

Chapter 2. Society which can realize hopes of pregnancy, birth and childcare

Section 1. For pregnancy and birth at ease

1. Securing Support System for Pregnancy and Childbirth, and Perinatal Care System

1) Alleviation of Economic Burdens Owing to the Gynecological Check-up and Childbirth

In the 2008 (H20) annual second supplementary budget, the support for receiving prenatal care was expanded, so it can be received as many times as necessary (about 14 times), while in 2011 fourth supplementary budget. In addition, the system for the lump-sum birth allowance will be continued since April 2011, with 420,000 yen and principle amount to be paid, system for direct payments to be paid directly to the medical institutions from medical insurance lump-sum birth allowance will make improvements, such as accelerating payments to medical institutions.

2) Development of Perinatal Care System, Securing Perinatal Medical Transport

(1) Enhancement of Perinatal Care System

It establishes the general obstetrics medical center and regional obstetrics medical center supporting the same for providing appropriate medical care for high risk pregnant women and new-born babies etc. and addresses the enhancement of the perinatal care system by securing cooperation with the regional farrowing facility.

(2) Securing Perinatal Ambulance Receiving System

As for the function of general obstetrics medical center, it deals with the mother and baby having complications other than the obstetric complication by coordinating with the related diagnosis and treatment department of its own facilities or other facilities and for the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), it is trying to develop 25-30 beds for every 10000 births as target up to 2014 (H26).

3) Obstetrics Compensation System

From January 2009 (H21), it compensates the economic burden for the child, detected with cerebral palsy due to medical mishaps during the delivery, and its parents and guardians, analyzes the cause of the accident, provide information that contributes for the prevention of accidents, and establishes a practice of 'obstetrics compensation system' for addressing the improvement in the quality of conflict prevention, early settlement and the obstetrics.

4) Raising Awareness for Maternity Mark

For raising awareness, Maternity mark was informed widely through the opportunities such as homepage and sends request of cooperation for the initiatives such as the transportation facilities, workplace and restaurant.

5) Development of Counselling and Support System (Pregnant Women, Childbirth Artificial Abortion etc.)

It offers counselling and support using the maternal and child health project such as the home guidance for the headaches like pregnancy and child birth, artificial abortion etc. and assists the consultation in the 'Women health center'.

2. Support to Tackle Fertility Treatment

1) Specialized Fertility Counselling Center

The medical specialists implement the 'specialized fertility counselling center' for carrying out 1) medical consultation for infertility and 2) psychological consultation for infertility for the health facilities playing core roles in the region.

2) Alleviation of Economic Burden Due to Fertility Treatment

It aids the partial amount of the expenses for the infertility treatment between spouses and addresses the alleviation of the economic burden for the in vitro fertilization and micro insemination for which the economic burden is high.

Section 2 Childhood education and nursery care service to whoever wants

1. Elimination of the Number of Waiting Children and Improvement in The Quality of Child Education, Childcare

1) Elimination of Child Day Care Centre Waiting

The number of children on daycare waiting list is increasing for the third consecutive years, it has become 26,275 people (an increase of 891 people over the previous year) as of April 2010.

The 'Children's Relief Fund' was established in the second national supplementary budget in FY 2008, with the buildup in the supplementary budget for FY 2010, extended until the end of FY 2011 and the project implementation deadline in the end of FY 2010, focusing on promotion concentration and support to the development and certification of nurseries and kindergartens.

In addition, to eliminate the waiting children is an urgent issue, instructed by the Prime Minister, to set up a 'zero waiting children special mission team' as the Prime Minister of the State in charge of the Cabinet Office (in charge of countermeasures to the falling birthrate), on November 29, 2010 summarized the 'Advance acceptance Project' preempting on 'Integrally resolving the problem of waiting children nationally and locally'.

Furthermore, the urban renaissance agency, in cooperation with local governments, is striving to set up the nurseries by utilizing site maintenance and restoration or existing vacant store, that are produced by the estate renewal project.

2) Providing Diverse Childcare Services

It continues to promote extended day care, night child care, and child care during and after sickness project, and assists in the expenses necessary to change a non-registered day care facility to a registered day care facility as the child resources of the region, for corresponding with diverse child care services.

3) Promoting Family Day Care (Childcare Mother)

For municipalities (while cooperating with childcare nannies and other nursery centers, nurturing a small number of pre-school children in homes of caregivers, etc.) to implement family childcare business, the necessary expenses are provided. In addition, 'group type small-scale nursery businesses' with caregivers for many families in the same location are being carried out.

4) Improving the Quality of Early Education and Childcare

In 2010, the 'survey and examination cooperators conference on a smooth connection with childhood education and primary school education' studied about a smooth connection with childhood education and primary school education in accordance with the development and learning of children, including third-party evaluation, 'Guidelines for school evaluation in kindergartens' the report were revised in November of the same year.

The new efforts were established and 'self-review guidelines for the day care center' were prepared in March 2009 (H21) for self-review of day care centers and child care person in the day care center child care guidelines.

5) Building a Comprehensive Unified System for Supporting the Development of the New Generation Including the integration of the function of kindergartens and childcare centers

To establish comprehensive and centralized systems including the integration of nursery schools and kindergartens to support the development of the next new generation (hereinafter referred to as the 'new system of children and childcare'), in January 2010, the 'Investigative Conference of the New System of Children and Childcare' composed of ministers concerned was started up. Under the conference, the working team was held, and after the meeting with the persons concerned, the 'Basic System Draft Outline of the New System of Children and Childcare' was summarized in June of the same year.

Then, in order to advance a more specific system study, three working teams with the participation of experts, held discussions in the same conference, aiming to submit and promote bills early.

2. Initiatives for After School Measures

1) Implementation of 'After School Children Plan (After School Children's Club, After School Children Education)'

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in collaboration and coordination with each other promote providing safe and healthy places for the children after school and during long vacations such as summer vacations in the local community and set up 'after school children plan' as a comprehensive after school child measure.

2) Enhancement of After School Children Clubs

It is expected that the percentage of the children using after school children's club, among the target children (Primary school students 1-3 years), if matched with the potential demand, will reach 40% by FY 2017 (H29), and the aim is to get service delivery percentage as 32% by FY 2014 (H26). Further, it also strives to improve the quality of the after school children's club based on the 'after school children's club guidelines' to address sound upbringing of the children for whom the place to live after the school is the 'after school children's club'.

Section 3 To save children's health and safety, to secure access to medical care

1. Securing Children Medical System Ensuring the Pediatric Care System

1) Enhancement of Pediatric Care

For the emergency medical care of children, the early child care center management is implemented for the initial emergency (2009 (H21)) whereas the pediatric emergency care support project which secures the hospital in which the dealing with pediatric emergency is possible using the number system in the secondary medical care unit for the emergency requiring the hospitalization (secondary emergency) and the hospital based pediatric emergency medical project which secures the hospital in which the pediatric emergency patients can be received for multiple secondary medical care units, are implemented and enhanced.

2) Medical Treatment Research Project for Chronic Specified Diseases in Children

For the pediatric chronic diseases such as a particular disorder like childhood cancer, the establishment and dissemination of treatment is addressed due to extended duration of the medical treatment and burden due to expensive treatment and the pediatric chronic disease treatment research project which assists a part of the burden of medical treatment expenses, is implemented for contributing to the alleviation of the burden due to medical treatment expenses of the home patients.

2. Protecting Health and Safety of the Children

1) Vaccination

Triggered by the occurrence and countermeasures of (A/H1N1) pandemic influenza in April 2009, the review of the overall national immunization system gained momentum and led to newly the establishment of the Health and Welfare Science Commission Infectious Diseases Department Vaccination Subcommittee in December of the same year. Currently, in the Vaccination Subcommittee, based on 'Primary Recommendations' that was put together by the same Committee in February 2010, the nature of the diseases and vaccines that are subject to the Preventive Vaccination Law, ways of the cost of inoculation burdens and ways of formulating evaluation and study organizations for preventive vaccination are being discussed.

2) Mental health

From 2008 (H20), the highly experienced retired nursing teachers are dispatched to the schools where nursing teachers are not yet established and training is given to the faculty members and the school health leaders are promoted for developing an environment in which the children and students can cope up with the contemporary health problems. Further, the training for mental care professionals is carried out for the period when the children reach adolescence stage, as a mental health measure for the children reaching adolescence period and professional consultation is implemented for the children reaching adolescence period by the Mental Health and Welfare Centre, and child guidance center etc.

3) Distributing Scientific Knowledge Related to Sex and Appropriate Education for the Developmental Stages

In the women health support through the life project, consultation guidance on mental and physical health of women, including birth control and sexually transmitted

diseases, and health education in accordance with the life stage of women are being implemented in municipal health centers, etc.

In Guidelines for the Course of Study, the appropriate sex education in school is performed in order for students to acquire the knowledge about development and health of mind and body on sex and prevention of sexually transmitted disease, and behave appropriately, for example, esteem life and personality, sympathize with other persons, and construct interpersonal appropriate relationship, and is intended to be conducted through total school educational activities such as physical education, health and physical education department, special activities, and moral. In addition, for carrying out appropriate sex education in school, as well as implementation and research practice on how effective the teaching is, training which aims at spreading and leadership training in each region are held.

4) Promotion of ‘Dietary Education’

In March 2011, based on the Dietary Education Basic Law, which was passed in 2005, the Fundamental Plan for establishing a new food education in a five-year period from fiscal 2011 to fiscal 2015 was determined.

(1) Promotion of dietary education as a national campaign

According to the basic plan for dietary education, the dietary education promotion campaign is clearly and effectively implemented and June is determined as ‘dietary month’ every year for measuring the infiltration of dietary education to residents.

(2) Implementation of Dietary Education in the Families

In order to promote nutrition education to families with infants, awareness is being raised regarding the ‘breastfeeding and weaning support guide’ compiled in March 2007.

Further, the ‘dietary reader for the parents’ is prepared and displayed in March 2010 (H22) considering the parents in child care as main targets.

(3) Implementation of Dietary Education in the Schools

The amended School Lunch Act was enforced in April 2009 (H21) by which the diet and nutrition teacher will regulate the guidelines related to the food service for the use of food. The ‘guide for providing the food in the child welfare facility’ is summarized after checking with the specialists, for the techniques of nutritional management such as the preparation and review of the specific diet plan in the child welfare facility. The new day care center guidelines for the child care which was enforced in April 2009 are positioned for the promotion of dietary education in the day care center.

(4) Implementation of the Initiatives for Improving Dietary Lifestyles in The Regions

For achieving the rich dietary lifestyle with healthy mind and body, the awareness is raised for Japanese Food Guide Spinning Top which indicates what and how much should be eaten, for binding the ‘dietary guidelines for Japanese’ formulated in 2000 to the basic actions.

5) Preventing Children Accidents

(1) The Initiatives for Preventing

The ‘Protecting Children from Accidents! Project’ which promotes the initiatives of households, schools, circles, consumer organizations, business persons, municipality

along with accelerating and focusing on the country's own initiatives for the children accidents, is carried out for preventing the mishaps of the children, for example 'Children safety mail from Consumer Affairs Agency' delivery service.

(2) Implementing Safety Measures of the Play Ground

The support for improvement of the facility which acts as the countermeasure for safety and security of the city parks is implemented with social capital total grants.

(3) Promoting Safety Measures of Buildings

Appropriate maintenance and necessary repair works of special buildings used by a number of people are promoted through preparation of maintenance plans and periodical submission of the result of investigation by owners of those buildings. In addition, in Panel of Infrastructure Development, Elevator etc. accident investigation Group as well as Panel of Infrastructure Development, Building Subcommittee, Building Accidents and Disasters Prevention Group, continuous analysis and study about the information of accidents on buildings are conducted for the prevention of accidents on buildings and measures of prevention of accidents on buildings are taken.

6) Preventing from Harmful Criminals

(1) Implementing the Efforts for Protecting Children from Crime

The Police implement crackdown on crimes targeting children and promote the security of children commute routes by strengthening the patrols during commute times for routes to and from schools. The Police are also promoting to support patrols by voluntary crime prevention groups and the activities of 'Home of Children Emergency Call 110'.

In addition, in 2010, in order to promote the development of more effective school safety system in a whole region, practical case studies collected leading efforts practical case studies of the development of school safety system in a whole region was created.

(2) Promotion of 'Planning a Safe and Secure Town'

The maintenance and management of public facilities developed with crime prevention mind, is promoted by steady implementation of the 'Guidelines for the Maintenance and Management of Public Facilities for the Planning Town for Crime Prevention' (July 2003 (H15)). Planning a safe and secure town by which crimes hardly occur in urban areas, is promoted for example, by environmental planning that takes crime prevention into account for residences. Furthermore, efforts have been made to understand and improve the dangerous areas such as school areas, children commute routes parks, subways, and vacant houses where children related crimes can occur.

7) Resolution of Environmental Factors which Impact the Health of The Children

'Nationwide survey related to the health of the children and the environment (Eco-child Survey)' is conducted from 2010 (H22) to resolve the impact of the chemical agents in the environment on the health of the children.

Section 4. For Single Parent Child

1. Promoting support for single-parent families

1) Parenting and life support

When a temporary problem arises in nursing care, child care or daily life on account of the parent's illness or commuting to the school for job training, the dispatched helper assists the single parent household with domestic chores.

2) Employment support

To ensure the economic independence of the single parent, a variety of support services for employment have been carried out, such as counselling and information provision.

In addition, as a special measure of FY 2012, the period of skills training benefit was extended and improvement of environment for work at home was promoted through using the Child Relief Fund.

3) Enhancement of economic support

In addition to the provision of child-rearing allowance, the government is lending welfare loans for fatherless families and widows. From August 2010 (the start of payment from December of the same year), to see in view of such living conditions of motherless family that child-rearing allowance has not been paid, the coverage of child-rearing allowance was expanded to include father of motherless family, and additional welfare benefits for fatherless family will be continued.

4) Securing educational expenses of the child

Professional counselors for expenses of children is assigned to the employment and independence support centers for fatherless families, etc., which were established by local governments, to offer the consultation, arrangement, and information related to agreement on childcare expenses, implementation and forcible execution. In addition, the government established support centers for consultations on childcare expenses to response to the difficult cases.

Section 5. Raising children healthily who require special support

1. Committing to supporting children with disabilities

1) Headquarters for the Promotion of Institutional Reforms for Disabled Persons

In the ‘Conference Promoting Institutional Reform for People with Disabilities’, which is mainly composed of people with disabilities and under the ‘Headquarters for the Promotion of Institutional Reforms for People with Disabilities’ set up in the cabinet, study for the disabled system reform in Japan, including the development of domestic legislation required for the conclusion of the ‘Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (tentative name)’ was carried.

At the same conference, based on the ‘Second Opinion for the Promotion of Institutional Reforms for Disabled People with Disabilities’ compiled in December 2010, the government determined the ‘Draft Act on the Partial Revision on the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities’, which incorporate giving consideration to be educated together with students without disabilities and students with disabilities and to be able to for children with disabilities to receive treatment and education in familiar surroundings in the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities, at the ‘Headquarters for the Promotion of Institutional Reforms for People with Disabilities’ in March 2011.

2) Enhancement of consistent support according to life stage

For children with disabilities, along with discovering disabilities as soon as possible due to health checkups, strengthening of the development of child welfare facilities and functions to implement the treatment or therapeutic care professionals, and treatment and education system for children with disabilities is being developed, based on the Child Welfare Act.

3) Childcare for children with disabilities

In order to train children with disabilities and ensure the place for them, we provide training program to manage their daily activities, temporary assistance projects in which children with disabilities stay during the day, and so on. At the nursery, projects for remodeling for barrier-free are conducted when it accepts children with disabilities. At kindergarten, development of system for accepting children with disabilities is promoting. For example, conducting the projects of appointment of special needs education coordinator to develop a support system, and promoting the allocation of special needs education assistant by local fiscal measures in public kindergarten.

4) Enhancement of support for children with developmental disabilities

Based on the Act on Support for Persons with Development Disabilities which came into force in April 2005, for supporting children with developmental disabilities, at each stage of life, from early childhood to adulthood, for the promotion of consistent help in response to developmental disabilities, the government is committed to cross-related measures regarding health system, medical care, welfare, education, and employment.

5) Promotion of Special Needs Education

In March 2009, the Course of Study for Schools for Special Needs Education was revised to enhance teaching methods for each and every the severity, duplication and diversification of the children with disabilities. Further, in the Courses of Study for the primary and secondary school revised in March 2008 and 2009, the description for

special needs education is enhanced such as the teaching content and methods for the degree of each disability.

In addition, in order to consider the way to develop special needs education which adapt the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to build an inclusive education system, discussion has been held at “Special Committee of the Future Directions of Special Needs Education” set by the Central Education Council. And the committee summarized a report in December 2010.

2. Preventing child abuse and enhancing social fostering

1) Public Awareness to Prevent Child Abuse (Orange Ribbon Campaign)

The November is positioned as the month for promoting the prevention of child abuse from 2004 in which the public awareness activities such as orange ribbon campaign are implemented by the private organizations in coordination with related ministries, local public entities and affiliates for measuring the arousal of social concerns related to the child abuse problems.

2) Early Detection and Support for the Child Abuse

(1) Status of the Initiatives of the Countermeasures to Prevent Child Abuse

For the prevention of child abuse, the initiatives for addressing the development and enhancement of unbroken comprehensive support system of the following are being promoted:

1. Preventing the occurrence of child abuse
2. Early detection and support for the child abuse
3. Security and independent support for a child who has undergone abuse

(2) Improvement in the Techniques to Cope Up with Child Abuse

For addressing the enhancement of the early detection, early support system of child abuse in the school, the training program model for the faculty members is investigated. The training material for addressing the improvement of the skills of the faculty members for supporting the child, who has received abuse, is prepared and distributed in January 2009.

3) Promotion of Family-like Care

According to the child welfare act amended in 2009, the foster parents are differentiated as the parents with adoption as the prerequisite and foster parent training and foster care expansion is implemented. Further, small-type residence based child fostering work(family group home) is positioned as the receptacle of new social fostering taking up the adoption contract, facility admission etc.

4) Enhancement of Self Support of Older Children

According to the child welfare act amended in 2009, the implementation of children's self-reliant living assistance services (self reliant assistance homes) supporting the independence of the children grown under the social fostering is mandated to the state. Furthermore, the regional living and independence is supported by carrying out counseling and support with the placement of staff, which have the knowledge of child welfare and employment support, from FY 2008. The regional living, independence support project, which provides a place for the people who have left to come together and exchange opinions started as a model project and from FY 2010 are conducted as after-care project for children which are left to facilities.

5) Enhancement of facility function on social advocacy

Currently, in the child welfare facilities, the government has been the establishment of community-based small-scale foster home that target the foster home as well as the implementation of small group care that targets the foster homes, etc.. As for the nature of social care, as well as promote the study in the Special Committee for Social Fostering, in January 2011, ‘Study Committee on issues of social fostering of foster home, etc.’ was established and it is studying intensively about issues of social care, including the problem to be solved in the short term and the future to address the medium to long term.

6) Prevention of Child Abuse in the Facilities

In the child welfare act amended in 2009, the structure for appropriate actions was developed for incorporating the items related to the abuse of children under measures and addressing the advocacy of the children under measures.

3. Promoting support for children of foreign residents, especially for children that require special consideration

1) School support for children of foreign residents

It is possible for foreigners to send a child to school at no cost to the child, such as public elementary and junior high schools, if desired by the parents, various measures to support the school have been carried out.

Further, a program is being implemented so as to establish places of instruction to teach the Japanese language etc. to foreign children who have ceased attending school, in order to facilitate their smooth transfer into public schools.

2) Support to Child Orphaned on Account of Suicide

Support for orphans due to suicide, based on the anti-suicide basic law, which went into effect in October 2006, to soften the serious psychological impact for families of those who committed suicide or attempted suicide, and in order to perform the appropriate support for the relatives, the regional support organizations, such as self-help groups for the bereaved, in coordination with local governments, are working on the promotion of related measures in suicide survivor support programs.

4. Efforts against the percentage of child poverty

1) About the percentage of child poverty

According to the 2007 survey of Japan, the relative poverty rate of the active families having children is 12.2% out of which the relative poverty rate of the household having 1 adult is 54.3% whereas the relative poverty rate of the household having 2 adults is 10.2%.

Based on this, as support for households having one parent, employment support measures which can make the households be independent economically is been strengthened, and in order to expand economic support for households having one parent, a bill is submitted in August 2010 which supplies the child care allowance also to the single father family (plan to enforce from December of that year). In addition, the provision of mother and child welfare shall be continued.