach. Data were obtained through literature studies, criminal statistics data, and interviews with the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police. The results of the study indicate that the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police were implemented through the establishment of a Child Protection Task Force in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Government, legal counseling and education on the dangers of sexual violence in schools, collaboration with the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, maximum law enforcement against perpetrators to provide a deterrent effect, and counseling parents regarding supervision of children. These policies have proven quite effective in reducing the number of crimes of indecent acts against children as indicated by the decline in the number of cases in the last three years. In addition, the collaborative preventive approach has also increased public legal awareness of the importance of protecting children from sexual violence. Thus, the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police can be a model for overcoming crimes of sexual violence against children based on education and institutional collaboration.

Keywords: *Preventive Policy, PPA Unit, Indecent Acts Against Children, Child Protection, Sexual Violence.*

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2nd International Conference on Islamic Community Studies (ICICS)

Theme: History of Malay Civilisation and Islamic Human Capacity and Halal Hub in the Globalization Era

<https://proceeding.pancabudi.ac.id/index.php/ICIE/index>

Introduction

Children are an inseparable part of the continuity of the nation and state, and therefore their existence must receive optimal protection. From a national legal perspective, children have the status of legal subjects whose rights must be guaranteed by the state, society, and family. Child protection is crucial because they are the nation's next generation and play a strategic role in national development. Therefore, all forms of action that threaten the growth and development of children, including criminal acts of indecency, must be prevented and addressed seriously through effective and sustainable legal policies. ^[1]

Child molestation is a form of sexual violence that has serious consequences for a child's physical, psychological, and social well-being. Victims of sexual crimes often experience longterm trauma, impaired mental development, loss of self-confidence, and even impacting their future as the nation's next generation. Sexual crimes against children are not only seen as a violation of legal norms, but also as a violation of human rights and humanitarian values. ^[2] Therefore, tackling criminal acts of indecent acts against children requires comprehensive steps through penal and non-penal approaches.

The development of sexual violence against children in Indonesia presents a concerning situation. Advances in information technology, weak family supervision, low public understanding of sex education, and the influence of the social environment are factors contributing to the increased vulnerability of children to sexual crimes. In practice, many cases of child molestation are perpetrated by those closest to the victim, making early detection difficult. This situation demonstrates that law enforcement alone is not sufficient to suppress sexual crimes against children; preventive measures through education and legal awareness are also needed. ^[3] In Indonesia's criminal justice system, the police play a crucial role in protecting women and children through the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA Unit). The PPA Unit is part of the criminal investigation function, tasked with handling crimes related to women and children, including child indecent acts. In addition to carrying out its repressive function through law enforcement against perpetrators, the PPA Unit is also responsible for implementing preventive measures to prevent sexual violence against children. ^[4] These preventive efforts are carried out through legal counseling, community education, family guidance, and collaboration with various related agencies in the context of child protection.

These preventive efforts are carried out through legal counseling, community education, family guidance, and collaboration with various related agencies in the context of child protection. ^[5] However, the data also shows a decrease in the number of cases from year to year, namely 52 cases in 2023, decreasing to 42 cases in 2024, and decreasing again to 39 cases in 2025. ^[6] The decline in these figures indicates that the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police are starting to have a positive impact in reducing criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City.

In an effort to suppress child indecent acts, the Women and Children Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police has implemented various preventive policies. One such measure is the establishment of a Child Protection Task Force in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Government to educate children about the dangers of sexual violence and how to prevent it. The formation of this task force demonstrates synergy between law enforcement and the local government in realizing child protection based on institutional collaboration. ^[7]

In addition, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police, in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, actively conducts outreach programs in schools to educate children about the forms of sexual violence and how to protect themselves from the threat of sexual crimes. This outreach is considered crucial because children generally have limited understanding of the threat of sexual violence that can occur in their environment. Through legal counseling and sexual education, it is hoped that children will be able to

recognize the forms of sexual violence and have the courage to report such crimes if they experience or become aware of them. ^[8]

Other preventive policies are implemented through legal counseling for parents to be more active in supervising their children's activities, especially when they are outside the home and in using social media. Parental supervision has an important role in preventing children from becoming victims of sexual crimes because the family is the first and foremost environment in providing protection for children. ^[9] In addition, the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police also applies maximum law enforcement against perpetrators of crimes of indecent acts against children in order to provide a deterrent effect and create fear for other potential perpetrators. This repressive approach accompanied by preventive measures is part of the criminal policy in an effort to overcome sexual crimes against children. ^[10]

In essence, the preventive policies implemented by the Padangsidempuan Police's Women and Children Unit (PPA) are an implementation of the concept of child protection and modern criminal policy, emphasizing the importance of a balance between penal and non-penal approaches. Non-penal approaches, through education, counseling, and institutional collaboration, are considered more effective in preventing sexual crimes early on than relying solely on punishment. Therefore, the success of combating child indecent acts is measured not only by the number of perpetrators punished, but also by the extent to which crime rates can be reduced through planned and sustainable preventive measures. ^[11]

Based on this description, research on the effectiveness of the Padangsidempuan Police's PPA Unit's preventive policies is important to conduct in order to determine the form of preventive policies implemented and their effectiveness in reducing the number of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City. This research is expected to contribute to the development of child protection policies and serve as a reference for law enforcement officials in efforts to address sexual violence against children.

Research Methodology

Research is a scientific activity conducted systematically to obtain data, facts, and truth regarding a legal problem being studied. Research methods play a crucial role in determining the quality of a study because they enable researchers to obtain objective and scientifically accountable data. ^[12] In the research on the effectiveness of the preventive policy of the PPA Unit of Padangsidempuan Police in suppressing criminal acts of indecent acts against children, the research method was used to analyze the form of preventive policy carried out by the PPA Unit and the effectiveness of this policy in reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City.

The type of research used in this study is empirical juridical legal research. Empirical juridical research is legal research that examines how legal provisions are applied in the practice of social life. ^[13]

This research not only focuses on legal norms written in laws and regulations, but also examines the implementation of preventive policies carried out by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police in an effort to overcome criminal acts of indecent acts against children. This research is descriptive analytical, namely research that aims to describe systematically, factually, and accurately the implementation of preventive policies of the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police, then analyzed based on legal theory, statutory provisions, and empirical facts found in the field. ^[14]

The research approaches used in this study are the statutory approach and the sociological approach. The statutory approach is carried out by examining various legal provisions related to child protection and acts of sexual violence against children, such as the Criminal Code, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, and Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence. ^[15] Meanwhile, a sociological approach was used to determine the implementation of the preventive policy of the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan

Police in practice and its impact on reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City. ^[16]

The research location was conducted at the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA) of the Padangsidempuan Police Criminal Investigation Unit. The research location was chosen because the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police actively implements various preventive policies to suppress criminal acts of indecent acts against children, such as the establishment of a Child Protection Task Force with the Padangsidempuan City Government, legal counseling to schools, collaboration with the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, and implementation of law enforcement against perpetrators of sexual violence against children. ^[17] In addition, based on data from the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police, the number of PPA criminal cases has decreased in the last three years, namely from 52 cases in 2023 to 42 cases in 2024 and decreased again to 39 cases in 2025. ^[18] The data shows that there are indications that the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police have had an influence on reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through interviews with investigators from the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police, the Padangsidempuan City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, and other parties involved in the implementation of preventive policies against child indecent acts. ^[19] Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through literature studies consisting of primary legal materials in the form of laws and regulations, secondary legal materials in the form of books, scientific journals, research results, and opinions of legal experts, as well as tertiary legal materials in the form of legal dictionaries and legal encyclopedias that support this research. ^[20] In addition, this research also uses statistical data on PPA crimes originating from the Padangsidempuan Police Chief's Presentation in the context of the Establishment of the Padangsidempuan Police PPA Unit in 2025 as supporting data to analyze the effectiveness of the Padangsidempuan Police PPA Unit's preventive policies. ^[21]

The data collection techniques in this study were library research and field research. The latter involved examining various literature, books, journals, and laws and regulations related to child protection, criminal policy, and acts of sexual violence against children. ^[22] Meanwhile, field studies were conducted through interviews and documentation with parties related to the research in order to obtain empirical data regarding the form of preventive policies and the effectiveness of their implementation in society. ^[23] Interviews were conducted directly using interview guidelines so that the data obtained was more focused and in accordance with research needs.

The data obtained in this study were analyzed qualitatively, namely by describing the data in the form of systematic, logical and structured sentences, then connected with legal theory, statutory provisions and empirical facts found in the field. ^[24] The analysis was conducted to obtain conclusions regarding the form of preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police and the effectiveness of these policies in reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City.

Results Forms of Preventive Policies Implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police in Suppressing Criminal Acts of Indecent Acts Against Children

1. Form a Preventive Policy through Legal Education and Counseling for Children

Preventive policies are a form of criminal policy aimed at preventing crimes before they occur. In the context of child indecent acts, preventive policies are crucial because children are a vulnerable group requiring special protection from all forms of sexual violence. Preventive efforts are not solely carried out through law enforcement, but also through educational approaches and legal awareness within the community and educational environments. ^[25]

In carrying out its duties, the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA) of the Padangsidempuan Police has implemented various preventive policies to suppress indecent acts against children. One such preventive policy is the establishment of a Child Protection Task Force in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Government. The task force aims to educate children about the dangers of sexual violence and how to prevent sexual crimes against children.^[26] The Child Protection Task Force is a form of synergy between the police, local government, and the community in creating a safe environment for children.

In addition to establishing the task force, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police also collaborated with the Padangsidempuan City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency to conduct legal outreach in schools. This outreach aimed to educate students about the forms of sexual violence, the perpetrators' modus operandi, and the self-protection measures children can take when facing the threat of sexual violence.^[27] This counseling activity is a form of legal education for children from an early age so that children have legal awareness and the ability to protect themselves from potential sexual crimes.

The legal counseling conducted by the Women and Child Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police also aims to increase children's courage in reporting if they become victims or become aware of indecent acts. In practice, many cases of sexual violence against children go unreported because victims feel afraid, embarrassed, or receive threats from the perpetrators. Therefore, legal education is crucial to raise awareness that sexual crimes against children are illegal and must be reported immediately to law enforcement.^[28]

Preventive policies through education and legal counseling are essentially implementations of a non-penal approach to criminal policy. The non-penal approach emphasizes crime prevention efforts by increasing public legal awareness rather than solely relying on criminal punishment.^[29] Thus, legal counseling and sexual education for children is a strategic step in suppressing criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City.

2. Form a Preventive Policy through Parental Supervision and Law Enforcement against Perpetrators

In addition to providing legal education and counseling to children, the Padangsidempuan Police Women and Children Unit also implements preventive policies by increasing parental supervision of children's activities. Parental supervision is considered crucial because the family is the primary environment for protecting children. Lack of parental supervision is often a factor that makes children vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual crimes, especially when children are outside the home or use social media without adequate supervision.^[30]

In its implementation, the Padangsidempuan Police's Women and Children Protection Unit actively provides legal education to the community and parents regarding the importance of child supervision. This education is conducted through outreach activities in the community, schools, and other community forums. The education material covers the importance of communication between parents and children, monitoring the use of information technology, and efforts to prevent promiscuity that could potentially lead to sexual crimes against children.^[31]

Through this outreach, it is hoped that the community will have legal awareness and shared responsibility in providing protection for children.

In addition to a preventative approach through counseling and family supervision, the Padangsidempuan Police Women and Children Unit also implements maximum law enforcement against perpetrators of child indecent acts. This law enforcement is carried out by strictly applying criminal provisions to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators and prevent similar crimes from occurring in the future.^[32] This repressive approach is essentially still part of a preventive policy because strict punishment can instill fear in the community about committing sexual crimes against children.

The maximum enforcement of the law against perpetrators of child indecent acts also demonstrates that the Padangsidempuan Police Women and Children Unit (PPA) is not only focused on resolving cases but also strives to create a deterrent effect in society. Deterrence is a crucial goal of criminal law, as punishments imposed on perpetrators are expected to serve as a warning to the public against similar crimes. ^[33] Thus, firm and consistent law enforcement is an integral part of preventive policies in reducing the number of criminal acts of indecent acts against children.

The preventive policy implemented by the PPA Unit of Padangsidempuan Police through an educational approach, family supervision, and law enforcement shows a combination of penal and non-penal approaches in dealing with sexual crimes against children. This combination is considered effective because it does not only focus on punishing the perpetrator, but also on prevention efforts through increasing public legal awareness and family-based child protection and the social environment. ^[34] Based on data from the PPA Unit of Padangsidempuan Police, this policy has had an impact on reducing the number of PPA crimes in the last three years, thus showing that the preventive policy implemented has been effective in suppressing criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City. ^[35]

The Effectiveness of Preventive Policies in Reducing the Number of Crimes of Indecent Acts Against Children in Padangsidempuan City 1. Effectiveness of Preventive Policies through Education and Legal Counseling on Reducing Criminal Acts of Indecent Acts against Children

Legal effectiveness is essentially related to the extent to which a rule or policy is able to achieve its stated objectives. In the context of preventive policies against child indecent acts, policy effectiveness can be measured by the ability of law enforcement officials to reduce the number of sexual crimes against children through a preventive and educational approach. ^[36] The preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police show systematic efforts to provide protection for children through legal counseling, sexual education, and building public legal awareness.

One indicator of the effectiveness of this preventive policy is the decline in the number of child abuse crimes in Padangsidempuan City over the past three years. According to data from the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, the number of child abuse cases in 2023 was 52, then decreased to 42 in 2024, and then again to 39 in 2025. ^[37] The decrease in the number of cases shows that the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police have an influence on efforts to suppress criminal acts of indecent acts against children.

The effectiveness of these preventive policies is inseparable from the implementation of legal counseling and education for children in schools. The legal counseling conducted by the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office provides children with an understanding of the forms of sexual violence, the dangers of indecent acts, and self-protection measures when facing threats of sexual violence. ^[38] Through this education, children become more aware of their rights as victims and have the courage to report sexual crimes they experience.

In addition to improving understanding of child law, outreach activities also have an impact on increasing public awareness of the importance of protecting children from sexual violence. Public legal awareness is a crucial factor in supporting the effectiveness of preventive policies because communities play a strategic role in social oversight of their surrounding environment. ^[39] With the involvement of the community and educational institutions in efforts to prevent sexual crimes against children, the perpetrators' room for movement becomes more limited.

The establishment of the Child Protection Task Force in collaboration with the Padangsidempuan City Government is also a factor supporting the effectiveness of the Padangsidempuan Police's PPA Unit's preventive policies. The task force serves as a means of coordination between law enforcement, local government, and the community in providing child protection.^[40] The synergy between these institutions shows that child protection is not only the responsibility of the police, but also requires the involvement of all elements of society and local government.

According to Mhd. Azhali Siregar, child protection from a criminal law perspective cannot rely solely on a repressive approach through punishing perpetrators, but must be balanced with preventive measures that involve families, schools, communities, and law enforcement officials in an integrated manner.^[41] This opinion shows that the success of overcoming sexual crimes against children is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of a child protection system based on social collaboration and public legal awareness.

Thus, the preventive policies implemented by the Women and Child Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police, through education and legal counseling, can be considered quite effective in reducing the number of child indecent acts in Padangsidempuan City. This effectiveness is evident in the decrease in the number of cases and the increased participation of the community and educational institutions in efforts to protect children from sexual crimes.

2. Effectiveness of Preventive Policies through Family Supervision and Law Enforcement against Perpetrators

In addition to an educational approach, the effectiveness of the Padangsidempuan Police's PPA Unit's preventive policies can also be seen in the implementation of family supervision and the maximum enforcement of the law against perpetrators of child indecent acts. Family supervision is a crucial factor in preventing sexual crimes against children because the family is the primary environment for character formation and protection of children.^[42] Lack of parental supervision of children's activities is often a factor that makes children vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual crimes.

In its implementation, the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police actively provides legal counseling to the community and parents regarding the importance of supervising children, especially in the use of social media and socializing outside the home.^[43] This counseling aims to help parents better understand the threat of sexual violence against children and enable them to take early preventative measures. Good family supervision can minimize the potential for sexual crimes against children because children receive direct protection and attention from the family environment.

The effectiveness of preventive policies is also evident in the maximum enforcement of the law against perpetrators of child indecent acts. The Women and Children Protection Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police strictly enforces criminal provisions to deter perpetrators and instill fear in the community about committing similar crimes.^[44] Strict law enforcement is basically part of a criminal policy that aims to create a deterrent effect or preventive effect through the threat of punishment.

The maximum enforcement of the law against perpetrators of sexual crimes against children demonstrates the commitment of law enforcement officials to protecting children as a vulnerable group. In criminal law, punishment is not only intended to punish the perpetrator but also to protect the community from becoming victims of crime.^[45] Therefore, strict law enforcement against perpetrators of indecent acts against children is an important part of supporting the effectiveness of preventive policies carried out by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police.

According to Mhd. Azhali Siregar in his journal on legal protection for children, the success of tackling sexual crimes against children is greatly influenced by the consistency of law enforcement officers in applying criminal sanctions to perpetrators.^[46] Weak law

enforcement can lead to the perception that sexual crimes against children are not serious crimes, potentially increasing the number of such crimes. Conversely, strict law enforcement can provide a sense of security for the community and increase public trust in law enforcement.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the Padangsidempuan Police's PPA Unit's preventive policies can be seen in the resolution rate of PPA crimes over the past three years. Based on case resolution data from the Padangsidempuan Police's PPA Unit, the resolution rate for PPA crimes has reached over 78%.^[47] The high level of case resolution shows that the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police is not only active in carrying out preventive efforts, but also consistent in enforcing the law against perpetrators of sexual crimes against children.

Thus, the combination of a preventive approach through education, family supervision, and firm law enforcement can be considered effective in reducing the number of child indecent acts in Padangsidempuan City. This approach demonstrates that the success of child protection is determined not only by law enforcement alone, but also by the involvement of families, communities, and the government in creating a safe environment for children.

Conclusion

The preventive policy implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police to suppress the crime of indecent acts against children is implemented through an integrated nonpenal and penal approach. This preventive policy is realized through the establishment of a Child Protection Task Force together with the Padangsidempuan City Government, the implementation of legal counseling and sexual education for children in schools, increasing legal awareness among the community and parents regarding the importance of supervision of children, and the implementation of maximum law enforcement against perpetrators of sexual crimes against children. This policy demonstrates the synergy between law enforcement officers, local governments, educational institutions, and the community in creating legal protection for children from the threat of indecent acts.

The effectiveness of preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police can be seen from the decrease in the number of PPA crimes in the last three years, namely from 52 cases in 2023 to 42 cases in 2024 and again decreasing to 39 cases in 2025. The decrease in numbers shows that preventive policies through education, legal counseling, family supervision, and strict law enforcement have an influence in suppressing criminal acts of indecent acts against children in Padangsidempuan City. In addition, increased community participation and parental legal awareness of child protection are also important factors in supporting the effectiveness of these preventive policies. Thus, the preventive policies implemented by the PPA Unit of the Padangsidempuan Police can be considered quite effective and can be used as a model for child protection based on institutional collaboration and community legal awareness.

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