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Strengthening Legal Awareness from an Early Age through Socialization for Students of SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo

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ABSTRACT

Early legal awareness is important for helping adolescents understand acceptable conduct, respect the rights of others, and respond responsibly to problems at school and in digital environments. This community engagement program was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo on Tuesday, 21 July 2026, and involved approximately 250 seventh-grade students from nine classes. The activity aims to strengthen basic legal literacy through contextual and participatory education. The material covered the social function of law, students' rights and obligations, bullying, violence, misuse of personal images, misinformation, digital responsibility, and safe conflict resolution. The program was coordinated with the school partner, represented by Umi Kahesa, and implemented through interactive presentation, guided questions, case-based discussions, participant simulation, and collective reflection. Information for evaluation was obtained from field notes, activity documentation, presentation materials, and students' verbal responses, then interpreted descriptively. The implementation showed that examples drawn from students' daily experiences encouraged active attention and participation. Several students responded to questions, took part in front-of-class activities, and proposed nonviolent responses such as stopping harmful content, apologizing, preserving relevant evidence, and seeking assistance from trusted adults. Despite the large number of participants and limited room arrangement, the activity remains orderly through role distribution among the student facilitators and school support. The program indicates that school-based legal education can serve as an initial preventive effort to develop responsible behavior and strengthen a safe, respectful, and digitally civil school culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Legal awareness is part of a person's ability to understand the existence of rules, assess the interests protected by these rules, and adjust their behavior to the values of order, justice and respect for the rights of others. In this sense, law is not simply introduced as a collection of prohibitions accompanied by threats of sanctions. The law also needs to be understood as a guide to living together that limits arbitrary actions and provides a resolution mechanism when disputes occur. Soekanto (1982) places legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes and behavior as interrelated stages in the formation of legal awareness. Thus, legal education from school age needs to be directed at the process of meaning, not just memorizing terms or articles.

Junior high school students are in early adolescence. During this phase, peer relationships intensify, the need for social recognition increases, and digital devices become more independent. These changes create opportunities for creativity

and communication, but they can also create new problems. Repeated teasing, photo editing to embarrass friends, the dissemination of private conversations, the forwarding of unverified information, and calls for violence can have far-reaching consequences beyond the perpetrator's imagination. Actions initially perceived as humorous can demean experiences that disrupt a sense of security and damage social relationships.

Schools hold a strategic position in shaping a legal culture because they serve as spaces where students learn to exercise their rights and obligations simultaneously. The right to a safe education is inseparable from the obligation to respect teachers, educational staff, and fellow students. Law Number 35 of 2014 affirms that children within and within educational institutions must receive protection from physical violence, psychological violence, sexual crimes, and other forms of violence (Republic of Indonesia, 2014). This policy direction is reinforced through Regulation of the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Number 6 of 2026 concerning a Safe and Comfortable School Culture, which encompasses physical protection, psychological



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well-being, sociocultural security, and digital civility and security (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2026).

The expansion of interaction into the digital space means that legal education for adolescents cannot be limited to school rules. Conversations in class groups, social media posts, the use of other people's photos, and the distribution of electronic documents are related to issues of consent, privacy, reputation, and responsibility for content. Law Number 1 of 2024, the second amendment to the Electronic Information and Transactions Law, indicates that distributing or transmitting electronic information can have legal consequences under certain circumstances (Republic of Indonesia, 2024a). However, explanations to students need to be provided proportionately. Not every dispute or objectionable post automatically meets the elements of a criminal offense. Legal assessments still depend on the facts, intent, content, method of distribution, consequences, and relevant provisions.

Various previous community service programs have shown that legal material is more easily understood by students when linked to everyday experiences. Rahmad, Setiyawan, and Dewi (2024) demonstrated that counseling on bullying can help students understand the forms of actions, their impacts, and their legal consequences. Wardhani et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of legal awareness in social media use so that adolescents do not stop being technology users but also understand the responsibilities inherent in digital actions. Meanwhile, Karno et al. (2025) used discussions and case simulations to connect legal concepts with the problems faced by students. These findings suggest that overly legalistic, one-way presentations need to be supplemented with dialogue, contextual examples, and decision-making exercises.

These conditions formed the basis for the implementation of a community service program themed "Get to Know the Law Early" at SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo by the Bina Bangsa University Student Work Lecture team. The material was designed to provide an initial framework regarding the function of law, student rights and obligations, bullying, intergroup violence, the distribution of photos without consent, false information, the use of digital media, and the risks of tobacco products and e-cigarettes. This article aims to describe the program implementation process, analyze the relevance of the educational-participatory approach, and explain the activity's contribution to strengthening basic legal literacy and establishing a safe school culture.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Program Approach

The community service program uses an educational-participatory approach with a prevention orientation. This approach positions participants as stakeholders in the process of understanding the problem, not simply as recipients of information. A concise conceptual presentation is provided, followed by prompting questions, situational discussions, and reflection. This choice is based on the consideration that students will more easily understand legal norms when given the opportunity to connect them to social experiences, school regulations, and the use of digital media.

2.2 Location, Time, Partners, and Targets

The community service activity was carried out at SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo, Pandeglang Regency, Banten, on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, as part of the Bina Bangsa University Student Work Lecture program. The activity partner was the school, which was accompanied by Umi Kahesa in its implementation. The program targets approximately 250 seventh-grade students from nine study groups. The selection of seventh-grade participants was

based on the need to provide an initial foundation regarding behavioral boundaries, self-protection, the relationship between rights and obligations, and the responsible use of digital media during the transition to adolescence.

2.3 Implementation Stages

The program was implemented in four stages. The first stage involved coordination with the school, including Umi Kahesa as the accompanying teacher, to adjust the material, time, space, number of participants, and classroom control mechanisms. The second stage involved preparing presentation materials and case studies using age-appropriate language. The third stage included interactive presentations, Q&A sessions, case discussions, and participant engagement in classroom activities. The fourth stage involved qualitative evaluation through field notes, documentation, and a review of student responses during the activities.

2.4 Material and Delivery Techniques

The material is structured in a hierarchical manner, beginning with the definition of law as a collective rule, continuing with the relationship between rights and obligations, a simple introduction to civil and criminal law, and responsibilities in the use of information technology. The presentation is not aimed at memorizing provisions, but rather at helping them recognize protected interests, those who could be harmed, and appropriate remedial measures.

Table 1. Scope of Material and Learning Orientation

Material	Discussion Focus and Orientation
Legal function	Order, security, justice, and dispute resolution; students are guided to see rules as a shared need.
Rights and obligations	The right to a safe education is combined with the obligation to respect the school community and protect the rights of others.
Bullying and violence	Types of action, impact on victims, role of witnesses, and channels of assistance; orientation towards prevention and non-violent resolution.
Digital responsibility	Consent, privacy, reputation, information verification, and digital footprint; exercise caution before uploading or forwarding content.
Conflict resolution	Dialogue, mediation, reporting, recovery, and protection of affected parties; choosing safe and proportionate measures.
Cigarettes and e-cigarettes	Health risks, access restrictions, and child protection; avoiding behavior that is harmful to oneself and the environment.

Source: Material "Get to Know the Law Early", developed by the community service team (2026).

The primary technique used is case analysis. Participants are presented with the situation of a student who edited a friend's photo to make fun of the victim and then shared it with their classmates. Students are asked to outline the facts, identify the injured party, assess the social and psychological impact, and develop alternative responses. This technique allows participants to practice distinguishing between emotions, actions, consequences, and responsibilities, while also understanding that a safe resolution is not synonymous with retaliation.

2.5 Data Sources, Analysis, and Success Indicators

Implementation information was sourced from presentation materials, field notes, photo documentation, and participants' verbal responses during interactive sessions. Data were analyzed descriptively by grouping findings into themes of understanding the function of law, the relationship between rights and obligations, digital responsibility, the ability to recognize injured parties, and conflict resolution options. Because the activity did not use an experimental design, pre-test, or post-test, this article does not present knowledge gains in percentages or statistical test results.

The success of the program is assessed by the appropriateness of the material to the participants' characteristics, their engagement

in discussions, the accuracy of risk identification, and the development of alternative actions that protect victims and prevent further conflict. These indicators serve as an initial evaluation of the program's relevance. Long-term changes in attitudes and behavior require repeated activities and monitoring by the school.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Implementation of Activities and Interaction Patterns

The activity was attended by approximately 250 seventh-grade students from nine study groups. Participants were seated in a single activity room, with seating arrangements tailored to the room's capacity. Despite the relatively large number of participants, the activity proceeded smoothly because the KKM Team divided the roles of presenter, presentation equipment manager, participant facilitator, and documentation officer. The accompanying teacher also helped maintain student readiness and order throughout the session.

The presentation began with questions about why schools need rules and the consequences that can arise if individuals act without considering the interests of others. Students' answers were then linked to the function of law as a guide to behavior, a means of protection, and a mechanism for resolving disputes. The material was presented through visual presentations, short dialogues, and examples relevant to the participants' experiences, so the discussion focused not on the threat of sanctions but rather on the social reasons why rules need to be followed.



Figure 1. Delivery of material, interactive discussions, and student involvement in the "Get to Know the Law from an Early Age" activity.
Source: Documentation of the KKM Team, Bina Bangsa University (2026).

Documentation shows that students attended not only as listeners but also engaged in Q&A sessions and case-based activities. Some participants volunteered to come forward to provide responses or participate in short simulations with the facilitator. This engagement demonstrates that interactive methods help maintain participant attention in large-scale activities. Symbolic appreciation was given to students who actively participated as a form of positive reinforcement, without making rewarding the primary learning objective.

3.2 Law as a Social Guideline and Protection Framework

Law was initially compared to the rules of a shared game. This analogy effectively explained that rules are necessary so that everyone knows the limits of their actions and how to resolve disputes. Once participants grasped this idea, the presenter added that law has a more formal nature because it is established or recognized by authorized institutions and can have specific consequences. Layered explanations were necessary so that the analogy didn't diminish the complexity of the law but still facilitated students' initial understanding.

A limited introduction to the civil and criminal realms is provided as a baseline. The civil realm is explained through

relationships that cause harm and require redress, while the criminal realm is introduced as acts prohibited by law and subject to sanctions. Participants are emphasized that an incident can have school discipline, social, civil, or criminal dimensions, and that judgments cannot be based solely on assumptions. This caution is crucial to prevent legal education from devolving into labeling.

A protective orientation is also emphasized when discussing children involved in conflict. The Juvenile Criminal Justice System prioritizes the best interests of children and provides a recovery-oriented resolution within conditions stipulated by law (Republic of Indonesia, 2012). For junior high school students, the primary message conveyed is not detailed judicial procedures, but rather the importance of stopping the action, protecting the injured party, seeking help, and resolving the problem without escalating violence.

3.3 Rights, Obligations and Safe School Culture

The discussion of rights and obligations is structured in a reciprocal manner. The right to a safe education is paired with the obligation not to instill fear. The right to express opinions is linked to the responsibility to use non-derogatory language. The right to protection is also explained, along with the courage to report to the appropriate authorities. Through this structure, participants are encouraged to understand that personal freedom cannot be exercised at the expense of the dignity and safety of others.

This approach aligns with the Safe and Comfortable School Culture, which emphasizes not only physical protection but also psychological well-being, sociocultural safety, and digital civility (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2026). A safe environment is not simply built through prohibitions; schools also require respectful relationships, trusted reporting mechanisms, and responses that do not blame victims. In this activity, students are guided to identify their homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and trusted adults as channels of support.

3.4 Bullying and Responsibility in Digital Space

Bullying is defined as an act that can be physical, verbal, social, or digital and has the potential to cause psychological and social harm. The discussion focuses not only on the perpetrator and victim, but also on the role of the bystander. Bystanders can magnify the impact by laughing at, recording, or sharing content; conversely, bystanders can play a role in stopping the act, supporting the victim, and reporting it. This perspective helps participants see that responsibility extends beyond the individual initiating the act.

Digital materials emphasize four key habits: obtaining consent before sharing photos, verifying the veracity of information, avoiding embarrassing comments, and considering the footprint left by posts. Wardhani et al. (2025) suggest that understanding rights and obligations on social media is necessary to foster responsible online behavior. Findings by Yuhandra et al. (2021) also suggest that interactive lectures and Q&A sessions can be used to explain the benefits and risks of gadget and social media use.

The Electronic Information and Transactions Law was introduced as a framework governing actions in the digital space. However, the presenter avoided the simplification of any unauthorized distribution of a photo as automatically defamation. Participants were given the understanding that assessments must consider the content, purpose, context, extent of distribution, consequences, and applicable provisions. This presentation maintained legal accuracy while preventing the use of criminal terms as threats in everyday conflicts.

3.5 Case Analysis of Photo Editing and Distribution

The case study of editing a friend's photo was the easiest part to relate to the participants' experiences. The analysis began by

separating facts from judgments. The facts discussed included the use of the photo without consent, the intention to ridicule, demeaning editing, and distribution to a class group. Students were then invited to consider the impact on the photo's owner, such as embarrassment, psychological distress, reputational damage, and disruption to friendships. This process shifted attention from the "just for fun" rationale to the real consequences experienced by others.

The discussion then focused on response options. Participants suggested deleting the content, apologizing, stopping forwarding messages, and reporting the content to a teacher. The presenter supplemented these responses with steps such as preserving necessary evidence, using the platform's reporting feature, refraining from retaliating with insults, and seeking adult supervision. These options position the law as a means of prevention and redress, not merely as a tool of retaliation.

The discussion on misinformation uses similar principles. Participants are encouraged to assess messages not solely by the number of forwarders, but rather to examine the source, date, context, and consistency of the information. While the spread of false information does not always carry the same legal consequences, the habit of forwarding messages without verification can still trigger panic, damage reputations, or escalate conflict. Therefore, the ability to verify information is positioned as part of digital legal literacy.

3.6 Cigarettes, Electronic Cigarettes, and Child Protection

The topic of cigarettes and e-cigarettes is presented from the perspective of health protection and restricting access for children. Government Regulation Number 28 of 2024 regulates the protection of addictive substances in the form of tobacco products and e-cigarettes, including age-based sales restrictions and the strengthening of smoke-free areas (Republic of Indonesia, 2024b). The material does not state that every child who smokes is automatically committing a crime. Emphasis is placed on health risks, peer influence, compliance with regulations, and the importance of seeking help when facing pressure to try these products.

3.7 Qualitative Achievements, Outputs, and Limitations

Real-world responses during the activity demonstrated that students were able to connect rules with order and a sense of security. In the case study, participants were able to identify the photo owner as the injured party, identify the social and psychological risks, and propose removing the content, apologizing, halting its distribution, and reporting it to the teacher. Several students also provided verbal responses and participated in activities in front of the class. These findings cannot be considered quantitative evidence of increased knowledge, but they do demonstrate that the materials and methods used were relevant to the participants' experiences.

Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Evaluation of Program Implementation

Aspect	Emerging Indications and Their Significance for the Program
Legal function	Participants associated rules with order, justice, and a sense of security. This suggests that contextual analogies help understand the social function of law.
Rights and obligations	Participants see that personal rights are related to the obligation to respect others; the material encourages a more balanced view.
The victim's point of view	The photo owner is identified as a party experiencing social and psychological harm; the case study helps develop sensitivity to the impact of the action.
Conflict response	Suggestions include removing content, apologizing, stopping distribution, and reporting; participants can identify nonviolent resolution measures.
Digital responsibility	Consent and verification are understood as habits before sharing content; legal literacy is translated into practical actions.

Aspect	Emerging Indications and Their Significance for the Program
Participant participation	Students provided verbal responses, participated in simulations in front of the class, and maintained a consistent flow of activities despite participants from nine classes. This demonstrates that the division of facilitator roles and the use of visual media supported participant engagement.

Source: Implementation notes, documentation, and participant responses, processed descriptively (2026).

The output of this activity is contextual legal literacy materials and a case analysis framework that can be reused by schools. The framework consists of four steps: describing the facts, determining the affected parties, identifying relevant values or norms, and choosing a safe course of action. This structure can be applied to other issues, such as class fights, the spread of rumors, or pressure to participate in brawls.

Implementation was supported by the use of visual media, examples relevant to students' lives, support from accompanying teachers, and a clear division of tasks among the KKM Team members. The main challenges stemmed from the large number of participants and limited space, resulting in some students participating in the activity sitting in positions adapted to the room's conditions. The team addressed this situation through group arrangements, supervision from the sidelines, and facilitator transfers during interactive sessions. The activity remained limited because it was conducted in a single session and did not utilize pre-post evaluations or long-term behavior monitoring.

The program's sustainability can be built through integration of materials into Pancasila Education lessons, guidance and counseling services, homeroom activities, and digital literacy programs. Schools can also develop class group ethics agreements, reporting simulations, short quizzes, and confidential complaint mechanisms. Collaboration with parents, universities, and practitioners with legal competencies is necessary to ensure legal education doesn't stop at a single socialization session.

3.8 Program Implications and Sustainability

The program's implementation demonstrates that legal literacy becomes more meaningful when linked to school culture. Discipline needs to be explained as a means of protection, not merely a means of punishment. Teachers and other educational staff also play a crucial role in providing safe reporting channels, maintaining confidentiality, and responding non-derogatorily to students. In this context, Umi Kahesa's involvement as a mentor teacher supports the orderliness of activities while strengthening the connection between the community service material and the school's needs.

Sustainability can be achieved by integrating the material into Pancasila Education lessons, guidance and counseling services, homeroom activities, and digital literacy programs. Schools can use short case studies, reporting simulations, and ethical agreements within class groups. Subsequent evaluations should include pre- and post-activity questions and follow-up monitoring, while maintaining confidentiality and avoiding labeling of specific participants or classes.

Collaboration with parents and universities is necessary because some digital issues occur outside the school environment. Parents can reinforce the habit of seeking approval, verifying information, and seeking assistance, while universities can support material updates and evaluation assistance. With this approach, community service activities don't stop at a single outreach event but develop into a continuous legal education process.



Figure 2. Joint documentation of the KKM Team and class VII participants of SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo after the activity.

4. CONCLUSION

The community service program "Strengthening Legal Awareness from an Early Age" was held at SMP Negeri 1 Kaduhejo on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, involving approximately 250 seventh-grade students from nine study groups. The activity, facilitated by Umi Kahesa as a school partner, utilized visual presentations, Q&A sessions, case discussions, simulations, and reflections. Material on the function of law, rights and obligations, bullying, violence, the use of photos, false information, digital responsibility, and the risks of cigarettes and e-cigarettes could be related to the participants' experiences. Student responses demonstrated initial abilities to identify the injured party and formulate non-violent solutions. Although it did not yet produce quantitative measures of knowledge change, the program provided literacy materials and discussion patterns that schools can use to strengthen a culture of safety. Follow-up activities need to be carried out periodically with simple evaluations, follow-up monitoring, and collaboration between schools, parents, and universities.

THANK-YOU NOTE

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