

Chapter 3 Understanding the Importance of the Life and Role of the Family

Section 1 Increase Opportunities to Communicate with Infants

- The conclusions of the Central Council for Education, compiled in January 2008, propose the enhancement of guidance for the development of a rich mind and healthy body, as well as substantial experiential activities, as one of the basic concepts of the teaching guideline revision. Based on that report, in March 2008, the Kindergarten Instruction Procedure and the Elementary and Junior High School Courses of Study were revised.

Section 2 Understanding the Importance of Life and the Role of Family

- It is important to teach children at school about the declining birthrate and its effect on society, along with child-care issues and the importance of men and women cooperating together to establish a family. For this reason, education to deepen understanding of child-raising is carried out at each level of education from elementary to high school, during the classes in relevant subjects such as ethics, special activities, and comprehensive study.
- As an approach to a family and a region, a “Family Education Booklet” was created to provide tips for family education and was distributed to provide information to parents with infants or with children of elementary school age and to be utilized at learning opportunities on family education. Also, a child-raising explanatory course has been set up for junior and senior high school students as future parents, along with efforts to promote the participation of fathers in family education by carrying out meetings to study the role of the father in child-raising, while lectures are also taking place at businesses and so forth.

Section 3 Deepen Understanding of Social Structure in which Childbirth and Raising Children is Carried Out Easily

- In order to carry out a nationwide campaign to promote reform about awareness of labour management as it relates to a revision of working styles, forums and symposiums coordinated by the public and private sectors are being held and the Promotion of Public-Private Coordinated Child-raising Support project has been implemented.
- Every third Sunday of November was designated as “Family Day,” and the preceding and following week, “Family Week.” During this period, in order to strengthen ties between families and their regions and raise the awareness of the whole community, a national campaign is being developed in cooperation with local governments and related organizations. In the fiscal year 2008, the National Convention was held in Nara prefecture and the regional conventions in Gifu, Fukushima and Nagasaki prefectures.
- Through awarding prizes to businesses, organizations and/or individuals that have made remarkable achievements or provided services in support activities for persons and families taking care of children, efforts of child care support are being caused to be disseminated throughout society. In addition, with a view to contributing to building awareness that strengthens family and regional bonds, “Japan Supporting Children and Families” prize awards have been performed for persons of merit since fiscal 2008 on.