

# CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL AND CITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE

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## ABSTRACT

*In the first stage of life, children get their prime and first education in their home, specifically from their parents. This can be happened because home is the first environment children live with and parents are the first people children interact with.*

*After they reach school-age, children will surely meet new environment to expand their education and experience at school. At this stage, school becomes a place for them to get formal education and to gain more experience in order to prepare themselves for a better future. Because of this significant role, schools are demanded to be able to accommodate children needs such as developing their knowledge and skills, or building some respect and attitudes for a better social skills. A good quality education is needed by children to maximize their potentials so that later they can contribute well in society.*

*One of the basic necessities needed by school to achieve good quality education is by creating and advancing school's facilities. School facility is one of the main factors that are able to improve student's psycho-motoric skills. Elementary students need more space to release their energy by running and playing with their friends. Children need not only home and school as their basic environment to grow and develop their talent and competence, but also a larger space or scope beyond the two mentioned before. We can divide children environment within two scopes: little and large scope. Home can be children's little scope of environment and the whole city means large scope for children to develop their abilities. These environment need to be friendly so that children can grow optimally. A clean, cozy, and pleasant place needs to be provided for the sake of children growth. This required some of qualifications; not only free from cigarette smoke and pollution, but also need to have a large area –field or etc., that can be used as a playground for children. This playground will absolutely provide a place for children to socialize and make friends to each other.*

*If schools and city are able to turn themselves as child-friendly places, it will definitely increase the chance to improve the children's knowledge, skills, and abilities – which can be so helpful to help them prepare their future.*

**Keywords: Child, child-friendly school, child-friendly city, child's rights**

## INTRODUCTION

Children are influenced by the environment around them. Their character has been built since they were at home, which become the prime and the first place to form children's behavior. However, children will not be at home forever. The school and the surrounding city will also become places where they grow and interact with their friends, so realizing or not, those environments have big influences in children's growth process. Cleanliness, cozyness,

and its layout have to be concerned if we want to provide them a friendly-place which is good for them.

Indonesia has become serious in creating programs of child-friendly environment. It's proved by choosing "Realize Child-friendly Family and Environment" as a theme for Children's Day 2015 ([indonesia70tahun.id](http://indonesia70tahun.id)). Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, and the First Lady, attend The National Celebration of Children's Day which is commemorated in the backyard of Bogor Presidential Palace at 11 August 2015. It was also attended by 2000 children from the whole country and some ministers of 'Kabinet Kerja'. The theme is divided into 3 subthemes; building Indonesian children's character into religious and qualified, realizing the tenacity of the family to encourage children's growth to be smart and healthy; and realizing the social reconstruction in order to create an environment which able to protect children's rights.

The Head Committee of Children's Day 2015, Wahyu Hartomo, stated that the goals of The Commemoration of Children's Day 2015 are to encourage all of people to fulfill children's rights and protect them supposed to be able to grow optimally ([kominform.go.id](http://kominform.go.id)). It is intended so that the family can give the best caring and also raise the children to be a part of community who have knowledge & skills, and protected from anything could obstruct them from growing well. Child-friendly schools are intended to give the best service for children who are being educated formally in the school. When they are surrounded by good people, friendly environment, and great quality of education, they can be supported to develop their knowledge and skills. They will feel happy and comfortable to go to the school every day without coercion from their parents. It is same as the child-friendly city. The children will be more interested to do outdoor activity with their same-age friends. It will be really good for them developing and maximizing their social ability.

But, the reality is different, and it is not easy as the theory. There are so many things happened these days that tend to snatch the children's rights away, such as too many cases of children who are unable to attend school, children trafficking, and children's sexual or physical abuse. Children in Indonesia are about more than 85 millions, but 1 of 2 grow in the family with less than \$2 income; about 67% of them don't have any birth records or certificates; 1 of 25 children die before 5 years old, more than 6 millions children age 7-18 don't attend to school, and 1 of 6 girl married before 18 years old (UNICEF, 2014).

In fact, Indonesia has already published a rule about children's protection included in *Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2002* that has been revised with *Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2014* about Children's Protection. The rules state that parents, family, government

and the country should protect the children (KPAI, 2004). That is why the establishment of child-friendly school and environment as soon as possible is an urgent, so that the children can get full access to grow well in such nice environment.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Child-friendly School**

UNICEF had codified children's rights since 1989 through *Convention on the Rights of the Child* that include children's protection regulation in 54 clauses. Children protected under the the convention are those who are under 18, except if there are any countries have different regulation about children's age limit (UNICEF, 1990). There are some children's rights stated in the convention, such as: 1) State are obliged to increase the protection for children for who are under adult age without concerned about ethnic, religion, gender, and disability; 2) parents and family have the rights to raise their children with affection, respect, and protection in order to develop capacities children have; 3) children have the rights to live properly in order to fulfill their physics and mental health, and the government should help families who could not afford those needs for their children; 4) children have rights to get education at least until they become highschool students supposed to develop their behaviour, talent, and ability; 5) children are not allowed to be exploited in labor and sexuality, and also have to be protected from trading and kidnapping.

The convention shows that children have rights to be treated, protected, and get the best facilities from their family, school, and environment. This can be a strong reason for applying the program of friendly-child environment. Indonesia has been revised the rule about compulsory education from 9 years to be 12 years since 2015. The government does not charge the education from the elementary until highschool, expecting it can decrease the dropout rate and facilitate the children to be more ready to face the challenge in the future.

Beside being a place for getting education, school should became a place that are able to be experienced by every single child in the world, so that they can do the best at present time for a better future. School should be fully focus on children, which means also should care about family background and their environment which can influence their education development (UNICEF, 2006). Every children have their own background, characteristic, and need. A good school should be able to accomodate those differences and become a friendly place for every children. This is because the school can be a tool for developing children's skill and knowledge, build self-respect and also respect for others.

However, the challenge of education is not as simple as invited children to go to school, but the quality of the whole school must be improved too. If the access and the quality of education can be implemented, children who study at elementary school can reach the goal of teaching and learning program and continue to middle school (UNICEF, 2006). School is often regarded as an institution created by society to perform important culture function associated with the education of young people (Olerumi, 2012). That is why many international organization such as UNICEF determine their performance to improve the quality of education, which one of its strategies is by pioneering *child-friendly school (CFS)*.

CFS was introduced on 1999 by UNICEF Education Program Department in New York, proclaimed based on principles of children's rights as stated on Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international human rights instruments and international declarations, including the Declaration Education for All. The framework of CFS is focused on children-focused and centered education, sensitive on gender values, inclusive, involve the community, and has protective and healthy approach, in or outside the school (Chabbott, 2004).

There are 5 characteristics which are essential in the establishment of a better school environment: a) a right-based and inclusive school that promotes and helps to monitor the rights and well-being of all children, including their physical, intellectual, emotional status, linguistic and social economic background; b) an effective school that provide quality education relevant to learner's needs for life such as knowledge and skills; c) a safe, protective, and healthy school which is able to protect emotional, psychological, physical, and moral well-being of children; d) gender responsive, equity, and equality promoting school which is accessible for family and children that need special protection, including those who were affected by abuse, disability, discrimination, poverty, and HIV AIDS; e) building school or community linkage and partnership which aims to strengthen family and community responsive to education by establishing vital relationship with teachers, and build partnership that are supportive to achieving the school's goals with the community (Nampota et al, 2012).

CFS become a verification of the government on the program of safe environment provision for all children. This becomes an important role to determine whereas the next generation is educated on body, mind, and soul (Hedge & Shetty, 2008). School is one of important factors which establish the quality of the future generation because the quality of the school will determine the quality of the outcomes. The development of a country is also influenced by the young people, and children's education becomes an important priority for that (Oluremi, 2012).

Indonesia has been serious on developing CFS. This is triggered by the high number of violence at school. NGO Plan Internasional dan International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) released a survey about children violence at school on early March 2015 (Qodar, 2015). The survey was held in Jakarta and Banten, and the result showed that 84% Indonesia children has been experiencing violence. This condition made Doni Koesoema as Indonesian United Federation of teachers Advisory Council (FSGI) wanted to bring the function of the school back to a safe place for children to learn.

Doni also said that there are some steps to build CFS: 1) school must be open and acknowledge that there is violence; 2) there are leadership supports from headmaster, the head of local education department, mayor, and other authorities up to the ministerial level to eradicate children violence; 3) school must know the form of violence, the characteristic features, and the solutions; 4) children violence at school have to be analyzed contextually; 5) there are ecological-rational approach to the victim supposed to be honest about what had happened to them; 6) there are sustainable evaluation (Qodar, 2015).

The responsibility of creating CFS is not only owned by the government, but also need efforts from parents, school community, and the citizen. CFS which has been being held for some times will give a significant effect for the children development, especially in 3 domains; cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric. Children who develop maximally are able to be a skillful person and ready to face a brighter future.

In Indonesia, there are some program of CFS initiated by local government, one of them is Yogyakarta that has socialized CFS in every district. The CFS is pointed to guarantee the fulfillment of children rights to be safe, comfortable, and free from violence and discrimination so the school can be a study room of various life values (Danu, 2016). This CFS program can be a way to face a better Indonesia in the future. Because a school with good quality of education and service can create educated children, so the next generation will be a great and capable generation to build Indonesia to be a greater country.

## **2. Child-friendly City**

Environment around the children must be considered to give safe and comfort feeling for them. The ideal environment for children's growth is a safe, friendly, and positive one. Those criteria can be embodied with some ways, such as increasing awareness of child safety, welfare, and wellbeing issues; equipping and providing information for adult people about child safety, welfare, and wellbeing strategies and guidelines; and promoting discussion of child safety, welfare, and wellbeing issues and taking necessary action (NSW & OEH, 2011).

We can divide children environment within two scopes: little and large scope. The little one means an environment around the children house, and the large one means the city they are living in. The result of the research showed that the best cities for children are those that have a strong community physically and socially, a community with clear and strict rules, and give opportunities for children to explore the world around them (IULA & UNICEF, 2001).

The cities in Indonesia still can not be declared as ideal cities. One of the reason is because the polluted-air. The air pollution in Indonesia is quite apprehensive, particularly in the big cities. This is proved by the research result that showed 57,8% of DKI Jakarta people is suffering for the air pollution. 70% air pollution in the cities are caused of transportation, and 90% of it caused of land transportation (Bimantara, 2016). Air pollution becomes identic with developing country which is still using *solar*, a kind of low cost fuel. (BBC Indonesia, 2016). Knowing the bad condition of the cities in the world that are apprehensive for children, UNICEF initiated a program caled Child-Friendly City (CFC). UNICEF interprets CFC as a city which aware of child and adolescent rights, and also supported by strict rules. CFS try to offer a new community environment which gives certainty in children cognitive, physis, health, emotional and social development for all children (Rodriguez, Carulla, & Muntanola, 2013). When children get their rights to grow well, world future would be best because it will be full of potential people that grow optimally.

UNICEF (2004) also explain some criterias of CFC, those are: 1) children are involed in the decision making about their city; 2) children can express their opinion about a city they want to live; 3) children can participate in the family, society, and social life; 4) children get the basic services such as health, education, and living place; 5) children get clean and healthy water service and also good sanitation; 6) children are protected frem exploitation, violence, and abuse; 7) children can walk safely on the street of the city they live; 8) children can meet and play with their friends; 9) children can have a green field to plant or keep animals; 10) children live in a free pollution place; 11) children can participate in a culture and social events; 12) children can get equality with the other citizen by getting access of all services, without consider about ethnic, religion, income, gender, or disability.

Creating CFC is not an easy thing. The aim and the goal is not only for today, but for a better community in the future. Besides, creating CFC is a form of implementation process of *the Convention on the Rights of the Child* by local government (UNICEF, 2004). Children's life today can influence their future, because they will be children who are fully supported to develop their potention and ability.

Indonesia also declares a rule about children protection that is contained on Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 Pasal 28B that states “Every children have rights of life sustainability, growing and developing, and has rights of protection from violence and discrimination.” Meanwhile, the operational procedure is stated on Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2002 that has been revised into Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2014 about Children Protection. Indonesian government these days developing a policy about CFC as a part of children rights protection embodiment. Hamid Patilima (ykai.net) said that the term of CFC was introduced by The Ministry of Woman Empowerment in 2005 through the policy of CFC.

However, CFC is not easy to be created. The challenge is not in the local government only, but also becomes responsibility of the family, society, and central government. So that, it needs cooperation from all of elements to make CFC real in the sake of the fulfillment of children necessity. It is because if we neglect it, it will decrease the quality of the next generation.

In Indonesia, there are not many cities which can be declared as CFC. Okezone (Bramantyo, 2013) wrote that among 109 cities which has become examples to be CFC, only 4 cities has the criteria of CFC. Those cities are Solo, Surabaya, Denpasar, and Bandung. In the upcoming years, the amount of CFC in Indonesia has increased a lot reaching up to 196 cities (Ramadhan, 2015). One of the them is Malang that have declared as CFC in 2015 (Satria & Ucu, 2015). Yogyakarta have released Perda No.1 Tahun 2016 about CFC directed through the developing of CFS, child-friendly health service, and a child-friendly village (Danu, 2016).

There are 3 steps to get status as CFC in Indonesia: 1) there is high commitment from the chief of the city to build their city as CFC; 2) arrange the teamwork involving government officials, child experts, and also college students; 3) there are arranging of basic data to acknowledge the problem of the children and how the solution mechanism. After that, every 2 years, there will be evaluation by independent team to prove that the city is worth to be declared as CFC (Ramadhan, 2015).

This goes along with Marta Santos Pais’ (Former Director of UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre) statement which is written on Republika (Ramadhan, 2015) that there are some aspects must be considered if we want to set the CFC standard like monitoring system involved the children, adequate funding, and whether the minority or marginal children have been included on the monitoring or not. The status of CFC must also be evaluated every few years. With this monitoring, the government program can embody CFC in Indonesia and make sure that Indonesian children will get better life guaranteed for now and in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

Children's growth are influenced by some factors. The comfortness and coziness of environment they live, the treatment they get, and the service from the government will be important things to support them for growing well. Children have rights to get a good treatment and protection from their parents, family, and from people around them. The government has also responsibility to serve a good service in every way, such as health care, education, and protection from violence, abuse, discrimination, and trading.

They are also have rights to get formal education at school, from elementary until high school. Education has been being the primary need for every children experiencing many things. School which have a good quality, management, and facility can maximally support children to develop their skill and ability. The outcome of the school does not only influence the present, but also the future. The future generation is determined how the education is going on now. One of the ways to create a good generation in the future is by creating Child-Friendly School (CFS). School need to fullfil some criteria to be declared as CFS, such as school needs to aware that there are possibility for children to get violence or abuse at school, school has to arrange a strict rules to protect children from every possible violence and abuse, school needs to return the main purpose of school whereas being a safe and full protection place to facilitate children in learning process, improve their curriculum to fullfil children needs that will hep them to grow in a good way, and school needs to create an environment with child-friendly facilities that will make children feeling comfort when they are studying at school. By doing this, the school will be a great place for children to improve their talent and support them to grow well and being a great generation in the future.

Beside of the school, the environment of the city they live is needed to be concern. City that can support children's growth is a city with fresh air and free from polution, have facilities which can be used by them to play with their friends, have regulation of protecting children so they can be safe if they walk or go around on the street alone or with their friends, and also a city that give opportunity for children to expressing their idea to build a city they always imagine. If the government can fullfil these things, it is not impossible to create a Child-Friendly City (CFC). CFS and CFC are being great solutions to change the future by preparing children with good treatment and service in every ways to help them grow being a good people and ready to face a better future.



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