

Table 14 Major Policies under the “New Child Plan” (2003)

Outline

Taking the opportunity of the full-scale implementation of the 5-day school week system in 2002, the “New Child Plan” has been developed to promote measures beneficial to continuously increasing interactive learning opportunities for children with cooperation from relevant ministries and agencies, with due consideration to the achievements under the “National Child Plan (3-year Urgent Strategy),” which aimed to improve community environments for child-care in the three years from 1999 to 2001.

<p>Develop frameworks for experience-based activities and provide information in communities</p>	<p>Provide More Opportunities for Various Activities in Communities For Children</p>	<p>Provide More Opportunities to Learn Home Education and Develop a Consultation System</p>
<p>Improve promotional systems to develop communities' educational ability and facilitate experience-based activities</p> <p>(National Level) National Committee for the Promotion of Interactive Learning Opportunities and Volunteer Activities National General Promotion Center for Interactive Learning Opportunities and Volunteer Activities (Prefectural/Municipal Level) Local Committee for the Promotion of Communities' Educational Ability and Interactive Learning Experiences Support Center for Interactive Learning Experiences and Volunteer Activities</p>	<p>Support Projects for Extracurricular Activities (weekend activities)</p> <p>Promote model projects to develop local educational abilities that are appropriate for each community through weekend activities by the effective use of local human resources, including athletic trainers, university students, and senior citizens. (Examples) “Program to Recreate Children's Places” at schools, social education facilities, and natural environments in communities “Community Interaction Support Program” such as exchanges with local residents by commuting camps and exchanges with seniors “Weekend School at Special Training School” program, using the professional skills of advanced technology schools. “Model Program to Facilitate Sports Activities After School” at gymnasiums, school grounds and athletic grounds.</p>	<p>Nation-wide Implementation of Educational Programs on Child-rearing (Enhanced)</p> <p>Improve classes on home education for parents of adolescent children and implement, on a nationwide scale, child-rearing classes for parents in the pregnancy period as well as such classes on the occasion of health examination for children starting school.</p>
<p>Child Center</p> <p>Establish “child centers” at municipal level, to provide information on various interactive learning opportunities and home education, with cooperation from both the public and private sectors in various fields in the community</p>	<p>Program to Promote Long-term Experience Activities of Using Foreign Languages (New)</p> <p>Provide children with opportunities to live with foreign people for a long period so that they will acquire the ability to communicate in foreign languages and an international outlook.</p>	<p>Project for the Active Use of Science Museum for Education</p> <p>Facilitate communities' learning activities and promote functions of regional museums to prevent and eliminate science & technology phobia, by making effective use of educational functions of museums, for example, working experiences at the museums and the development of learning programs through the joint studies with curators (museum attendants) and teachers.</p>
<p>Campaign for Improving Physical Fitness (New)</p> <p>Implement various comprehensive measures to improve physical fitness among children, including nation-wide campaigns.</p>	<p>Program to Promote Long-term Nature Experience Activities for Youths</p> <p>Promote nature experience activities with students of different age groups working together for about 2 weeks, mainly during the summer holidays, in outdoor activity facilities and farmhouses.</p>	<p>Traditional Culture Classes for Kids (New)</p> <p>Provide children with opportunities to experience and acquire skills of traditional Japanese cultures such as tea ceremonies, flower arrangement, dance and music in a planned and continuous manner on weekends, mainly at schools and cultural facilities.</p>
<p>Child Broadcast Station</p> <p>Broadcast participatory programs to children nationwide on Saturday, now official play day, with the help of a satellite communication system (ELNET), which enables two-way communication at local libraries, public halls, museums and other facilities where children gather</p>	<p>Program to Support Cultural Experiences</p> <p>Provide opportunities to appreciate and experience various aspects of culture on various occasions</p>	<p>Program to Promote Experience-based Environment Learning in Cooperation with Relevant Ministries and Departments</p> <p>Promote model projects that children themselves plan and carry out work-studies in a continuous basis under themes related to regional environments, in association with relevant ministries and departments. Interactive environment learning experiences around rivers (In cooperation with Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation, and Ministry of Environment) Interactive environment learning experiences at fishing ports (Fisheries Agency) Interactive environment learning experiences at agricultural irrigation channels (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) Interactive environment learning experiences in forests (Forestry Agency) Interactive environment learning experiences through exchange activities between urban and rural communities and farming experiences (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) Interactive environment learning experiences in local companies and stores (Small and Medium Enterprises Agency) Interactive environment learning experiences in national parks (Ministry of Environment)</p>
<p>Production of TV Programs on Science</p> <p>Produce TV programs to talk about science and technology in plain language to the general household via CS broadcasting</p>	<p>Kid's Dream Fund</p> <p>Grants to various experience-based activities programmed by private bodies, such as “support projects for interactive learning experiences” and “reading support projects for kids”</p>	<p>Improvement of the Child-rearing Support Network (Enhanced)</p> <p>Promote the establishment of child-rearing support networks in communities, by increasing “child-rearing supporters” to provide detailed advice and consultation for parents who have problems in rearing and disciplining their children.</p>
		<p>New Home Education Handbook (New)</p> <p>Revise and distribute a “home education handbook” and “home education notebook,” which help give parents other ways to look at their family life and raise child(ren) with confidence.</p>
		<p>Supports for Exchanges among Child-rearing Groups</p> <p>Hold research meetings at national level, to encourage information and opinion exchange on regional efforts, targeting child-rearing group leaders who support parents in raising children.</p>
	<p>National Facilities for Youth Education</p> <p>Provide opportunities and places to engage in various activities at national facilities for youth education, such as communal (group) living in rich natural environments and nature experience activities.</p>	