

Basic Plan on Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People

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**Council for Promoting Measures Against Content Harmful
to Young People on the Internet and Development of an
Appropriate Environment**

< Contents >

Introduction -----1

No 1 Basic Policies on Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People

1. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities for voluntary and independent Internet use by young people -----3
2. Implementation of awareness-raising activities for enabling guardians to properly control Internet use by young people-----4
3. Promotion of efforts by business operators, etc. to prevent young people’s viewing of content harmful to young people -----4
4. Promotion of voluntary efforts by citizens to resolve problems on the Internet -----4

No 2 Matters concerning Measures for Promoting Education and Awareness-raising Activities on Appropriate Internet Use by Young People

1. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities at schools-----6
 - (1) Promotion of information moral education, etc.
 - (2) Enhancement of teaching skills in information moral education, etc.
 - (3) Promotion of awareness-raising activities at schools
 - (4) Promotion of efforts to cope with “cyberbullying”
2. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities in society -----7
 - (1) Support for education and awareness-raising activities by local communities, private bodies, and business operators
 - (2) Prompt provision of easy-to-understand information through portal sites
3. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities at home ----- 8
 - (1) Support for efforts at home, such as making family rules
 - (2) Support for guardians’ control (parental control) in accordance with young people’s developmental stage
4. Support for research for developing and disseminating effective education methods, etc. -----9

- (1) Support for implementing effective information education
- (2) Review and promotion of effective awareness-raising activities for guardians
- 5. Development of national movements ----- 9
 - (1) Public announcements and awareness-raising activities for coping with problems in society as a whole
 - (2) Support for voluntary activities by Internet users and business operators

No 3 Matters concerning Measures for Improving the Performance and Disseminating the Use of Service and Software for Filtering Content Harmful to Young People

- 1. Securing business operators' thorough performance of obligations to provide filtering services and software, etc. and promoting explanations to guardians ----- 11
 - (1) Securing thorough performance of obligations to provide filtering services and software, etc.
 - (2) Promoting explanations to guardians
- 2. Promotion of the advancement of filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs ----- 12
 - (1) Promotion of diversification and improvement of filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs
 - (2) Support for efforts to make appropriate the range of viewing restricted by filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs
- 3. Support for filtering service providers to grasp content to be made subject to restricted viewing ----- 12
- 4. Awareness-raising activities for promoting dissemination of filtering services and software ----- 13
- 5. Surveys on dissemination of filtering services and software, etc.----- 13

No 4 Matters Concerning Support for Private Bodies, etc. Engaged in Activities for Appropriate Internet Use by Young People

- 1. Support for activities to allow young people to acquire skills for the appropriate utilization of the Internet ----- 14
- 2. Support for website operators to develop a system for measures to prevent viewing of content harmful to young people ----- 14
 - (1) Support for developing a system such as formulating guidelines, etc.

- (2) Support for efficient and smooth implementation of activities
- (3) Support for efforts for rating and zoning
- 3. Support for resolution of civil disputes over measures to prevent the viewing of content harmful to young people ----- 15
- 4. Support for consultation on young people's problems concerning the Internet ----- 15
- 5. Support for other activities for the development of an environment for Internet use ----- 16

No 5 Important Matters Concerning Other Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People

- 1. Promotion of controlling cyber crimes ----- 17
 - (1) Promotion of crackdowns and strengthening of the system
 - (2) Promotion of development of good cooperative relationships for investigation
- 2. Promotion of request for deletion, etc. of illegal and harmful content ---17
 - (1) Promotion of request for deletion, etc. through the Internet Hotline Center
 - (2) Support for business operators and private bodies to review effective measures to prevent viewing
- 3. Promotion of measures against defamation and invasion of privacy for young people ----- 18
 - (1) Counseling service for young people
 - (2) Measures against defamation and invasion of privacy
- 4. Promotion of countermeasures against spam mail ----- 19
 - (1) Steady enforcement of the law and other comprehensive measures
 - (2) Promotion of international cooperation
 - (3) Dissemination activities for countermeasures against chain mail
- 5. Surveys on Japan and other countries ----- 19
 - (1) Implementation of surveys on social impact of harmful content, etc.
 - (2) Survey on efforts in foreign countries

No. 6 Promotion System, etc.

- 1. Promotion system in the national government ----- 21
- 2. Utilization of collaboration with local public entities, guardians, business operators and private bodies, etc.----- 21

3. Promotion of international collaboration	22
4. Reviews of the Basic Plan	22

Introduction

The Internet has widely spread also among young people under 18 years of age as an effective and convenient communication tool. According to the survey conducted by the Cabinet Office in March 2007, nearly 58% of elementary school students, 69% of lower secondary school students, and 75% of upper secondary school students use the Internet from a personal computer, and nearly 27% of elementary school students, 56% of lower secondary school students, and 96% of upper secondary school students from a mobile phone.

However, there is a mass of information on the Internet that is not considered suitable for viewing by young people, who are still physically and mentally immature. Under such circumstances, many guardians have anxiety that their children might access harmful websites or get involved in crimes through their use of the Internet. The Internet, with which present young people are totally familiar, did not exist in their guardians' childhood. Such generation gap may cause guardians' lack of recognition of Internet use by young people and problems caused thereby.

In 2008, as many as 724 young people suffered from damage via so-called online dating sites websites. Most of them had accessed the Internet from their mobile phones. Furthermore, a total of 792 young people suffered from damage through the use of websites other than online dating sites.

In addition to this, overdependence on the Internet, such as continuing e-mail exchanges even at the sacrifice of sleep, may exert some influence on young people's lifestyles.

Under such circumstances, the Act on Development of an Environment That Provides Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People (Act No. 79 of 2008; hereinafter referred to as the "Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People") was enacted in June 2008 and was put

into effect on April 1, 2009.

The "Basic Plan on Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People" (hereinafter referred to as the "Basic Plan") establishes matters concerning "promoting education and awareness-raising activities on appropriate Internet use by young people," "improving the performance and disseminating the use of software for filtering content harmful to young people," and "support for private bodies, etc." and so on, as well as the "basic policies," based on the Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People.

Based on this Basic Plan , in light of the fact that it is urgently required to cope with the present situation of the Internet, which is flooded with harmful content, and that changes in the environment surrounding the Internet are rapid and significant, the State shall proactively promote measures for providing safe and secure Internet use for young people, together with local public entities, in a prompt and effective manner.

No 1 Basic Policies on Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People

The Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People prescribes the following basic principles for the State and local public entities to follow in formulating and implementing measures for providing safe and secure Internet use for young people.

First, young people shall be prompted to acquire skills for independently utilizing information and communication equipment, properly sorting out information available on the Internet, and appropriately transmitting information via the Internet.

Secondly, the chances of young people viewing content harmful to young people via the Internet shall be reduced as much as possible, by way of improving the performance and disseminating the use of software for filtering content harmful to young people, and through measures for preventing young people's viewing of content harmful to young people to be taken by persons engaged in businesses related to Internet use by young people.

Thirdly, voluntary and independent efforts in the private sector shall play a substantial role and the State and local public entities shall respect this, in light of the significance of the free expression activities and characteristics of the Internet that enable diversified entities to engage in diverse express activities to the whole world.

Based on these basic principles prescribed in the Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People, the government shall take measures for providing safe and secure Internet use for young people in accordance with the following basic policies. On that occasion, the government shall grasp new problems immediately concerning young people's use of the Internet, whose technology and utilization changes rapidly, so as to take prompt actions.

1. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities for voluntary

and independent Internet use by young people

In order to secure voluntary and independent Internet use by young people in accordance with their developmental stage, guidance for appropriate use of information and communication technology and information moral education shall be provided at schools according to children's developmental stage. At the same time, awareness-raising activities for young people at local communities shall also be promoted and supported.

2. Implementation of awareness-raising activities for enabling guardians to properly control Internet use by young people

Awareness-raising activities for guardians, with regard to harmful content on the Internet, risks on the Internet threatening young people, and how to deal with such problems, shall be promoted and supported at schools and local communities, so that guardians can properly control Internet use by young people in accordance with their developmental stage.

3. Promotion of efforts by business operators, etc. to prevent young people's viewing of content harmful to young people

In order to enable guardians to prevent young people from accessing content harmful to young people, depending on guardians' needs, the government shall promote business operators' performance of their obligation to provide a filtering service for young people, etc, their efforts to disseminate filtering services and software and advance filtering services and software in accordance with guardians' needs, and their measures to prevent viewing by young people of content harmful to young people.

4. Promotion of voluntary efforts by citizens to resolve problems on the Internet

The government shall encourage each private Internet user to make voluntary efforts to pay attention to young people when transmitting information or to report problematic content so as to resolve problems

on the Internet, including content harmful to young people.

No 2 Matters concerning Measures for Promoting Education and Awareness-raising Activities on Appropriate Internet Use by Young People

In order to have young people acquire skills for the appropriate utilization of the Internet according to their developmental stage, education and awareness-raising activities on appropriate Internet use by young people shall be promoted at schools, society and home. Measures shall also be taken to assist research, and collect and provide information for the purpose of developing and disseminating effective education methods.

Furthermore, the government shall be united to carry out public announcements and awareness-raising activities, proactively support private bodies' awareness-raising activities, and prompt to develop national movements in society as a whole for the development of an environment that provides safe and secure Internet use for young people.

1. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities at schools

(1) Promotion of information moral education, etc.

Guidance for appropriate use of information and communication technology and information moral education according to children's developmental stage shall be provided at all elementary schools, lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools.

(2) Enhancement of teaching skills in information moral education, etc.

Experts shall be dispatched to schools to assist supervisors and teachers so as to establish model method of information moral education at schools. Furthermore, teachers' teaching skills in information moral education shall be enhanced through training sessions for supervisors, etc. so as to have nearly all teachers acquire skills to teach appropriate utilization of information and communication technology and information morals by FY2011.

(3) Promotion of awareness-raising activities at schools

Materials for awareness-raising activities to support education at schools shall be prepared and provided, and under cooperation between the public and private sectors, awareness-raising courses concerning appropriate Internet use shall be provided for young people, teachers, and guardians. Awareness-raising activities shall further be promoted by making the most of the effective opportunities where guardians, etc. meet together at schools.

(4) Promotion of efforts to cope with “cyberbullying”

The reality of “cyberbullying” via so-called off-school websites, etc. shall be made clear, and effective measures shall be taken for prevention, early detection or preemptive moves toward such problems. If any problem occurs, schools shall be encouraged to take appropriate measures in collaboration and cooperation with related organizations. Furthermore, efforts shall be promoted to develop a system for children to consult about their problems including “cyberbullying.”

Based on the notice, which requests the prohibition of bringing mobile phones to elementary schools and lower secondary schools in principle and thoroughly coping with “cyberbullying,” efforts shall be promoted, in accordance with the circumstances at respective schools and communities.

2. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities in society

(1) Support for education and awareness-raising activities by local communities, private bodies, and business operators

Under the cooperation between the public and private sectors, awareness-raising courses concerning appropriate Internet use shall be provided for young people, and education and awareness-raising activities by local communities, private bodies, and business operators shall be supported, in accordance with their respective circumstances, by way of formulating a system to implement such activities, holding

symposiums and forums, promoting the use of private bodies' Internet-use skill tests for young people, and preparing and distributing materials for awareness-raising activities.

(2) Prompt provision of easy-to-understand information through portal sites

Easy-to-understand and convenient information on concrete countermeasures against illegal and harmful content shall be provided promptly by utilizing portal sites, such as websites on countermeasures against illegal and harmful content.

3. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities at home

(1) Support for efforts at home, such as making family rules

Under the cooperation between the public and private sectors, awareness-raising courses concerning appropriate Internet use by young people shall be provided for guardians.

The government shall provide young people and their guardians with awareness-raising materials concerning family rules for the use of mobile phones so as to ensure safe and secure Internet use by young people, potential risks behind the use of profile sites, and methods to avoid being involved in troubles and crimes on the Internet, and also provide teaching materials for guardians to cultivate media literacy on the Internet, thereby supporting various efforts at home.

(2) Support for guardians' control (parental control) in accordance with young people's developmental stage

Guardians shall be informed of methods to grasp how their children use the Internet and to control their children's Internet use at their choice (parental control) in accordance with the developmental stage of their children, such as mobile phones with functions that allow checking of their children's access history or mobile phones whose functions can be restricted.

4.. Support for research for developing and disseminating effective education methods, etc.

(1) Support for implementing effective information education

The government shall conduct research, aiming to resolve problems in implementing information education, and thereby support implementation of more effective information education.

(2) Review and promotion of effective awareness-raising activities for guardians

Information on countermeasures against troubles on the Internet shall be made available for guardians, so that they can properly control Internet use by young people. At the same time, reviews shall be promoted on effective awareness-raising activities at various chances such as at purchase of the equipment that allow access to the Internet, such as a mobile phone, PHS or personal computer.

5. Development of national movements

(1) Public announcements and awareness-raising activities for coping with problems in society as a whole

In order to prompt society as a whole to endeavor to realize an environment that provides safe and secure Internet use for young people, public announcements and awareness-raising activities shall be continued through such occasions as the "Nationwide emphasizing month to cope with youth delinquency problems."

(2) Support for voluntary activities by Internet users and business operators

As the project "Team Minus 6%," that has been promoted as a national

movement for preventing global warming, support shall be provided for the activities to further promote expansion of voluntary activities, such as Internet users and business operators' activities to voluntarily resolve to take concrete actions for the development of a better environment for Internet use, to adopt certain logos to show their intention, and to carry out their activities.

No 3 Matters concerning Measures for Improving the Performance and Disseminating the Use of Service and Software for Filtering Content Harmful to Young People

In order to reduce the chances of young people viewing content harmful to young people as much as possible, measures shall be taken to ensure business operators' performance of their obligations to provide filtering services and software, etc, further disseminate the use of filtering services and software, and enable guardians to use effective filtering service and software that allows detailed settings in accordance with the developmental stage of young people.

1. Securing business operators' thorough performance of obligations to provide filtering services and software, etc. and promoting explanations to guardians

(1) Securing thorough performance of obligations to provide filtering services and software, etc.

Business operators' obligation to provide filtering services and software, etc. shall be performed thoroughly under the Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People, and the government shall also promote measures taken by related business operators to provide filtering services or other methods to prevent young people's use of so-called online dating sites, based on the Act on Regulating Enticement of Children through Websites for Social Networking of Opposite Sexes (Act No. 83 of 2003).

In particular, efforts shall be promoted to find out if young people use mobile phones and PHSs, for which business operators shall be obliged to provide filtering services for young people, in principle, under the Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People.

(2) Promoting explanations to guardians

With regard to mobile phones, PHSs, and personal computers, through which young people generally access the Internet, efforts shall

be promoted to have guardians fully understand the details and the significance of filtering services and software.

2. Promotion of the advancement of filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs

(1) Promotion of diversification and improvement of filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs

There are not enough options for filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs, for which business operators shall be obliged to provide filtering services for young people, in principle, under the Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People. The government shall promote efforts by business operators of major mobile phones and PHSs used by many young people, so that various filtering services, from which guardians can select in accordance with their children's developmental stage, should be provided by the end of FY2009, and shall suggest further improvement if necessary.

(2) Support for efforts to make appropriate the range of viewing restricted by filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs

The government shall support efforts by private third party bodies to accredit websites that have governing structures with due consideration to protection of young people, so that information that does not fall under the category of content harmful to young people should not be made subject to restricted viewing through filtering services for mobile phones and PHSs.

3. Support for filtering service providers to grasp content to be made subject to restricted viewing

In order to help filtering service providers grasp content to be made subject to restricted viewing, support shall be provided for the Internet

Hotline Center Japan to continuously provide filtering service providers with URL information of websites reported by general users as containing harmful or illegal content.

4. Awareness-raising activities for promoting dissemination of filtering services and software

In order to further disseminate the use of filtering software, simple filtering software for personal computers shall be provided free of charge. At the same time, the government shall cooperate with local public entities, organizations that promote filtering and other awareness-raising bodies, related business operators, PTAs, and other related bodies to continue and promote awareness-raising activities.

5. Surveys on dissemination of filtering services and software, etc.

In order to contribute to the review and implementation of measures for further improving the performance and disseminating the use of filtering services and software, surveys shall be carried out continuously on young people and their guardians about their knowledge of filtering services and software, dissemination thereof, and their needs for improvement thereto, etc, and publicize the survey results.

No 4 Matters Concerning Support for Private Bodies, etc. Engaged in Activities for Appropriate Internet Use by Young People

The government shall provide financial and other support, including support for technological development, to private bodies or business operators engaged in activities for ensuring safe and secure Internet use for young people, respecting their voluntary and independent efforts as much as possible, without interfering with their judgment of harmful content and setting of standards for filtering.

1. Support for activities to allow young people to acquire skills for the appropriate utilization of the Internet

For further expansion and enhancement of education and awareness-raising activities by private bodies, their efforts in accordance with the circumstances of respective communities shall be supported by way of formulating a system to implement such activities, holding symposiums and forums, promoting the use of private bodies' Internet-use skill tests for young people, and preparing and distributing materials for awareness-raising activities.

2. Support for website operators to develop a system for measures to prevent viewing of content harmful to young people

(1) Support for developing a system such as formulating guidelines, etc.

Support shall be provided for private bodies to formulate guidelines for countermeasures against illegal and harmful content, develop a system to implement such guidelines, and provide a consultation service, in order to promote measures to prevent viewing of content harmful to young people taken voluntarily by individual or corporate website operators, bulletin board service providers, or other service providers.

(2) Support for efficient and smooth implementation of activities

For efficient and smooth implementation of business operators' countermeasures against content harmful to young people, support shall be provided for research and development of detection technology for illegal and harmful content on the Internet by the private sector, and efforts shall be promoted to share information, such as appropriate mental care for workers engaged in the detection and sorting-out of illegal and harmful content.

(3) Support for efforts for rating and zoning

Support shall be provided for efforts of private bodies that formulate the standards and implement of the so-called rating, or promote the so-called zoning to compartmentalize content harmful to young people to others on their websites, so that website operators can properly sort out content harmful to young people and users can easily and appropriately make decisions on the prevention of viewing.

3. Support for resolution of civil disputes over measures to prevent the viewing of content harmful to young people

In order to smoothly resolve troubles concerning measures to prevent the viewing of content harmful to young people, etc., review shall be made on classification of disputes and resolution thereof between website operators, content transmitters, and filtering service and software providers.

4. Support for consultation on young people's problems concerning the Internet

Support shall be provided for activities of private bodies that detect content on the Internet that is likely to be harmful to young people, or provide consultation services concerning troubles caused by Internet use

by young people, etc.

5. Support for other activities for the development of an environment for Internet use

Support shall be provided for activities for the development of an environment for Internet use by such private bodies as the Safe Internet Development Promotion Council, which promotes voluntary efforts under the cooperation between industry and academia.

No 5 Important Matters Concerning Other Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People

In order to provide safe and secure Internet use for young people, the government shall develop a system for requesting deletion of illegal and harmful content or other measures, or for consultations on damages, and promote efforts to cope with each problem such as spam mail, as well as strengthen controlling cyber crimes.

1. Promotion of controlling cyber crimes

(1) Promotion of crackdowns and strengthening of the system

The government shall promote controlling cyber crimes, such as prohibited inducement on so-called online dating sites and child pornography cases on the Internet, so as to prevent young people from suffering crime damage via the Internet, and strengthen enforcement system necessary for that purpose. Strict enforcement on cyber crime offenders should also be sought.

(2) Promotion of development of good cooperative relationships for investigation

The development of cooperative relationships with business operators, etc. should further be promoted with a view to increasing arrests of cyber crime suspects and preventing the expansion of damages.

2. Promotion of request for deletion, etc. of illegal and harmful content

(1) Promotion of request for deletion, etc. through the Internet Hotline Center

In order to promote countermeasures against illegal and harmful content that is flooding on the Internet, users shall be encouraged to

request the deletion of illegal and harmful content on the Internet through the Internet Hotline Center. At the same time, the government shall promote outsourcing of cyber patrol business to the private sector, so that more reports can be made to the Internet Hotline Center concerning illegal content on so-called online dating sites and membership websites.

(2) Support for business operators and private bodies to review effective measures to prevent viewing

In order to protect rights of young victims of child pornography on the Internet, support shall be provided for business operators and private bodies to review effective measures to prevent viewing.

3. Promotion of measures against defamation and invasion of privacy for young people

(1) Counseling service for young people

In order to make young people feel free to consult with counselors when they get damaged by defamation, etc. the government shall continue to promote several measures which include providing counseling services by hotline or on the Internet, and distributing sets of letter paper and envelope for counseling to students of elementary schools and junior high schools nationwide.

Furthermore, the government shall promote awareness raising activities to young people and their guardians on appropriate Internet use from the viewpoint of the human rights protection.

(2) Measures against defamation and invasion of privacy

With regard to consultations on defamation and invasion of privacy on the Internet, the government shall promote measures to inform victims of the ways of asking the providers, etc. to disclose the information of the sender or to delete the contents, and, if necessary, to request the providers, etc. to delete the contents.

4. Promotion of countermeasures against spam mail

(1) Steady enforcement of the law and other comprehensive measures

Regarding spam mails sent without recipient's consent about so-called dating service websites or sexually explicit sites, regulations shall be steadily enforced based on the Act on Regulation of Transmission of Specified Electronic Mail (Act No. 26 of 2002) and the Act on Specified Commercial Transactions (Act No. 57 of 1976), so that such mail should not lead young people to access illegal and harmful content. Furthermore, the government shall take comprehensive measures such as the promotion of business operators' technological countermeasures.

(2) Promotion of international cooperation

The government shall exchange information on countermeasures against spam mail with other countries, providing foreign authorities with information contributing to the enforcement of the legislation concerning spam mail if necessary, and thereby collaborate internationally in execution of laws.

(3) Dissemination activities for countermeasures against chain mail

Regarding chain mails (meaning a kind of spam mail that continues by urging receivers to pass along a chain letter by mail) that many young people receive, countermeasures, etc. shall be disseminated via the Anti-Spam Consultation Center.

5. Surveys on Japan and other countries

(1) Implementation of surveys on social impact of harmful content, etc.

Support shall be provided for industry-academia surveys on the social impact of harmful content on young people, etc.

(2) Survey on efforts in foreign countries

Survey shall be carried out on the current conditions and efforts in foreign countries which have promoted measures relating to content harmful to young people.

No. 6 Promotion System, etc.

1. Promotion system in the national government

In order to promote measures based on the Basic Plan in a comprehensive and effective manner, the Council for Promoting Measures Against Content Harmful to Young People on the Internet and Development of an Appropriate Environment shall take the initiative, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, to formulate close collaboration and cooperation among related administrative agencies and the IT Safety Council and make sufficient adjustment among various measures including "Intensive Measures Concerning Illegal and Harmful Content on the Internet" (decision by the IT Safety Council on October 15, 2007).

2. Utilization of collaboration with local public entities, guardians, business operators and private bodies, etc.

When implementing measures based on the Basic Plan, voluntary and independent efforts by guardians, business operators, and private bodies play a significant role. In light of this, the government shall endeavor to develop a system of mutual collaboration and cooperation among guardians, business operators, and private bodies, together with local public entities.

For this purpose, the government shall fully utilize the framework connecting public and private related sectors, such as the "Public-Private Working-level Roundtable on Countermeasures Against Illegal and Harmful Content," to promptly share information on urgent matters and continuously review effective measures, and shall host meetings, such as the "Nationwide Promotion Council on Safety and Security of the Internet," to strengthen collaboration among school-related bodies, PTAs, and communications-related bodies.

3. Promotion of international collaboration

In light of the characteristics of the Internet that enable the transmission and viewing of information across borders, the government shall participate in various meetings with international organizations and other related countries to actively transmit information on Japan's efforts and exchange information on other countries' activities.

Furthermore, the government shall consider efforts made for realizing international collaboration in private sector's efforts for developing a better environment for Internet use.

4. Reviews of the Basic Plan

With regard to this Basic Plan, the government shall follow up the status of implementation of concrete measures once a year, while promptly coping with new problems concerning young people's use of the Internet, whose technology and usage change rapidly. Based on the results of the follow-up, changes in social and economic circumstances, changes in the environment for Internet use by young people, and progress of measures based on the Basic Plan, the Basic Plan shall be reviewed in around three years.