

Protection of The Rights of Child Victims of Violence in Day Care from the Perspective of Human Rights and Child Protection Law (A Case Study of Day Care Little Aresha Yogyakarta in 2026)

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ABSTRACT: The case of violence against children that occurred at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026 demonstrates a violation of children's fundamental rights in an environment that should provide protection and a sense of security. This study aims to analyze the legal protection afforded to child victims of violence in day care centers from the perspectives of Human Rights and child protection law, as well as to examine the fulfillment of children's rights to receive affection and parental care. This research employs a normative juridical method using statutory, conceptual, and case study approaches. The findings indicate that acts of violence within a day care environment constitute a violation of children's rights to protection, safety, and proper growth and development as guaranteed by Human Rights instruments and Indonesian laws and regulations. In addition to causing physical harm, such violence may also result in psychological trauma that can adversely affect a child's long-term development. This study concludes that the protection of children's rights must be realized through effective law enforcement, comprehensive victim recovery, and the fulfillment of children's rights to safe, nurturing, and affectionate care that supports their optimal development.

KEYWORDS: Human Rights, Child Protection, Child Violence, Day Care, Child Care

I. INTRODUCTION

Children are the future generation and serve as the foundation that binds communities and nations together. Therefore, children's rights must become a primary priority for families, communities, and government agendas. Every child has the right to live, survive, grow, develop, and receive protection from violence and any treatment that may hinder their development. Children have not yet reached full maturity, and their physical, mental, and emotional development makes them particularly vulnerable to various risks. This condition requires special protection to ensure that children can grow and develop properly. The quality of protection received by children throughout their development will ultimately influence their character, mental health, and social functioning in the future. This is because child protection is not merely a legal obligation but also constitutes a significant social investment in the future of the nation.

Social and economic changes within society also influence patterns of childcare and parenting. As an increasing number of parents enter the workforce, the need for reliable childcare has also increased. In this context, day care services have become an option that assists parents in caring for their children when they are unable to provide direct care due to work and other responsibilities. Day care institutions are expected to provide a safe, comfortable, and supportive environment that promotes children's development. Beyond simply serving as a place where children spend time while their parents are working, day care institutions are also expected to provide appropriate educational, social, and emotional stimulation. In this context, the existence of day care institutions has become a strategically important component of childcare in the modern world, particularly for working parents who are unable to care for their children during working hours.

Unfortunately, not all childcare institutions are able to fulfill these functions properly. In practice, there are still situations in which children's safety and well-being are threatened by violence committed by caregivers. This is particularly concerning because such violence occurs within an environment that should serve as a safe place for children. One example is the case of violence against children at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026. In this case, children became victims of violations of their rights even within an institution that was intended to assist in their care and protection. This situation also raises questions concerning the effectiveness of supervision and child protection mechanisms within childcare institutions.

These issues demonstrate that violence against children in childcare institutions is not an isolated phenomenon. Child victims of violence require comprehensive legal protection because the existence of various legal instruments does not automatically guarantee effective protection in practice. An effective child protection framework must encompass protection and recovery for

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victims while also ensuring appropriate mechanisms for law enforcement and accountability against perpetrators. Such protection should prioritize the best interests of the child and ensure that children's rights to safety, dignity, physical and psychological well-being, growth, and development are fully respected and fulfilled (Rachmanto, 2021). Consistent with these findings, it can be observed that the legal instruments for child protection in Indonesia are relatively well established. However, public awareness, education, and effective implementation remain significant challenges in preventing violence against children. The existence of comprehensive legal provisions alone is insufficient to ensure effective protection if they are not accompanied by adequate understanding and awareness among parents, caregivers, communities, and other stakeholders. Therefore, strengthening public education, improving awareness of children's rights, and ensuring consistent implementation and enforcement of child protection regulations are essential measures for preventing violence and creating a safe and supportive environment for children (Maharani and Senjaya, 2018).

Violence against children has consequences that extend far beyond the infliction of physical injuries. Various studies have shown that experiences of violence during early childhood can have long-term effects on children's psychological, emotional, and social well-being. Children who experience violence are at risk of developing trauma, anxiety, a disrupted sense of security, and difficulties in establishing healthy social relationships. These effects may persist into adolescence and adulthood if appropriate intervention and support are not provided. Therefore, violence against children must be understood as a serious issue requiring multidimensional attention from legal, psychological, and social perspectives.

Research developments in 2026 have begun to directly examine the case of violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta. From the perspective of civic education, the case reveals several significant issues, including weak supervision, limited understanding among caregivers regarding children's rights, and the inadequate implementation of the values of justice, responsibility, and respect for human rights in childcare practices. These findings demonstrate that effective child protection requires not only the existence of legal regulations but also the development of awareness, ethical responsibility, professional competence, and respect for children's rights among caregivers and childcare institutions. In this regard, strengthening supervision and caregiver education is essential to ensure that childcare environments genuinely support children's safety, dignity, emotional well-being, and overall development (Dhiu *et al.*, 2026). The implementation of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning risk management of errors in day care institutions, with a case study of Little Aresha, identifies weaknesses in the supervision system, institutional governance, and risk management within childcare institutions. Research concerning the same case has also begun to emerge from moral-religious and institutional perspectives on childcare, positioning the Little Aresha case as an indication of a crisis of trust and responsibility within child care institutions. These findings emphasize that the protection of children requires not only compliance with statutory provisions but also effective institutional governance, adequate supervision, professional accountability, and a strong ethical commitment to safeguarding children's rights and welfare (Roria, 2019).

From a human rights perspective, children are subjects of rights, and the state has an obligation to provide protection for them. Children's human rights include protection from various forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and treatment that may undermine their dignity as human beings, as well as the rights that are inherent in them from birth. In Indonesia, the principle of the best interests of the child has become a fundamental principle underlying policies and regulations concerning child protection. In addition to the right to protection, children also require love, attention, and the right to receive appropriate care from their parents. The family is the first environment in which children experience relationships and serves as the primary setting for the development of their personality and emotional well-being. Through consistent, close, and continuous interactions with their caregivers, children develop a sense of security, self-confidence, trust, and the ability to navigate and respond to their environment. Positive caregiving experiences are therefore essential to children's development, while the quality of interactions between parents and children plays a crucial role in supporting their physical, psychological, emotional, and social growth.

The importance of parents in children's development can be further explained through John Bowlby's attachment theory. A healthy emotional bond between children and their parents constitutes an important mechanism in children's psychological development. Emotional closeness during childhood contributes significantly to mental well-being, adaptability, emotional regulation, and the development of social skills. A secure attachment provides children with a sense of safety and confidence, allowing them to explore their surroundings while maintaining a reliable emotional foundation. It also helps children develop the ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships with others. Therefore, the quality and consistency of parental care are important factors in shaping children's psychological well-being and their capacity to develop positive social bonds in the future (Bowlby and Solomon, 1989). A lack of emotional connection with a primary caregiver can affect a child's sense of security and emotional development in various ways. Therefore, although day care centers can serve as a practical solution to childcare needs, they cannot fully replace the role of parents in a child's life. The issue of child protection must also be understood through the principle of the *best interests of the child*. This principle should not merely be positioned as a normative declaration but must be translated into clear and applicable parameters for legal decision-making. The absence of clear operational parameters may result in children's interests being subordinated to institutional interests or the interests of adults.

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In cases involving violence within childcare institutions, this principle requires that all decisions concerning investigation, prosecution, examination of child victims, rehabilitation, recovery, and institutional supervision prioritize the safety, well-being, dignity, and long-term interests of the child. The best interests of the child should therefore serve as a guiding principle throughout the entire legal and protection process, rather than being considered only after a violation has occurred. This approach also requires that children be treated with sensitivity and respect, particularly when they are involved in legal proceedings as victims. Measures taken by law enforcement authorities, childcare institutions, families, and other relevant parties should be designed to minimize further psychological harm and ensure that children receive appropriate support throughout the recovery process. In this context, effective child protection requires an integrated approach that combines legal protection, psychological recovery, parental involvement, institutional accountability, and preventive measures to ensure that children can grow and develop in a safe, supportive, and dignified environment (Putri, Judiasih and Kusmayanti, 2026).

The case of violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026 is significant to examine for two main reasons. First, it may constitute a violation of children's right to protection from violence. Second, the case raises important issues concerning children's right to receive safe, appropriate, and loving care that supports their optimal growth and development. In this context, the incident can be analyzed not only from the perspective of child protection law but also through the perspectives of human rights and child developmental psychology. Such an integrated approach is important because the protection of children involves not only legal safeguards against violence but also the fulfillment of their emotional, psychological, and developmental needs.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this research aims to analyze the legal protection afforded to child victims of violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026 from the perspectives of human rights and child protection law. In addition, this research aims to examine the fulfillment of children's rights to receive love, affection, attention, and care from their parents from a human rights perspective. It also seeks to examine the psychological implications of childcare provided by day care institutions compared with direct care provided by parents. Through these objectives, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between legal protection, the fulfillment of children's rights, and the psychological needs of children in different childcare arrangements.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a normative juridical research method, as it focuses on the legal norms governing the protection of children as victims of violence and the recognition of children's rights within the framework of human rights. This approach is used to examine the scope and application of relevant legal provisions and to relate them to cases of violence against children at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026. The normative juridical approach enables the study to analyze various laws and regulations, legal principles, and relevant legal concepts concerning child protection and human rights. Accordingly, this study is not primarily focused on collecting empirical data from the field, but rather on examining and understanding how the existing legal framework provides protection for child victims of violence. It also seeks to assess how children's rights are recognized, respected, and protected in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Through this approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive legal analysis of the protection afforded to children and the extent to which existing legal provisions are capable of addressing violations of children's rights and ensuring their safety, dignity, well-being, and development (Saebani *et al.*, 2023).

To obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the issues under study, this research employs several approaches. The statutory approach is used to analyze laws and regulations concerning child protection and human rights. This approach is particularly important because child protection is regulated through various national legal instruments and is also recognized within the framework of international human rights law. Through this approach, the research examines relevant statutory provisions governing children's rights, protection from violence, and the responsibilities of the state, families, communities, and childcare institutions. The statutory approach also enables the researcher to assess the consistency and relevance of existing legal provisions in addressing violence against children and ensuring the fulfillment of their fundamental rights. Furthermore, the analysis considers the relationship between national child protection regulations and international legal standards concerning children's rights, thereby providing a broader legal framework for understanding the protection of children as human rights holders (Anam, 2017). Second, the conceptual approach is employed to examine and understand the fundamental concepts underlying child protection, the best interests of the child, children's rights, childcare, and attachment theory. This approach is important for providing a theoretical foundation for analyzing the relationship between children and their caregivers, particularly the emotional bond between children and their parents. Attachment theory emphasizes that the emotional relationship established between children and their primary caregivers plays an important role in shaping children's sense of security, psychological development, emotional well-being, and ability to establish social relationships. Therefore, the conceptual approach enables this research to examine how these concepts are interconnected in the context of child protection and childcare. It also provides a framework for understanding the importance of parental care, affection, attention, and emotional support in fulfilling children's rights and supporting their optimal development. Through this approach, the research can further assess the extent to which childcare practices, including those provided by day care institutions, are consistent with the principles of child protection and the best interests of the child (Roziqin, Susiswo and Rusdianto,

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2023). Third, the case approach is employed to examine the incident of violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026 as the primary case under investigation. This approach is used to analyze the circumstances and legal issues arising from the incident, particularly those relating to violations of children's rights and the legal protection afforded to child victims of violence. Through the case approach, the research examines the incident in relation to the applicable legal provisions, principles of child protection, and human rights standards. The approach also aims to identify the forms of legal protection that should be provided to child victims, including protection from further violence, recovery from trauma, and the fulfillment of their physical, psychological, and social needs. Therefore, the case approach serves as an important basis for assessing how the existing legal framework can be applied to concrete cases of violence against children and how the best interests of the child can be prioritized in the protection and recovery process (Poltak and Widjaja, 2024).

The data sources for this normative legal research consist of primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations related to child protection and human rights. Meanwhile, secondary legal materials are obtained from various relevant sources, including books, scientific journals, previous research findings, academic articles, and scholarly papers discussing child protection, children's psychological development, and childcare systems within families and childcare institutions.

The collection of legal materials is conducted through library research. The various legal sources collected are subsequently analyzed, selected, and classified according to the focus of the issues under investigation. This process is carried out to identify the relationship between legal norms, the theories employed, and the facts emerging from the case under study. Not all materials obtained are used in the research. Only materials that have direct relevance to the issues of child protection, violence against children, and children's rights to proper care are used as the basis for the analysis.

The analysis of legal materials is conducted qualitatively using a descriptive analytical method. All collected legal materials are systematically described and interpreted to obtain a comprehensive understanding of legal protection for children who become victims of violence in childcare environments. The analysis also aims to examine the protection of human rights and child protection law concerning children's rights to life, survival, growth, development, and adequate care. Through this analysis, the research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the rights of child victims of violence and the emotional needs of children for safe, loving, responsive, and child-centered care.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Human Rights and Children's Rights

Children are subjects of human rights who possess fundamental rights from birth. These rights include the right to life, the right to survive, grow, and develop, the right to security and protection, and the right to be protected from violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, and any treatment that degrades their dignity. The recognition of children as holders of human rights emphasizes that children are not merely objects of protection, but individuals with rights that must be respected, fulfilled, and safeguarded by all relevant parties. Therefore, every child is entitled to an environment that supports their physical, psychological, emotional, social, and intellectual development in accordance with their age and individual needs. Protection of children is consequently not merely a moral obligation but also forms part of the state's legal obligations and the shared responsibility of families, communities, childcare institutions, and all parties involved in the care and upbringing of children. This responsibility includes ensuring that children are provided with a safe and supportive environment, free from all forms of violence and neglect. In the context of childcare institutions such as day care centers, this obligation becomes particularly important because parents entrust the care and protection of their children to caregivers and expect them to provide adequate supervision, attention, and protection. Any failure to fulfill these responsibilities may place children at risk and potentially result in violations of their fundamental rights (Rahayu *et al.*, 2024).

B. Legal Protection and the Best Interests of the Child Principle

Legal protection for children is aimed at ensuring that children's rights are respected, fulfilled, and safeguarded from various forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect, and discrimination. Such protection is intended not only to respond to violations after they occur but also to prevent the occurrence of actions that may threaten children's safety, dignity, well-being, and development. The principle of the best interests of the child places the safety, welfare, and overall development of children as the primary considerations in every policy, decision, action, or measure concerning children. This principle requires all parties involved in child protection to prioritize the needs and rights of children above other interests whenever their interests may be affected. Accordingly, the legal protection framework serves as an important basis for assessing the adequacy of legal responses to acts of violence against children, as well as for evaluating policies and practices concerning childcare. In the context of day care institutions, this principle requires caregivers and childcare providers to ensure that children are cared for in a safe, appropriate, and supportive environment. Therefore, any form of violence, neglect, or treatment that threatens the physical or psychological well-being of children must be addressed through effective legal protection, victim recovery, supervision, and preventive measures (Suhardi, 2026).

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C. Attachment Theory

Attachment theory explains the importance of emotional bonds between children and their primary caregivers. The emotional attachment established during the early stages of a child's life plays an important role in shaping the child's sense of security, psychological development, ability to adapt, emotional regulation, and capacity to establish healthy social relationships. A secure and responsive attachment can provide children with a sense of safety and confidence, enabling them to explore their environment while maintaining a reliable emotional foundation. Conversely, inconsistent, inadequate, or harmful caregiving may interfere with the development of a child's sense of security and potentially affect their emotional and social development. Therefore, the quality of the relationship between children and their parents is an important aspect of understanding children's caregiving needs. In this context, parental presence, affection, attention, responsiveness, and consistent care are important factors in supporting children's optimal development. This perspective is particularly relevant when examining childcare arrangements, including day care, because the quality and continuity of relationships between children and their caregivers may influence how children experience safety, trust, and emotional well-being (Bowlby and Solomon, 1989).

IV. LEGAL PROTECTION OF CHILD VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AT DAY CARE LITTLE ARESHA YOGYAKARTA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND CHILD PROTECTION LAW

A. Human Rights and Child Protection

At Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026, incidents of violence occurred, and children remain at a very high risk of becoming victims of violations of their rights in an environment where their safety and security should be guaranteed. This is a serious issue because such incidents occurred within an institution entrusted by parents to assist in caring for and protecting their children. Violence in such an environment is not merely a matter of children's physical safety; it also concerns their fundamental human right to be respected and protected.

From a human rights perspective, children are subjects of law who possess fundamental rights from birth. These rights include, most importantly, the right to life, the right to survive, grow, and develop, the right to security, and the right to protection from all forms of violence and degrading treatment. Therefore, protecting children is not merely a moral obligation but also a legal obligation, requiring the involvement of the state, society, families, and all parties involved in childcare.

Child protection as an integral part of human rights is strongly guaranteed under Indonesian law. Children's rights are expressly regulated in Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which provides that every child has the right to survival, growth and development, as well as protection from violence and discrimination. This provision demonstrates that child protection constitutes one of the fundamental rights that must be guaranteed through the implementation and enforcement of the law (RI, 2002). If a behavior is considered to threaten the safety and well-being of a child, it constitutes a violation of a constitutional right protected by the state itself. The commitment to protecting children is also affirmed in Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights. Children are a vulnerable group and require special protection due to their developing physical and mental conditions. Parents, families, and society must share responsibility for providing such protection. This protection is intended to support children's development in physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects (Indonesia, 1999). State policy on child protection is reflected in Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 on Child Protection. It provides that every child has the right to protection from violence, including physical and psychological violence, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of abuse. In addition, the law establishes the principle of the best interests of the child as the basis for all policies and actions concerning children. This principle means that every decision made concerning children must prioritize their protection, well-being, and development (Indonesia, 2002).

B. Violence Against Children at Little Aresha Day Care

Violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta is a manifestation of violations of children's rights guaranteed by law. Children who are injured not only experience physical trauma but may also suffer psychological instability, which can further endanger their well-being. A childcare environment, where children should feel safe, has instead become a place where their welfare is threatened. This reflects a serious problem in childcare provided by other caregivers. A sense of security is essential because it forms the foundation for children's emotional growth and self-confidence. When this sense of security is disrupted by violence, the effects can be lifelong and affect various aspects of a child's development.

This issue is not merely about prosecuting the perpetrators; victims also require psychological assistance, social support, and family assistance to recover from the trauma they have experienced. Law enforcement alone is not sufficient to provide justice for all victims, as victims need more than retribution against the perpetrators. Therefore, legal protection should also be viewed as a means of helping victims recover from the trauma caused by physical violence and restoring their health and development. This case also demonstrates the need for strict supervision of childcare institutions. Weak supervision can lead to various violations of children's rights. Therefore, childcare centers need to operate under clear standards concerning service quality, caregiver competence, environmental safety, and supervision. Easy access to complaint mechanisms is also an essential component of a child

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protection system. These measures are necessary to detect violence, prevent it from occurring, and provide appropriate protection and assistance to victims.

Consequently, the violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta demonstrates that child protection is not merely a legal issue. It is also a matter of children's human rights, state responsibility, the quality of childcare, and the effectiveness of the child protection system. Therefore, the protection of child victims must be implemented comprehensively through law enforcement, victim recovery, and prevention measures. In this way, children's rights can be fulfilled and similar incidents can be prevented from occurring in the future.

V. FULFILLMENT OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO RECEIVE LOVE AND PARENTAL CARE FROM THEIR PARENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF DAY CARE COMPARED WITH DIRECT CARE BY THEIR OWN PARENTS.

A. Children's Rights from a Human Rights Perspective

Child protection is not limited to the prevention or handling of violence, but more broadly encompasses the fulfillment of rights necessary to support children's physical and mental development. One of the most important rights is the right to receive affection, attention, and proper care. In fact, the quality of care plays a significant role in shaping a child's personality, emotional development, and mental health. Proper care can provide a foundation for individuals to become healthy and independent and to adapt effectively to their social environment. Conversely, inadequate care may contribute to various developmental problems that can persist into adulthood.

From a human rights perspective, children possess fundamental rights that must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. The right to life, the right to be protected from harm, and the right to grow in an environment conducive to their development are fundamental components of children's human rights. Children's safety and emotional support are at the core of these rights. Therefore, child protection extends beyond physical safety and must be understood as a comprehensive protection system.

The family represents the first environment in human and child development. From birth, children begin to experience social and emotional interactions for the first time. Through love, security, respect, and the values that guide them throughout life, families shape children's early experiences and development. The relationship between children and their parents is one of the most important foundations for character development. Therefore, the quality of a child's development within the family can have significant implications for the child's subsequent stages of life.

Children and parents share a relationship that cannot easily be replaced by others. Parents do more than merely fulfill their children's physical and material needs; they also provide essential emotional support. By demonstrating attention, communicating effectively, and providing consistent care, parents help children develop self-confidence and understand their own emotions. Within such relationships, children can feel valued and accepted, and these feelings are essential to their psychological well-being. Indeed, numerous studies have indicated that the quality of the parent-child relationship is often one of the key factors influencing children's social and emotional development.

Emotional closeness is particularly important according to John Bowlby's attachment theory. Emotional bonds formed during early childhood between children and their primary caregivers can influence children's psychological development in the long term. Children who develop secure attachment tend to have higher self-esteem, greater adaptability, and healthier social relationships. Conversely, children who are unable to develop secure emotional bonds may be more vulnerable to psychological difficulties later in life. Therefore, emotional closeness is not merely an immediate need, but also an essential component of human development from childhood into later stages of life.

B. Psychological Implications of Childcare at Day Care Compared with Being Cared for by Their Own Parents

Social and economic changes in contemporary society have affected parenting practices. An increasing number of parents are working outside the home and therefore require assistance in fulfilling their childcare responsibilities. Working parents may rely on childcare services to provide support in caring for their children while they are away from home. When properly managed, childcare can benefit children by providing a safe and educational environment that supports their social development.

However, the care provided by childcare centers is fundamentally different from direct parental care. Caregivers in childcare institutions are present for a specific period to care for children and perform their responsibilities professionally, whereas the relationship between children and their parents is personal, continuous, and develops through deep emotional bonds. This intimacy develops through daily interactions that begin from birth and continue throughout the child's development. Therefore, childcare can support the caregiving process, but it can never replace the emotional role of parents in a child's life.

The importance of security in childcare is particularly evident in the case of violence at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta. This incident represents a distressing example of a harmful childcare environment that may have significant consequences for a child's development. The child experienced violence that caused harm, while the child's emotional and psychological well-being was also affected. Following a traumatic experience, a child may experience behavioral changes, anxiety,

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sleep disturbances, and difficulties in social interaction. In some cases, these effects may persist for years if they are not appropriately addressed.

When a child experiences trauma, the role of the family, particularly the parents, becomes extremely important. Parents who provide security and emotional support can contribute significantly to the child's recovery process. They should provide an environment in which the child feels safe, protected, and deeply loved. A positive relationship with parents is essential to helping children reduce the psychological harm resulting from negative experiences. Such support is important not only for the child's recovery, but also for rebuilding the child's trust in the surrounding environment.

In addition to their fundamental human rights, children's right to receive affection and attention is an essential aspect of human dignity and well-being. Therefore, protecting children from violence is just as important as ensuring that they receive proper care, affection, and emotional support. Quality childcare is an important means of protecting and promoting children's physical, mental, and social well-being. Accordingly, the protection of children's rights needs to be understood comprehensively, taking into account the prevention of violence, emotional care, and the creation of an environment in which children can grow and develop safely, warmly, and supportively, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.

VI. DISCUSSION

Child protection is fundamentally concerned not only with how the state imposes sanctions on perpetrators of violence, but also with how children's rights are guaranteed before violence occurs, when violence occurs, and after children become victims. In the context of childcare at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026, the issue of violence against children demonstrates that a place that should serve as a safe environment for children may instead become an environment that threatens their safety, health, and development. This situation is particularly serious because childcare institutions are entrusted by parents with carrying out part of their caregiving responsibilities when parents are unable to accompany their children directly.

From a human rights perspective, children are not merely objects of protection by adults, but legal subjects who possess rights from the moment of birth. Children have the right to life, growth and development, security, affection, and freedom from all forms of violence and treatment that degrades human dignity. Therefore, because children are still in a developmental stage, their protection requires greater attention than that afforded to other groups within society. Their limited ability to protect themselves places a shared responsibility on parents, families, communities, childcare institutions, and the state to ensure that these rights are genuinely fulfilled.

Constitutionally, the protection of children's rights is affirmed in Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which provides that every child has the right to survival, growth, and development, as well as the right to protection from violence and discrimination. This provision demonstrates that child protection is not merely a matter of social policy, but constitutes a constitutional right that must be guaranteed by the state. Accordingly, when a child experiences violence in an environment that should provide protection, the issue does not end with the criminal act committed by the perpetrator, but also concerns whether the child's constitutional rights to security and protection have been fulfilled. This guarantee is further strengthened by Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights. Children are recognized as a group requiring special protection because their physical, mental, and psychological conditions are still developing. Such protection is essentially intended not only to prevent children from experiencing physical violence, but also to ensure that they can grow in an environment that supports their personality development, mental health, and social life. Therefore, child protection must be understood comprehensively, because violence experienced during childhood may have consequences that extend far beyond visible physical injuries. Under Indonesian positive law, such protection is more specifically regulated by Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning the Amendment to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection. The law affirms children's right to protection from violence, including physical and psychological violence, as well as other forms of treatment that may interfere with their growth and development. One of the fundamental principles of child protection law is the best interests of the child. This principle requires that every decision, action, and policy concerning children place their safety, welfare, development, and future as primary considerations.

When this principle is applied to the case of violence at Little Aresha Day Care, the best interests of the child cannot be understood merely in terms of punishing the perpetrator. Law enforcement against the perpetrator is indeed an important component of justice, but protection for the victim must be provided simultaneously. Children who experience violence require medical examinations, psychological assistance, family support, guarantees of safety, and the restoration of their social and emotional well-being. Thus, justice for child victims of violence should not be purely repressive, but must also incorporate restorative and rehabilitative dimensions.

This issue becomes increasingly important when violence occurs within a day care environment. Childcare institutions are essentially established to assist parents in fulfilling their childcare responsibilities. When parents entrust their children to such institutions, they place their trust in the expectation that their children will receive security, attention, supervision, and appropriate treatment. Therefore, violence occurring within a day care setting involves a broader dimension of breach of trust. Children not only become victims of violent acts, but may also lose their sense of security in an environment that should have provided protection. A

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sense of security is one of the fundamental needs in child development. Children require an environment that is consistent, predictable, and responsive to their needs. When such an environment instead generates fear or violence, it may disrupt the development of the child's sense of trust. The effects may manifest in behavioral changes, anxiety, sleep disturbances, fear of certain individuals, difficulties in social interaction, or changes in emotional responses. Not all of these effects become immediately apparent after an incident of violence. In certain circumstances, traumatic experiences may affect a child's long-term development if they do not receive appropriate treatment.

At this point, child protection is closely connected to the fulfillment of children's rights to affection and proper care. Protection from violence should not be separated from children's need for attention, emotional closeness, and a supportive caregiving environment. It is not sufficient merely to place children in an environment that is physically safe. Children also require an environment in which they feel accepted, respected, heard, and loved. Families, particularly parents, play a crucial role in fulfilling these needs. From the earliest stages of life, the relationship between children and their parents constitutes one of the foundations of children's emotional and social development. Parents not only fulfill their children's physical and material needs, but also provide security, attention, affection, and a supportive environment in which children can recognize and manage their emotions. Consistent interaction helps children develop trust in other people and in the environment around them.

John Bowlby's attachment theory provides an explanation of the importance of these emotional relationships. Secure attachment between children and their primary caregivers can help children develop trust, adaptability, and healthy social relationships. Conversely, caregiving experiences characterized by uncertainty, rejection, or violence may disrupt the development of a child's sense of security. This theory is relevant to understanding the issue of day care because, although professional caregivers can assist in fulfilling children's daily needs, such relationships have different characteristics from the emotional relationship between children and their parents.

Social and economic developments have increased the importance of day care services. Working parents require support in carrying out their caregiving responsibilities, making childcare institutions an important part of the family support system. Under ideal conditions, day care can provide benefits for children by offering a structured environment, opportunities to interact with other children, and various activities that support their development. Therefore, the existence of day care cannot inherently be regarded as contrary to the best interests of children.

Nevertheless, childcare provided in day care settings has characteristics that differ from direct parental care. Caregivers in childcare institutions perform caregiving functions on the basis of professional responsibilities and within specific periods of time. In contrast, the relationship between children and their parents develops personally and continuously. This distinction demonstrates that day care should be positioned as an institution that assists and supports the caregiving functions of families, rather than as a substitute for the emotional relationship between children and their parents. In this context, the violence case at Little Aresha Day Care provides an important lesson that the quality of childcare cannot be measured solely by the availability of physical facilities or the fulfillment of children's basic needs. The quality of care must also be assessed in terms of caregiver competence, the manner in which caregivers treat children, their ability to regulate their emotions, the ratio of caregivers to children, supervision systems, reporting mechanisms, and the institution's ability to respond to potentially dangerous situations. In other words, child protection in day care settings requires a comprehensive system that does not rely solely on the behavior of individual caregivers.

This demonstrates the need to strengthen supervision of childcare institutions. Supervision should not only be conducted after reports of violence emerge, but should also incorporate preventive measures. Assessments of institutional suitability, caregiver competence and background, safety standards, emergency response procedures, complaint mechanisms, and periodic evaluations should form part of the child protection mechanism. A supervision system that is merely administrative in nature may fail to detect violence occurring within everyday childcare environments. In addition to government supervision, parents also play an important role in developing such a protection system. Parents need adequate information regarding how the institution provides care, who is responsible for their children, how complaints can be submitted, and how the institution responds to suspected violence. Transparency is essential because the relationship between parents and childcare institutions is built upon trust. Such trust should not eliminate parents' right to obtain information concerning their children's safety and development.

Child protection needs to shift from a purely reactive approach toward a more preventive approach. Attention to violence often increases only after a victim has experienced an incident and the case has entered the legal process. However, the primary objective of a child protection system should be to prevent children from becoming victims in the first place. Prevention can be pursued through improving caregiver competence, education on non-violent childcare practices, consistent supervision, accessible complaint mechanisms, and active parental involvement. When a child has already become a victim, the protection approach must also be oriented toward recovery. Child victims of violence should not be positioned merely as instruments of evidence in legal proceedings. Children remain individuals with emotional, psychological, social, and developmental needs that must be taken into account. Medical examinations and legal proceedings involving children should consider their psychological condition so that the pursuit of justice does not itself create additional trauma. Psychological assistance is important in helping children understand their experiences, rebuild their sense of security, and restore their trust in their surroundings. In this context, the family plays a crucial

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role. Parents can serve as the primary source of support after a child experiences a traumatic event. The presence of parents, attentive communication, a non-blaming attitude, and the provision of a sense of security can help children throughout the recovery process. Children need to understand that the violence they experienced was not their fault. Such support is important because childhood trauma is related not only to the violent event itself, but also to how the child's immediate environment responds after the event occurs.

Thus, the relationship between legal protection and childcare is particularly close. Child protection law should not be understood merely as a set of rules designed to punish individuals who commit acts of violence, but also as an instrument for ensuring that every child has an environment that supports their well-being and development. Legal protection must be capable of balancing three interests simultaneously: law enforcement against perpetrators, recovery for victims, and prevention of similar incidents from occurring again.

The Little Aresha Day Care case also demonstrates that the fulfillment of children's rights cannot be separated from both the right to freedom from violence and the right to receive affection and proper care. A child who is free from violence but does not receive adequate attention and emotional support may not yet enjoy comprehensive protection. Conversely, an environment that is full of affection but lacks adequate safety standards and supervision is also insufficient to guarantee children's rights. Ideal child protection must integrate physical safety, psychological well-being, fulfillment of emotional needs, proper care, and respect for children's dignity.

Based on the foregoing, the problem of violence at Little Aresha Day Care is not merely an issue concerning the actions of an individual perpetrator, but also demonstrates the importance of developing a rights-based childcare system. Children must be placed at the center of all policies and actions concerning childcare. Every decision relating to childcare institutions, from caregiver recruitment, service standards, supervision, complaint handling, to victim recovery, should consistently take the best interests of the child into consideration.

Ultimately, protecting child victims of violence requires a comprehensive approach. Law enforcement remains necessary to hold perpetrators accountable and to ensure that violence against children is not tolerated. However, such processes must operate alongside victim recovery through healthcare services, psychological assistance, family support, and a safe environment. At the same time, the state and childcare institution managers need to strengthen prevention and supervision mechanisms so that violence can be detected at the earliest possible stage.

Through such an approach, child protection does not end with resolving a case after violence has occurred, but develops into a system capable of preventing violence while ensuring that children can grow in an environment that is safe, nurturing, and respectful of their dignity. This represents the meaning of child protection from a human rights perspective: not merely ensuring that children do not become victims of violence, but ensuring from the outset that they have the opportunity to live, grow, develop, and build their future in a dignified manner.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Violence against children at Little Aresha Day Care in Yogyakarta in 2026 constitutes a violation of children's fundamental rights, which are protected by international human rights instruments and Indonesian laws and regulations. The protection of child victims of violence should not be limited to law enforcement measures, but should also include support, assistance, psychological recovery, and the protection of children's safety and well-being throughout their development. Based on human rights principles and child protection laws, the state, society, families, and all parties involved in childcare have a shared responsibility to act in accordance with the best interests of the child. Above all, children's right to receive proper care, affection, and protection from their parents is a fundamental element of the protection of their rights.

Childcare centers constitute an extension of family and social care. However, in today's society, parents may face challenges in maintaining strong emotional bonds and ensuring adequate security for their children while balancing work and other responsibilities. The bond between children and their parents is essential for psychological development, character formation, and the development of social skills.

Children's rights must therefore be prioritized not only in terms of meeting their physical needs and ensuring proper supervision while parents are working, but also in fulfilling their emotional needs so that they can develop in a healthy and balanced manner. Child protection should consequently be understood in a broader sense than merely preventing and responding to acts of violence. Effective child protection requires a safe and supportive childcare system, proper supervision of childcare institutions, and active parental involvement in children's lives.

Therefore, protecting children's rights requires more than merely responding to violations after they have occurred. It also requires preventive efforts to create a supportive environment in which children can grow, develop, and live in accordance with human rights principles, applicable laws, and sound child protection practices.

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