

Chapter 3 Strengthening community with multiple networks which performs childcare

Section 1 Section 1 Enhancement of Centers and Networks for Parenting Support

1. Addressing Development and Functional Enhancement of the Centers of Childcare Support in the Community

1) The visit all houses of infant‘ project (Hello Baby Project)

The ‘visit all houses of infant‘ project which supports the provision of information related to the child care by visiting all the houses with infants, and ‘the parenting support visit‘ project which carries out consultation, guidance, advice as per the visits for the households where parenting support is necessary, are promoted.

2) Promoting Establishment of Community Child Care Support Centers

The government is making efforts to promote establishment of three types of community child care support centers and utilizing the features of each type: the ‘community child care support centers project (center type)’, carrying out childcare consultations and the provision on childcare related information in the regions at nursery schools, the ‘community child care support centers project (plaza type)’, in vacant space of public facilities and stores, and the ‘community child care support centers project (children center type)’ in privatized children centers.

3) Promotion of Family Support Center

The establishment of the family support center carrying out mutual support activities such as the transportation and after school custody is promoted by considering the workers and housewives in child care of infants or primary school children.

4) Temporary Custody, Kindergarten Custody Care

(1) Implementation of Temporary Custody Project

The temporary custody project is implemented for coping up with the demands of temporary custody service for the child care during emergency in the family of full time housewife and temporary child care corresponding to the diversification of the work arrangement.

(2)Implementation of Custody Care in the Kindergarten

The support is extended to the kindergarten which deals in ‘custody care‘ for the desired persons according to the situation in the region or demand of the parents, before and after the normal training time for Kindergarten (standard 4 hours) or the during the long holiday.

5) Using Vacant Shops in the Mall, Vacant Classrooms in the School, Kindergarten

(1) Using Vacant Shops in the Mall

Using vacant store spaces at shopping streets and the establishment of places that can serve for the function of childcare support in the region and parent-child interaction are promoted

(2) Using Vacant Classrooms of Primary Schools, Junior High Schools, and the Kindergartens

The vacant classrooms can be effectively used due to high flexibility of property disposal procedures for public school establishments receiving government subsidy and the preparation of pamphlets introducing the case studies for using the vacant classrooms of the primary schools, junior high schools, and kindergartens as the places for child care support and parent interaction.

6) General Support Coordinator for Childcare

Coordination functions and services for childcare support which consist of getting a full picture of a range of activities and services to support childcare in communities including temporary custody and establishment of community childcare support centers are stipulated as the responsibility of municipalities. It aims to further promote such efforts, in 2009, in order to train coordinators, etc. to support the child care of parents, and the business for staff training to support the development of the next generation was founded.

2. Promoting use of residents power, support of private organizations, intergenerational exchange

1) Supporting Community Childcare Activity like NPO Activity

The training of ‘child care supporter leader’ who measures the improvement in the quality for ‘child care supporter’ distributed all across the country corresponding to the child care consultation, is carried out and consulting system related to child care is enhanced.

2) Using Manpower and Intergenerational Exchange of Retired and Elderly People in the Area

The Silver Human Resources Center implements the ‘project of the child care using the elderly people’ for supporting the infants care and transportation to the child care facility, and learning and daily life guidance for the after school and weekends for the school children.

3) Supporting Childcare by the Company Participation

With the cooperation of the companies, local public entities promotes the initiatives for “Childcare support program with company participation” and “Childcare support program through cooperation and collaboration between companies and NPOs”

Section 2 Aiming for children to live safely and securely in houses and towns

1. Ensuring the security of housing and living environment that is suitable for raising children

1) Support for home ownership through housing loans and tax system

To facilitate the acquisition of high-quality home ownership, interest rates of housing loans whose durability and variability, etc. are especially high have been lowered by the support scheme to facilitate for acquiring high-quality housing of Securitization Support Business of Japan Housing Finance Agency. In addition, taxation measures of housing loans deduction have been taken.

2) Promoting supply of high-quality rental housing for families

To promote integrally various measures for households raising children, such as precise supply of public rental housing and support of smooth occupancy to private rental housing, the government is driving forward the supply of high-quality rental housing for families.

3) Ensuring the stability of residence through the effective use of public rental housing stock

Child-rearing households are given preferential treatment when they settle in public rental housing according to the discretion and judgment of housing operators.

4) Promotion of integral development of public rental housing and childcare support facilities

For leading efforts to contribute to the stable supply of residence of child-rearing household and childcare, the government has been supporting integrally developing projects, facilities for public rental housing and childcare support, along with the features in principle social welfare facilities during the reconstruction of large public rental housing.

5) Promotion of residence in the cities

In order to support child-rearing households living close by jobs in the city center, housing supply in city centers and urban areas is induced and promoted.

2. Promoting barrier-free childcare for safe and peaceful living

1) Promoting barrier-free childcare

(1) Promotion of barrier-free measures that take into account the concept of universal design

Based on the ‘The Act for Improving Easily Accessible Transportation and Facilities for the Elderly and Disabled’, the need for education and training to perform maintenance and facilities that meet the needs of the parties concerned was established in "Basic Policy on Promotion of Smooth Movement"

(2) Promotion of barrier-free buildings

Barrier-free buildings are being promoted through imposition of conformity obligations for building standards on owners, when attempting to make changes, such as new construction, renovation, and applications for buildings over a certain size that are used by an unspecified number of persons.

(3) Promotion of barrier-free public transportation

The promotion of barrier-free public transportation is achieved by a variety of auxiliary aid, with promotion measures such as the introduction of low-floor bus in the bus fleet vans and elimination of stairs in passenger facilities.

(4) Promotion of barrier-free adaptations in urban parks , riversides and others

The development of urban parks, locations for health exercise and recreation, and places for all people to rest and communicate, while considering children, pregnant women, and people with children, is being promoted through comprehensive social infrastructure improvement grants.

2) Development of Road Traffic Environment

For the community roads, the development of the signals by the prefectural public safety commission, preparing compact intersections are implemented so that pregnant women, children and the persons accompanying children can pass through safely and securely. The efforts are taken for the development of pedestrian roads, and the control of entry and speed in the traffic.

3) Promotion of Traffic Safety Education

The traffic safety education, suitable for their developmental stage, is promoted for infants and primary, secondary, high school children in coordination and cooperation of households and related institutions, organizations etc. In addition, correct use of child seats, safe bike riding with two children, are also addressed.

4) Promotion of making things by children's views (Promotion of Kids Design)

The development and dissemination of "Kids design," a design that aims to create living conditions that lead to healthy growth and development of children's safety and security are being promoted.