

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH HEALTH PROMOTION MESSAGES IN INDONESIA

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with its huge youth population, high rates of smoking and unmet need for family planning services is an ideal setting to pilot an integrated short messaging service (SMS) to improve young people's access to sexual reproductive health (SRH) information and services; and improve awareness of harms related to smoking

METHODS

A six week SMS intervention series with total of 12 SMS: 6 related to SRH and 6 regarding the harms of smoking was delivered to young people (16-24 years) based on their risk profile. To assess acceptability of SMS and evaluate the intervention, we conducted focus group discussion/FGD of 34 young people at the end of SMS intervention period. Four FGDs were held among unmarried male and female senior high school and university students, and one FGD among married women

RESULTS

Results indicated that while participants felt that the SRH messages were acceptable, informative, inoffensive, relevant and easy to understand; some unmarried participants felt uncomfortable receiving messages that they felt promoted extramarital relationships, while some married female participants reported conflict with messages about the safety of family planning methods which were challenged by personal experiences and noted side effect of different contraceptive methods. Participants preferred the tobacco control messages compared to SRH messages, and reported learning something new about the harms of passive smoking. Young people identified additional health topics that they felt were important to target with health promotion message including healthy lifestyles and nutrition.

CONCLUSION

Overall, SMS is accepted as a useful way to provide health promotion messages and increase awareness and knowledge on SRH and smoking. For future interventions, the culture and religious beliefs in Indonesia needs to be considered in developing health messages

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