

Basic Program for Shokuiku Promotion (Abstract)

[provisional]

The Preamble of the Basic Law on *Shokuiku* (food and nutrition education) sets out the following provisions:

Above all else '*SHOKU*' (food/diet/eating) is important for children to cultivate rich humanity (i.e., develop into well-rounded and compassionate individuals), and to acquire the knowledge and means to live healthy lives. The Basic Law on *Shokuiku* formally makes *Shokuiku* the foundation for living, and positions it as the base of intellectual (*Chiiku*), moral (*Tokuiku*) and physical (*Taiiku*) education. The law seeks to promote *Shokuiku* that will raise children who can practice healthy dietary habits, by fostering acquisition of knowledge related to *Shoku*, and the ability to choose *Shoku* through various experiences. While *Shokuiku* is important for all generations of the Japanese people, *Shokuiku* for children exerts great influence on both mental and physical growth, and also on their character formation, which forms the foundation for fostering mental and physical health, as well as individuals' humanity, throughout their lifetime.

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Introduction

1 The present status of food and nutrition in Japan

Food and nutrition are essential for human life. Food and nutrition are also the source of life and no one can live without them. Humans have acquired knowledge and experience about food and nutrition, and created rich food cultures tailored to the varied environments in which they live. Human survival and success derive in part from healthy dietary practices developed throughout human history.

Recently in our country, as standards of living have improved with rapid economic development and dietary diversification, there has been an increasing trend toward utilization of food services outside the home. Dramatic changes in socioeconomic circumstances and lack of free time in daily life have gradually led to decreased awareness of the importance of food and nutrition and loss of healthy dietary practices. Additionally, the extensive food and nutrition information provided to communities has led to confusion and made it difficult for citizens to make decisions regarding proper diet. Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that the present state of food and nutrition in our country has reached a critical stage.

The unbalanced nutritional intake and unhealthy dietary habits such as excessive fat intake, lack of vegetable intake and the skipping of breakfast have increased among citizens including children. These are assumed to be the causes of increased obesity and lifestyle related diseases. Problems related to excessive dieting and slimness have also been documented. There is concern that these public health problems will lead to decreased vitality on both individual and population levels, and thus early intervention is required.

Healthy dietary practices, especially in childhood, provide a foundation for the cultivation of individuals' humanity, and they are important for the future of our country. The Shokuiku Promotion Basic Program expects that adults will reflect on their own dietary habits through Shokuiku for children, and that communities and societies will make every effort to address Shokuiku for children.

With the rapid increase in the elderly population in our country, it is important for the aged to lead vibrant and healthy lives. It is necessary for people to continue to engage in physical activity and to practice healthy dietary habits.

As individuals' daily lives and schedules have become increasingly complicated, opportunities to eat around the table with family or friends have decreased. It is important to increase such opportunities as much as possible to improve quality of life.

Issues related to both domestic and international food safety have evoked citizens' interest in food safety. It is necessary to ensure food safety and enhance citizens' understanding about food safety.

Our country's rate of food self-sufficiency is the lowest among developed countries, and the food supply is largely derived from abroad. Consideration of the numerous factors affecting our food supply such as global population increase, water resources depletion, farmland desertification and climate change, suggests a great need to increase our country's rate of food self-sufficiency.

Improvement in living standards enables many citizens to enjoy a wide variety of diets. However, local regionally-specific food cultures are now disappearing. In order to revitalize local regional communities, and in order to promote the traditional healthy "Japanese dietary pattern" which includes rice as a staple food, suited to the Japanese climate, accompanied by various side dishes, it is important to transmit the significance of traditional food culture to younger generations.

2. Past approaches and development for the future

Many contextual factors have contributed to the current state of our country's food and nutrition problems. Socioeconomic changes following World War II, and the accompanying changes in lifestyle, values and needs have led to changes in dietary habits and the environment surrounding food and nutrition. Through these changes, citizens' awareness of the importance of food and nutrition, feelings of gratitude for food as well as knowledge about food, have gradually decreased. Our country has arrived at a stage where healthy dietary habits cannot be practiced unless effective measures are taken.

To solve problems related to food and nutrition in our country, a resolution was sought. We call it "Shokuiku". The concept of "Shokuiku" dates back to the Meiji era (1868 - 1912) but had disappeared from the contemporary lexicon. We have reintroduced the concept of "Shokuiku" as the basis of intellectual, moral and physical education, and are promoting it as a national movement. The restructuring of Japanese dietary practices involves individual and societal changes that should be

promoted with an aim toward achieving a gender-equal society so that every individual, regardless of sex, can follow healthy dietary practices.

Since dietary patterns of each citizen are subject to individual taste preferences and values, free will and choice are essential. However, the present situation requires Japan to promote Shokuiku on a national level. The importance of this situation necessitates an effort to disseminate the concept of Shokuiku among all citizens. Yet it is important that varied lifestyles and individual values are respected, and that Shokuiku not be considered at all mandatory.

Thus far the government, local public entities, and private organizations have tackled Shokuiku united under a common awareness of the problems, and it appears that a certain degree of success is being attained. However, definite solutions to the current diet-related challenges remain elusive. Local groups are requested to develop and promote policies and programs in coordination with the government.

To cultivate citizens' health and humanity throughout their lives, the national movement of Shokuiku is being promoted to raise children and adults with adequate food and nutrition knowledge and food choice skills in order to practice healthy dietary habits. For this purpose, the Shokuiku Basic Law (hereinafter referred to as "Basic Law") came into force in July 2005. The Basic Law defined the fundamental philosophy of Shokuiku and its course of action to promote relevant policies comprehensively, systematically, and effectively.

The Basic Program for Shokuiku Promotion (hereinafter referred to as "Basic Program") was enacted following stipulation by Basic Law, and is in effect for the five-year period from 2006 to 2011. This Basic Program contains the basic items necessary for the implementation of the policies related to Shokuiku promotion in a comprehensive and systematic way and is the basis for both the prefectures' and the municipalities' (cities, towns and villages) Shokuiku Promotion Programs (hereinafter referred to as "Promotion Program").

From now on, based on the Basic Program, all of those concerned with Shokuiku promotion including the government and local public entities will use all available resources and efforts to promote Shokuiku as a national movement to realize a society where all citizens can build healthy minds and bodies, as well as cultivate individuals' humanity throughout their lives.

I Basic principles for policies related to Shokuiku promotion

- 1. Improvement in citizens' healthy minds and bodies as well as cultivation of individuals' humanity**
- 2. Feeling of gratitude for and understanding of food**
- 3. Development of Shokuiku promotion campaign**
- 4. Roles of caregivers and personnel involved in education regarding Shokuiku for children**
- 5. Practices of hands-on activities and Shokuiku promotion activities**
- 6. Traditional food culture, consideration of food production harmonized with environments, and contribution to revitalization of agricultural, forest and fishing villages as well as to an increase in food self-sufficiency rate**
- 7. Roles of Shokuiku in guarantee of food safety**

II Items related to the targets in Shokuiku promotion

- 1. Setting objectives**
- 2. Target values in Shokuiku promotion**
 - (1) Increase in proportion of citizens who have interest in Shokuiku**
 - (2) Decrease in proportion of citizens who skip breakfast**
 - (3) Increase in proportion of locally produced products used in school meals.**
 - (4) Increase in proportion of citizens who practice healthy diets using the “Japanese Food Guide Spinning Top” guide as a reference**
 - (5) Increase in proportion of citizens who are aware of “metabolic syndrome”**
 - (6) Increase in proportion of volunteers who participate in Shokuiku promotion**
 - (7) Increase in proportion of municipalities (cities, towns and villages) which have educational farms**
 - (8) Increase percentage of citizens who have basic knowledge about food safety**
 - (9) Increase percentage of municipalities and prefectures which have formulated and implemented their own Shokuiku Promotion Programs**

III Issues related to comprehensive Shokuiku promotion

- 1. Shokuiku Promotion in households**
 - (1) Present situations and future directions**
 - (2) Policies to be addressed**

- (Improvement in behavioral patterns)
- (Promotion of preventing childhood obesity)
- (Acquisition of preferable dietary habits and food knowledge)
- (Nutrition guidance for pregnant women and infants)
- (Efforts made by nutrition teachers)
- (Shokuiku Promotion for youth and their caregivers)
- 2. **Shokuiku Promotion in schools and nurseries**
 - (1) Present situations and future directions
 - (2) Policies to be implemented
 - (Enhancement Upgrade of leadership)
 - (Enhancement of teaching contents for children)
 - (Enhancement of school meals)
 - (Promotion of health status improvement through Shokuiku)
 - (Shokuiku Promotion in nurseries)
- 3. **Approaches to improve dietary habits in community**
 - (1) Present situations and future directions
 - (2) Policies to be addressed
 - (Practice of the well-balanced Japanese dietary pattern)
 - (Promotion and utilization of “Dietary Guidelines for Japanese” and “Japanese Food Guide Spinning Top”)
 - (Training and use of personnel with specialized knowledge about food and nutrition)
 - (Shokuiku Promotion in health promotion and medical education)
 - (Shokuiku Promotion by food industry)
- 4. **Development of Shokuiku Promotion campaign**
 - (1) Present situations and future directions
 - (2) Policies to be addressed
 - (Establishment and implementation of “SHOKUIKU”month)
 - (Continued Shokuiku Promotion campaign)
 - (Establishment of coordination and cooperative framework with various groups)
 - (Giving awards to private groups who have addressed Shokuiku Promotion)
 - (Research studies and information services with contribute to the national campaign)
 - (Enhancement of citizens’ understanding about Shokuiku)
 - (Support for voluntary activities)
- 5. **Promotion of interactions between food producers and consumers, and**

revitalization of agricultural, forest and fishing industries harmonized with environments

(1) Present situations and future directions

(2) Policies to be addressed

(Promotion of coexistence and connections between cities and agricultural, forest and fishing villages)

(Promotion of children's hands-on activities in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and provision of information to consumers)

(Shokuiku Promotion campaign performed by farmers, foresters and fishers)

(Promotion of local consumption of locally produced products)

(Promotion of biomass application and food recycling)

6. Support for various activities for inheritance of food culture

(1) Present situations and future directions

(2) Policies to be addressed

(Approaches to voluntary activities)

(Proactive introduction of local cuisines to school meals and utilization of relevant events)

(Information for use by cooks)

(Collection and dissemination of relevant information)

(Link with approaches to countries with intellectual property rights)

7. Surveillance of food safety, nutrition and related dietary habits, and promotion of international exchanges

(1) Present situations and future directions

(2) Policies to be addressed

(Enhancement of risk communication)

(Provision of information related to food safety and nutrition)

(Implementation of basic research and studies)

(Dissemination and enhancement of systems regarding information on food)

(Promotion approaches through local authorities)

(Overseas development of Shokuiku and promotion of overseas research)

(International exchange of information)

IV. Issues necessary for comprehensive and systematic promotion of the policies of our country regarding Shokuiku promotion

1. Reinforcement of cooperation and coordination of relevant parties

- 2. Establishment of Promotion Program and policies based on the programs by prefectures**
- 3. Proactive provision of information and understanding the public opinions**
- 4. Understanding the progress, assessment of the effect, and efficient and intensive management of fiscal measures**
- 5. Review of the Basic Program**