

Part 2 Status of the Implementation of Measures to Develop and Support for Children and Young People

Chapter 1 Promoting Measures to Develop and Support for Children and Young People in a Comprehensive and Systematic Manner

Section 1 Formulating the National Youth Development Policy (2008)

- The numbers of “NEETs” (not in employment, education or training) and permanent part-timers (“freeters”) have remained high. Our society has been flooded with various kinds of information, and the means of communication have been diversified. In order to respond to this situation, the National Youth Development Policy was formulated in December 2008 (decision by the Headquarters for Youth Development on December 12, 2008).

Section 2 Establishment of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People and the measures based on it

(Establishment and enforcement of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People)

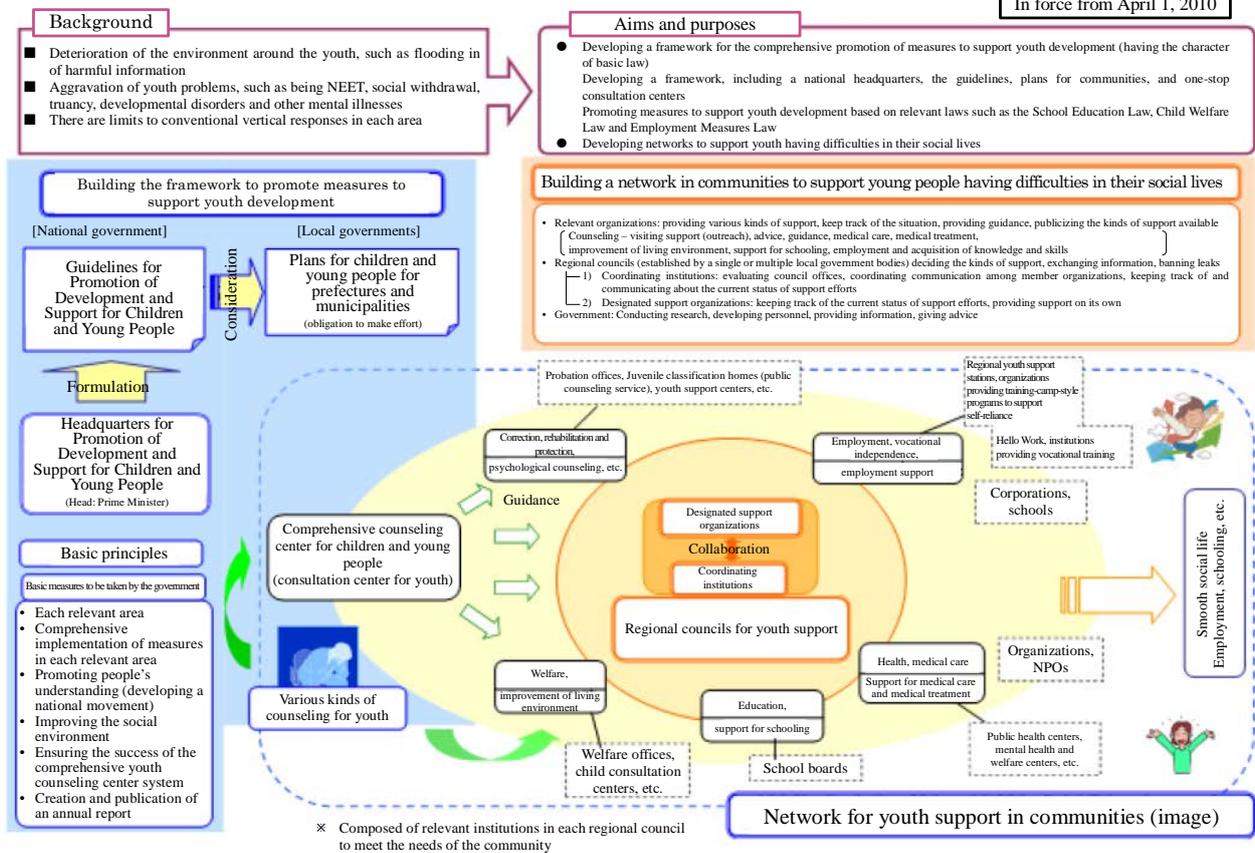
- At the 171st Session of the National Diet in 2009, the government submitted a bill to promote comprehensive measures for youth. The House of Representatives amended the bill and unanimously approved the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”) in July 2009. The Act came into force on April 1, 2010 (Figure 1). The main provisions of the Act are as follows:
 - Guidelines to establish a headquarters and to promote measures to develop and support for children and young people (hereinafter referred to as the “Guidelines”); development of plans for local communities and a framework including “one-stop consultation centers”
 - Development of regional networks to support children and young people who have difficulties in their social lives.

Figure 1

Outline of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People

About the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People

In force from April 1, 2010



Source: Website of the Cabinet Office (<http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/contents.html>)

(Formulating the Guidelines based on the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People)

- As a special institution based on Article 26 of the Act, the Headquarters for Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People was established in the Cabinet Office. It is composed of the Prime Minister (head) and all other Cabinet ministers.
- On July 23, 2010, the Headquarters formulated guidelines (“Vision for Children and Young People”) based on the Act.

(Investigation and evaluation of measures based on the Guidelines)

- In order to promote implementation of the Guidelines and to investigate and evaluate the status of the implementation of the measures based on the Guidelines, in July 2011, it was decided to hold an expert meeting on the investigation and evaluation of promotion of development of children and young people.

Chapter 2 Providing Support for the Healthy Development of All Children and Young People

Section 1 Supporting Self-Development of Children and Young People

1 Support for Self-formation

(1) Forming basic life habits

(Measures in school education)

- The Courses of Study, revised in 2008 and 2009¹, (hereinafter referred to as the “new Courses of Study”) plan to improve moral education. It emphasizes guidance on morals to ensure that children, especially those in the lower classes at elementary school, learn basic rules regarding their life habits and their social lives, such as greetings, making moral judgments, and not doing what one must not do.
- MEXT (The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) is taking the following measures:
 - MEXT will distribute copies of “Kokoro no Note” to all elementary school students and junior high school students to be used in FY 2013.
 - Based on the report from the “Conference on the Improvement of Moral Education,” MEXT created some teaching material “Watashitachi no Dotoku,” which is a fully revised version of “Kokoro no Note,” and distributed copies to be used in FY 2014.
 - In order to provide support for a variety of kinds of moral education according to the actual condition of each school or community, MEXT will provide support for activities to spread the good practices, and to adopt distinctive kinds of moral education and teaching materials

(Efforts by Society as a Whole to Develop Lifestyle Habits for Children)

- MEXT is promoting a national campaign “Early to Bed, Early to Rise, Don’t Forget Your Breakfast.”² In FY 2013, MEXT held meetings for the “Review Committee for Developing Lifestyle Habits for Children Centering on Junior High School Students and High School Students” and summarized issues and problems for mainly junior high school students and high school students, whose lifestyles tend to be disturbed due to the expansion of living areas and diversification of behaviors, and effective approaches to take in schools and communities. In FY 2014, it will consider supportive measures such as effective methods to educate guardians.
- As the executive office of the National Council for “Early to Bed, Early to Rise, Don’t Forget Your Breakfast,” the National Institution for Youth Education is making an effort to improve the rhythm of daily life for children.

(Promoting food education [“Shokuiku”])

- The Second Plan for Promoting Shokuiku (decision by the Shokuiku Promotion Council in March 2011) aims, by FY 2015, to reduce the percentage of “students in fifth grade who answer that they rarely have breakfast” to 0%.
- The Cabinet Office created “A Guide to ‘Shokuiku’”³ to allow all citizens to make their own appropriate efforts regarding their diets, and released it to the public in May 2012.
- MEXT is increasing the distribution of nutrition instructors who provide guidance on food to each prefecture.
- MHLW (The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) is providing learning opportunities and information on food for pregnant women, nursing mothers and families with children.
- MAFF (The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) provided support for efforts to promote the practice of “Japanese Dietary Patterns,” which have an excellent nutritional balance,

1 MEXT revised the Government Guidelines for Teaching for elementary schools and junior high schools in March 2008 and those for high schools in March 2009.

2 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shougai/asagohan/index.htm

3 <http://www8.cao.go.jp/syokuiku/data/guide/index.html>

and for educational farms where people working in agriculture, forestry and fisheries provide opportunities to experience agriculture.

- The Food Safety Commission of the Cabinet Office provides information on food safety for children on its website. In addition, it holds the “Junior Food Safety Commission” for fifth and sixth graders and their guardians during summer vacations.

(2) Developing communication skills and norm consciousness

- Throughout various educational activities at school, teachers tell students to have compassion for others and to open-mindedly respect others’ opinions and viewpoints different from their own. In addition, they emphasize the development of communication skills and provide lessons which profoundly incorporate presentations and discussion.
- Educational facilities for youth provide various opportunities for hands-on experiences such as experiencing nature and the experience of lodging together for the purpose of nurturing social skills and cooperative attitudes.
- The police hold delinquency prevention classes by dispatching officers to schools or in cooperation with volunteer youth officers.
- MIC (The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) is developing and lending out educational materials to improve the media literacy of children.

(3) Improving physical fitness

(Promoting activities to improve physical fitness in local communities)

- Since FY 2013, MEXT has been implementing a model project intended to establish activities to improve the physical fitness of children in tandem with the whole local community including schools, families and sports clubs.

(Promotion of physical education and sports club activities at school)

- MEXT created guidance materials for martial arts courses that have been compulsory at junior high schools.

2 Providing opportunities for various activities

(1) Securing opportunities for group play

- MHLW is promoting the establishment of children’s centers⁴.
- MEXT and MHLW are promoting the creation of safe and sound places for children to stay after school.

(2) Promotion of reading activities

- MEXT is promoting children’s reading activities by accelerating the formation of municipal plans and by holding the “Forum for the Promotion of Children’s Reading Activities” in accordance with the Act on the Promotion of Children’s Reading and the Third Basic Plan Concerning the Promotion of Reading Activities by Children⁵.

(3) Various activities in local communities

(Promoting hands-on activities)

- MEXT, while promoting dissemination and teaching activities to ask families and companies to understand hands-on activities, gives awards to companies that promote hands-on activities.⁶ Since 2013, MEXT has conducted research on the evaluation of and awards for hands-on activities.
- The National Institution for Youth Education is promoting the “Let’s Have a Great Experience in Nature” campaign.⁷

4 A type of children’s recreational facility provided for in Article 40 of the Child Welfare Law

5 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/sports/dokusyo/

6 <http://kids-taiken.com/award.html>

7 <http://www.niye.go.jp/services/taikennokaze/>

Affiliated organizations include: CONE, National Institution for Youth Education, National Kominkan Association, National Federation of Kodomo-kai, Scout Association of Japan, Girl Scouts of Japan, National Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations of Japan, National Recreation Association of Japan, National Camping Association of Japan, Japan Lullaby Association, National Association of Sports Promotion Committees, Japan Radio Exercise Association, and Japan Junior Sports Clubs Association. Japan Youth Hostels, Inc.