

# T O P I C S

## Eliminate the Uncertainties of Raising a Child: at beauty salons, online, and with peer supporters<sup>1</sup>

### **Kagawa Prefecture: *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station* uses beauty salons to support parents who are raising children**

In Kagawa Prefecture, the *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station* project has been conducted to relieve some of the pressures of parenthood by listening to parents' worries and concerns about childcare since FY 2015. The project has also provided parents with useful tips for raising children at the beauty or nail salons where mothers in child-caring also periodically attend.

#### **Mothers reveal their worries to their beautician:**

The representative of the non-profit child support, Wahaha Net,—based in Takamatsu city—came up with the idea of using the close relationship between customers and beauticians as a part of a child support program since she noticed that many customers comfortably share their concerns with their beauticians. After discussion with Kagawa Prefecture officials, the planning committee for *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station* was organized.

After the committee investigated the conditions and needs for child support at the beauty salons etc.,<sup>2</sup> they organized training sessions for salon employees throughout the prefecture, who learned about circumstance that families face and how to handle them with their customers. The salons and shops hiring these employees are authorized as *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station*.

As of the end of FY 2016, a total of 285 stores were approved as care-stations. Since there are more *udon* shops than convenience stores<sup>3</sup>, and there are four times as many beauty salons as

*udon* shops in Kagawa, they expect an increase of official care-station figures from now on.

Kagawa Prefecture is expanding this project to provide complete family-planning information regarding marriage, pregnancy, child birth, and childcare at the care-station training session.



Booklet on *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station* project.



Authorization sticker as a *Kosodate-Biyo Eki: Child & Beauty Care Station*

<sup>1</sup> The project introduced in this TOPICS uses “Regional Countermeasures for the Declining Birthrate Promotional Grant” (Refer to Supporting Local Public Organization, Part 2, Chapter 5, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph.)

<sup>2</sup> Target stores include barber shops, nail salons, and osteopathic clinics.

<sup>3</sup> As of 2016, there were about 400 convenience stores and 600 *udon* shops.

**Kyoto Prefecture: Using an app to relieve inconvenience when childrearing families are away from home.**

Kyoto Prefecture developed a smart phone app called “Mammopu” to relieve inconvenience when the childrearing families are away from home and has been operating it since 2015. The number of registrants in this app reached around 46,000 as of the end of FY 2016.

**A prefectural office employee who is raising children supports developing this app.**

*Mammopu* is an app which searches child-support spots (including “Childrearing Support Passport”<sup>1</sup> participating stores) via GPS while the registrants are away from home. Eligible families can also register and show their passport on this app. To make this app more efficient for childrearing families, it provides useful information as well as user’s comments and feedback via SNS.

The development of the app started with an experience of a prefectural office employee. During her time raising children, she realized that it may be a common feeling among parents who stay at home with their small children all day that they want to go out, but feel inconvenienced by the lack of information regarding places which are child-friendly. She could not find places that listed whether they had a breast feeding room, stroller parking, or diaper changing rooms. Kyoto Prefecture sought possible collaboration with local child support organizations, IT companies, and municipal employees interested in this issue and established a research team for child-support care. The result of this public/private partnership was *Mammopu*. The name “Mammopu” was selected by the public and means both *Omamori* (holy charm) and convenient online map.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)

- (1) If you research the spot for going out, icons will show the availability of breast-feeding areas, child toilet seats, and whether or not baby foods are allowed inside.
- (2) *Mammopu* is interlocked with *Kyoto Childrearing Support Passport*. It has the function of user registration and users can show their passport on this app at various spots.
- (3) By using *Mammopu*, it is easy to get local medical information and to call #8000 (consultation number for emergency pediatric service).
- (4) Local writers who are raising children post useful news in their neighborhood. It is connected with SNS and has comment function.

1 Refer to “Nationwide campaign of childrearing support passport” Chapter 2, Section 2.

«Nigata City: First Time Child Care/Cultivating a Positive View of Ourselves through Peer-support»

In Nigata City, consultation offices for child-abuse, who respond to child abuse and its notice, advise that the city should provide some support for mothers from the beginning stages of childrearing. According to a recent survey, 11.6% of mothers (70.8% of whom are first-time mothers) in the city who have a baby under one year old suffer from postpartum depression.

Baby Program is a peer support program in which mothers can share their worries and uncertainties about childrearing

In May 2016, a program called, “Baby Has Come! Building a Close Bond with Your Child,” was launched, which is specifically targeted towards mothers who have a first-born child between 2-5 months of age. This program, called Baby Program (B.P.), is an educational workshop to support first-time mothers. It consists of four weekly sessions conducted by an accredited B.P. facilitator<sup>1</sup>.

When 20 pairs of mothers and children take part in this program every time, the parents also have a safe space to share their experience and information about various topics to support each other. The program, peer-support<sup>2</sup>, also allows participants to learn necessary knowledge about childrearing skills and their roles as parents. They can enhance their own self-esteem through workshop activities. Some parents even continue supporting each other after the sessions. This program takes an experiential learning approach to raising children in the local community. Since 20 pairs of mothers and children come together for this program, it can provide a great opportunity for them to find their friends and learn how to communicate with babies from observing each other. Furthermore, a professional health nurse takes part in some sessions to give child-care consultation. The city provides the

space to encourage continuous gatherings of participants after finishing scheduled sessions. “I realized I was worrying over nothing.”

“I grew to understand that I don’t have to be perfect.” “I always depended on my cell phone, but I found out I could talk with other mothers. Now I can enjoy taking care of my child more,” participants said.

93.6% of mothers worried and felt anxious about childrearing before taking this program. However, after attending the course, 91% of mothers answered that they worried less about their child-care than before, and 98.5% answered they are now able to be positively involved in raising their children<sup>3</sup>.

In addition to the necessary support from their families, it is very helpful for mothers to develop relationships with other mothers, exchanging skills and experiences with each other and discussing worries and joys of parenthood. Nigata City recommends that all eligible mothers participate in this program. A total of 878 pairs of mothers and children (out of 3,000 eligible pairs) participated in the program in FY 2016.

Training courses for B.P. facilitators with employees from the City Parenting Support Service was held by Nigata City and now nine experts<sup>4</sup> are ready for the B.P. program on a continuous basis.



Only women may enter the workshop space to make the space comfortable for breastfeeding and changing diapers.

1 B.P. facilitator is accredited by NPO Kokoro no Kosodate Internet Kansai which developed the B.P. program  
 2 “Peer” means people who are in similar situations. “Peer-support” means people who have equal standing support for each other.  
 3 From the survey of FY 2016 participants  
 4 As of the end of March 2016