Section 1 Measures for each kind of difficult situation

1 Support for children and young people who are NEET, socially withdrawn or truant.

(1) Measures for the local community to provide support for children and young people having difficulties in their social lives

- The Cabinet Office is promoting the establishment of Regional Councils for Youth Support and conducting research on various types of training and support, including visiting support (outreach) training.
- The National Institution for Youth Education is carrying out various programs for children and young people who are NEET, socially withdrawn or truant.

(2) Support for young people who are NEET

- MHLW is promoting the establishment of “Regional Youth Support Stations.” In the FY 2012 supplementary budget, the development of Regional Youth Support Stations was added to the projects to be funded by the Emergency Fund for Human Resource Development and Employment Support. MHLW is planning to establish more Support Stations (currently there are 160 stations, 44 more than the previous year) by the end of 2013. It will also provide support for high school dropouts to begin to study again through the development of a new network with schools, active outreach (visiting support), and prevention of the “cycle of poverty.” Moreover, it will provide the “Intensive Training Program for Non-Employed Youth,” which provides intensive support for their lives, including residential training courses, and on-the-job training and acquisition of certifications in order for them to obtain basic abilities needed to recover self-confidence and obtain employment, and to acquire basic certifications (Figure 10).

Figure 10 Regional Youth Support Station Project (FY 2012 supplementary budget)

Source: Material provided by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

42 Article 19 of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People imposes the obligation to make efforts to establish such councils in local governments.

43 The national government and local governments are supposed to make efforts to take necessary measures to train personnel, improve their skills and develop the system under Article 18 of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People.

44 http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/nouryoku/ys-station/
Refer to the NEET Support Net list for contact information for Support Stations across the country:
http://www.neet-support.net/about/supportstation_4.html
3) Support for social withdrawal (“hikikomori”)
   - MHLW is distributing the “Guidelines for Evaluation and Support for Social Withdrawal” to the institutions concerned. In collaboration with these institutions, it is also promoting the development of the “Hikikomori Regional Support Centers,” which function as professional consultation centers for those suffering from social withdrawal. In 2013, MHLW will implement a new program in which prefectural governments and designated municipal governments train “Hikikomori Supporters” and municipalities dispatch these Supporters to those suffering from social withdrawal and their families. Hikikomori Supporters try to find young people suffering from social withdrawal living in the community at an early stage and continuously visit them, in order to provide fine-tuned support for them and their families.

4) Support for children and young people who do not attend school
   - MEXT is conducting a follow-up survey to gain an understanding of the situations of the students who have a record of truancy. In 2012, it commissioned local governments and private organizations to tentatively take measures that support prevention of, early detection of and prompt responses to truancy and measures to promote collaboration among institutions that are able to deal with truancy. MEXT has also disseminated the results.
   - Education support centers (adaptive guiding classes), which have been established by prefectural and municipal school boards, are providing educational guidance based on the situations of truant children while keeping in touch with the school where the children are registered.

5) Dealing with mental problems
   - MEXT is promoting health guidance given by school nursing staff and relevant teachers and expanding the distribution of school counselors and school social workers.
   - MHLW has added the “Comprehensive Website on Everyone’s Mental Health” and “Let’s Maintain Your Mind — Mental Health Site to Support Young People” to its website. The former contains descriptions of mental disorders and illnesses and the presentations about various kinds of support services. The latter explains to teenagers and people in their 20s as well as those around them (family members and teachers) what to do when they notice they have mental health issues.

6) Support for high school dropouts
   - In 2012, the Cabinet Office conducted a survey of the family members of young people who have difficulties, including high school dropouts.
   - MEXT has gained insight into the situations of high school dropouts and published it in the report “Survey on Various Issues Related to Giving Guidance to Students Such as Students’ Problematic Behavior.”
   - MHLW is implementing the Support Station-School Collaboration Program. In this program, Support Stations, schools and Hello Work share information on high school dropouts and Support Stations actively provides visiting support (outreach) for those in need of support, thus providing fine-tuned support.

2 Providing support for disabled children and young people

1) Support for disabled children and young people
   (Promotion of special needs education)
   - MEXT is taking the following measures:
     - It subsidizes part of the expenses of support provided in cooperation with the institutions concerned or by expert teams.
     - It takes local financial measures to assign Special Needs Education Supporters to public kindergartens, elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools. It also subsidizes part of that expense for private schools.

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45 Visit the following Web page for contact information for Hikikomori Regional Support Centers
http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/eki/infra/s05/hikikomori05.pdf
46 http://www.mhlw.go.jp/kokoro/
47 http://www.mhlw.go.jp/kokoro/youth/
48 http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/toukei/chousa01/shidou/1267646.htm

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• It promotes research on and dissemination of specified books used as textbooks, teaching materials and supporting skills for them according to the nature of children’s disabilities, developmental stages and the nature of the subjects to be studied, pursuant to the Act on Promotion of Distribution of Specified Books, etc. Used as Textbooks for Disabled Children and Students.

In 2013, in accordance with the revised Disabled Persons Fundamental Law, MEXT will start to distribute the Early Support Coordinators and Collaborators for Rational Consideration and will develop a database in an effort to establish an inclusive education system.

(Support for attending special needs education)
- MEXT and local governments are providing grant-in-aid for school attendance for the guardians of children who attend a special needs school or a special needs class depending on their ability to pay tuition.

(Exchange and joint learning among disabled children, able-bodied children and people in the community)
- In order to further promote exchange and joint learning between disabled children and able-bodied children, MEXT has published “Examples of Exchange and Joint Learning” and posted “Exchange and Joint Learning Guide” on its website.
- The National Institute of Special Needs Education holds the “Workshop for Promoting Joint Activities and Learning” designed for elementary school and junior high school teachers in order to communicate and disseminate concrete plans for exchange and joint learning.

(Providing appropriate welfare services that take the characteristics of disabilities into consideration)
- Based on the Child Welfare Act and the Act on Comprehensive Support for Persons with Disabilities, municipalities provide necessary welfare services such as day care centers for disabled children and home care services. In addition, after the partly revised Services and Supports for Persons with Disabilities Act came into force, facilities for disabled children that had previously been classified by type of disability were unified. These facilities are striving to give disabled children appropriate support at a place close to them and to provide them with professional support according to their ages and the characteristics of their disabilities.

(2) Support for children and young people with developmental disabilities

(Strengthening the regional support system centered around “Support Centers for Persons with Developmental Disabilities”)
- MHLW is promoting counseling support for people with developmental disabilities and their families under the Act on Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities. Specifically, it is taking the following measures:
  • Prefectural governments and designated municipal governments are working to train Parent Mentors, to distribute the personnel who manage their activities and to hold workshops to promote the introduction of assessment tools.
  • Special workers who have an understanding of developmental disabilities go around facilities and places (such as nursery schools) where children and their parents gather and give them advice. In 2012, more municipalities conducted this kind of program.
  • MHLW has collected information on the visionary activities of some municipalities, published them in a manual and a program and distributed them across the country to promote these activities.

49 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/tokubetu/010/001.htm
50 http://www.nise.go.jp/
51 As of FY 2012, every prefecture and designated city has this kind of facility.
53 Those who have a child with developmental disabilities and, by taking advantage of their experience, give advice to parents whose child has been recently diagnosed with developmental disabilities.
54 A check sheet to discover developmental disabilities at an early stage and to assess the progression of the students’ condition
• It is promoting the dissemination of the information and support methods of the Information and Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, which is the central hub of the Support Centers for Persons with Developmental Disabilities throughout the country.

(Developing a support system at schools)
- In 2013, MEXT will begin to hold seminars to improve teachers’ expertise in developmental disabilities and will develop training programs.
- The Information Center of Education for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, a branch of the National Institute of Special Needs Education, provides educational information on developmental disabilities for school teachers and guardians to be able to gain a correct understanding of developmental disabilities. The center also provides teachers with many types of training.

(3) Support for the employment of the disabled
- The legally mandated employment rate of the disabled, which is based on the Act on Employment Promotion etc., of Persons with Disabilities, was raised to 2.0% (from 1.8%) in April 2013 in order to further increase the employment of the disabled.
- In order to achieve an increase in the employment rate of the disabled, MHLW has given Hello Work strict guidance. It is also providing the following types of support: “Team Support” to provide, in collaboration with the institutions concerned, consistent support for the disabled to get used to a new job after obtaining employment; “Employment Change Support” to provide support for the disabled to obtain ordinary work under the Act on Comprehensive Support for Persons with Disabilities; and “Employment Continuation Support” to offer employment to the disabled who are not capable of doing ordinary work.

3 Providing support for children and young people who have fallen into delinquency or committed a crime

(1) General measures
(Collaboration among the relevant ministries)
- In order to facilitate good communication, exchange of information and discussion regarding the measures against delinquency, the government has established the Directors Conference on Measures against Youth Delinquency under management of the Headquarters for Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People.

(Collaboration among families, schools and the community)
- The National Police Agency and MEXT have established “Support Teams,” in which relevant institutions appropriately divide their roles and jointly deal with problems. In order to effectively operate the Support Teams, the Support Teams and regional police bureaus jointly hold “Block Conferences for Collaboration to Deal with Problem Behavior.”
- Every prefecture has School-Police Liaison Councils under the jurisdiction of police stations or municipalities.
- Many communities have a “School-Police Communication System” to inform each other of juvenile delinquents.
- The police have stationed retired police officers at police stations as “school supporters” and dispatch them to schools when requested.
- The “Rehabilitation Support Center,” where juvenile probation officers reside, cooperates with various institutions and organizations to provide support for young people on probation to reform, to hold seminars to prevent delinquency and to give residents counseling about delinquency.

(2) Prevention of delinquency, counseling activities
(Creating a society that does not produce delinquents)
- The police are promoting efforts to “Create a Society that Does not Produce Delinquents”

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55 http://www.rehab.go.jp/ddis/
56 http://iceedd.nise.go.jp/
57 In this paragraph, “juveniles” refers to “those who are under the age of 20” as stipulated in Article 2 of the Juvenile Act
58 http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/suisin/hikou.html
throughout the country.

(Delinquency prevention classes)
- The police hold delinquency prevention classes by dispatching officers to schools or in cooperation with volunteer youth officers.
- MEXT holds delinquency prevention classes in collaboration with the institutions concerned, in order to cultivate norm consciousness and to prevent children from falling into delinquency.
- The Ministry of Justice has formulated the “Action Plan to Support Junior High School Students.” Under this plan, juvenile probation officers (those in charge of working with schools) directly visit junior high schools to teach delinquency prevention classes about delinquency or drug abuse or to provide teachers with individual counseling about how to give guidance to troubled children.

(Counseling activities)
- Youth Centers are institutions that conduct counseling and other activities with the goal of developing youth. They are operated under names such as Youth Guidance Centers and Youth Development Centers. They perform counseling activities, street guidance and they help improve harmful environments.
- The police are working to create an accessible counseling desk that can be reached by fax, e-mail and a toll-free number (its telephone counseling service is called Young Telephone Corner).59
- Through the Ministry of Justice, counseling is given by Civil Rights Commissioners and staff members of Regional Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus. Detention homes60 also provide counseling for teaching staff and the public who are worried about juvenile delinquency.

(Guidance activities)
- Police-sponsored “Youth Support Centers” conduct guidance activities on a daily basis, mainly in areas where delinquency often takes place, in order to uncover delinquency or other problematic behaviors at an early stage and to give appropriate advice and guidance to delinquent young people and their families. In addition, volunteer youth officers are commissioned by the police to conduct guidance activities and help improve the social environment.
- Juvenile officers at Youth Centers also are commissioned by municipalities to conduct street guidance and help improve the social environment.

(Measures against delinquent groups)
- The police have strengthened the collaboration among the youth divisions, traffic divisions and detective divisions to come to a full understanding of the situations of delinquent groups and to launch strict crackdowns.

(3) Prevention of drug abuse
- The National Police Agency is striving to block the supply of drugs by carrying out wholesale arrests of abusers of controlled substances and by strengthening border control in collaboration with the relevant agencies. It also holds drug abuse prevention classes to root out the demand for drugs.
- Since 2012, at reformatories, the Ministry of Justice has been implementing a correctional education program intended for young people who have experienced dependence on a drug or drug abuse. Detective divisions provide guidance help to break dependence on drugs61 for

59 http://www.npa.go.jp/higaisya/shien/torikumi/madoguchi.htm
60 Facilities mainly intended to accommodate children who are sent from a family court to be placed under protective detention and to have their disposition judged
61 It is intended to cause these prisoners to understand their dependence on drugs and related challenges, to determine to live without using drugs, and to work out
prisoners who are dependent on narcotic drugs or stimulant drugs. Probation offices conduct simple drug tests for those on probation and has a drug offender treatment program based on cognitive behavior therapy.

- In collaboration with MHLW and the NPA, MEXT holds drug abuse prevention classes at elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools. It also has created and distributed educational materials regarding the prevention of drug abuse in collaboration with MHLW.
- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is taking the following measures: strengthening the crackdown on drug trafficking over the Internet and drug trafficking by foreigners; improving counseling regarding the prevention of drug abuse and drug dependence in communities; improving medical institutions’ activities; providing counseling programs and family classes for drug addicts and their families; requesting that prefectural pharmaceutical administrations, the Japan Pharmaceutical Association, and prefectural pharmacist associations put up posters and distribute brochures; and setting up the “Suspicious Drugs Notification Network” in order to collect and provide information in a unified way.

(4) Juvenile trials

(Acceptance of new cases)

- In 2012, family courts throughout the nation accepted cases for 132,142 juveniles in new juvenile protection cases (Figure 11).

(Processing)

- 22,614 juveniles were put on probation: 11,959 juveniles in ordinary cases (52.9%) and 10,655 juveniles in traffic cases (47.1%).
- 270 juveniles were referred to children’s self-reliance support facilities or children’s homes.62
- 3,528 juveniles were referred to reformatories.
- 3,418 juveniles were referred to the public prosecutor as their cases are appropriate for criminal punishment,
- 181 juveniles were referred to the prefectural governor or the head of a child consultation center.63
- Judges and inspectors at family courts give advice to juvenile delinquents based on their problems to prevent recommitment during the investigation or trial even if there is no need for a trial or protective custody (Figure 12).

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62 They are referred to children’s self-reliance support facilities. (Children who have engaged in delinquent behavior or may engage in it are placed in the facility or commute to the facility from their guardian’s home. They are given necessary guidance to assist them in their independence.). Most of them are children aged 15 or under.

63 Their treatments are entrusted to children’s welfare institutions. Like the cases referred to children’s self-reliance support facilities, most of the children are aged 15 or under and the number of such children per year is small.

76
Figure 11 Number of juveniles in new juvenile protection cases (Percentage of each kind of delinquency in 2012)

- Violation of a special law excluding road traffic cases: 8,569 juveniles (6.5%)
- Violation of a special law other: 4,270 juveniles (3.2%)
- Violation of the Poisonous and Deleterious Substances Control Law: 171 juveniles (0.1%)
- Minor offense: 4,157 juveniles (3.1%)

Total number: 132,142 juveniles

Criminal offenses: 97,474 juveniles (73.8%)
- Theft: 43,267 juveniles (32.7%)
- Embezzlement: 11,978 juveniles (9.1%)
- Injurious assault: 5,921 juveniles (4.5%)
- Professional (gross) negligence resulting in death and/or injury: 22,892 juveniles (17.3%)

Other criminal offenses: 13,416 juveniles (10.2%)

Minor offense: 4,157 juveniles (3.1%)

Violation of the Poisonous and Deleterious Substances Control Law: 142 juveniles (0.1%)

Violation of a special law excluding road traffic cases: 8,569 juveniles (6.5%)

Figure 12 Processing of juvenile protection cases (Percentage of each kind of final decision in 2012)

- Referred to the public prosecutor: 64,612 juveniles (48.8%)
- Discharge: 23,001 juveniles (16.8%)
- Non-prosecution: 64,612 juveniles (48.8%)
- Transfer, return: 7,210 juveniles (5.3%)
- Probation: 22,614 juveniles (16.5%)
- Protective measures: 26,412 juveniles (19.2%)

Total number: 137,301 juveniles

Note 1: Professional (gross) negligence resulting in death and/or injury includes professional (gross, vehicular) negligence resulting in death and/or injury and dangerous driving resulting in death or injury.
2: Because the percentages were rounded to one decimal place, the totals and sub-totals may not agree with the numbers given by adding individual numbers.
3: These figures are preliminary.

(5) Consideration for victims
(Various systems and measures to provide information for victims)

- The police try to provide victims with as much information on the state of the investigation as possible.

62 They are referred to children’s self-reliance support facilities. (Children who have engaged in delinquent behavior or may engage in it are placed in the facility or commute to the facility from their guardian’s house. They are given necessary guidance to assist them in their independence.). Most of them are children aged 15 or under.

63 Their treatments are entrusted to children’s welfare institutions. Like the cases referred to children’s self-reliance support facilities, most of the children are aged 15 or under and the number of such children per year is small.

- The Ministry of Justice is taking the following measures:
  • Public Prosecutor’s Offices across the nation provide victims with information on the results of their cases.
  • Reformatories, District Offenders Rehabilitation Commissions and probation offices provide information on the treatment of juvenile assailants and examination of their provisional release.
  • Public Prosecutor’s Offices, District Offenders Rehabilitation Commissions and probation offices provide information regarding juveniles who are subject to criminal punishment. The information includes the following: the results of the handling of the case, the results of the trial, the treatment of the assailant while the assailant is serving the sentence, information on the parole hearing and treatment of the assailant during probation.
  • Under the Offenders Rehabilitation Law, the following two systems are in use: the District Offenders Rehabilitation Commission hears the views of victims when the provisional release of a juvenile from a reformatory is being examined or the release on parole of a juvenile who has undergone criminal punishment is being examined. Probation offices deliver victims’ feelings to juvenile assailants on probation (including those who have undergone criminal punishment).
Family courts try to appropriately manage the system for victims under the Juvenile Act. They also try to take victims’ views into consideration during juvenile trials.

(Proper treatment of assailants based on victims’ feelings)
- Reformatories and juvenile prisons try to improve correctional education and guidance for reforms so that “education taking victims’ views into account” will be provided deliberately and systematically.
- When on probation, a juvenile delinquent is given advice and guidance in order to be able to face his crime, to understand the victim’s feelings and how serious his crime was, and to respond to the victim in a sincere manner.

(6) Detention homes
- A detention home mainly accommodates juveniles whom a family court has decided to place under protective detention and judges their disposition. The result of its judgment is sent to family court as a statement of the results of the judgment and is used as evidence in a trial. When protective measures have been decided, the resulting decision is sent to the reformatory and probation office to be used as a reference during treatment.

(7) Reformatories and children’s self-reliance support facilities

(Reformatories and juvenile prisons)
- Reformatories create an individual treatment plan for each juvenile by consulting the information from and views of the detention home and family court in order to provide effective education.
- Juvenile prisons designate a person to be in charge of an individual juvenile. They give individual guidance such as through diary writing and interviews. This way the facilities take remedial measures based on each juvenile prisoner’s character.

(MHLW is working to secure and improve the quality of children’s self-reliance support facilities based on the Operating Policy for Children’s Self-Reliance Support Facilities.)

(8) Rehabilitation, support for self-reliance and reform

(Provisional release from a reformatory, release on parole from a juvenile prison)
- Probation offices make efforts to improve the system for juveniles being released by taking care of the juveniles released from these facilities in terms of their relationships with guarantors and employment after release.

(Probation)
- When delinquents on probation have difficult problems, their probation officers become more deeply involved in their cases and give them intensive support. Numata Employment Support Center in Numata-cho, Uryu District, Hokkaido mainly provides juveniles who have been provisionally released from a reformatory with accommodations and puts them on strict probation. The center has them attend agricultural training on a farm operated by the town in order to promote their reform and rehabilitation.

(Improvement and diversification of treatment)
- The Ministry of Justice is making efforts to properly and smoothly take protective measures by examining the examples at reformatories and institutions for treatment and by holding meetings with relevant institutions.
- Juveniles on probation who lack social skills will participate in social activities to develop a

64 In order to treat victims with further consideration, the Juvenile Act provides the following services: 1) Victims are allowed to read and copy the records; 2) Hearings for a victim’s opinions are held when requested; 3) The victims are informed of the judgment; 4) Victims of serious crimes are allowed to attend juvenile trials; and 5) The status of the proceedings is explained to victims.

65 The kinds of judgment include the following types: “Detention judgment,” which is conducted while detaining the juvenile as mentioned above; “Home judgment” conducted upon the request of a family court while the juvenile is not detained; “Requested judgment” conducted upon the request of an institution related to the Ministry of Justice, such as a reformatory, a detective division, or a probation office; and “General juvenile judgment” conducted upon the request of a resident in the community, a school or a company.

http://www.moj.go.jp/kyousei1/kyousei_kyouse06.html


healthy social consciousness. They will also help look after other people at a welfare facility or clean up public places. When they do useful things for society like these activities, they can improve their feelings of self-worth, norm consciousness and social development.

(9) Employment support for juvenile delinquents

- Reformatories and juvenile prisons are taking measures for juvenile prisoners to acquire appropriate attitudes toward work and increase their willingness to work. They are encouraged to obtain various types of certifications. These institutions also provide them with employment support in collaboration with Hello Work.
- In cooperation with correctional institutions, families and schools, probation offices are working to find and secure employment for the released juveniles. Some probation offices have implemented the “Model Program for Support for Rehabilitation Employment,” in which experts provide them with continuous and fine-tuned support. In 2013, probation offices are making efforts to expand employment opportunities offered by cooperative employers and to develop and ensure the availability of social firms (companies and organizations that run their businesses mainly aiming to create and provide employment for people who are in a disadvantaged position in the labor market).
- In collaboration with reformatories, juvenile prisons and probation offices, Hello Work provides juveniles who have been released, are going to be released or are on probation with employment support such as employment counseling, job placement seminars, company tours, visits to workplaces, and trial employment.
- MHLW is working to improve “Independence Support Homes” (program to provide support for young people leading an independent life). The program provides young people who have been released from a rehabilitation facility with support for their daily life and employment.

(10) Measures against bullying and violence

- In order to further promote collaboration between schools and the police, on November 2, 2012, MEXT issued a notice, “About consulting with or reporting to the police bullying cases for which it is considered necessary to treat them as crimes (notice)” to the chairs of the school boards of prefectures and designated cities, prefectural governors, and presidents of national universities that have attached schools. The notice was intended to make the following three points known to all parties:
  - When it is considered necessary for a bullying case to be treated as a crime, it is important for the school to inform the police of the case promptly without hesitation and to collaborate with the police to deal with the case in order to fully protect the bullied child.
  - If a bullied child’s life or limb is threatened, it is essential to immediately inform the police of the case.
  - It is important to inform guardians and help them understand the response made by the school in cases where it is considered necessary for a certain act to be treated as a crime at school.

MEXT issued a notice that set forth points to consider when promoting collaboration and cooperation with the police, based on “About appropriate responses to bullying problems at school,” a notice issued by the police in January 2013 (described later).

- The police are striving to detect bullying at an early stage through giving youth counseling and sending School Supporters to schools in close cooperation with schools. In January 2013, the National Police Agency sent a notice “About appropriate responses to bullying problems at school” to the prefectural police in each prefecture in order to promote appropriate responses to bullying problems at school. They are also working to detect school violence at an early stage, to take appropriate measures and to prevent recurrence in cooperation with schools.

68 Refer to Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 3, 2 “Fostering a variety of responsible people in communities.”
69 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/seitoushido/1327861.htm
70 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/seitoushido/1331896.htm
4 Dealing with the problem of child poverty

(1) Support for families in economic difficulties
(2) Support for single-parent families
   ○ Under the Act on Welfare of Mothers with Dependents and Widows, MHLW is implementing comprehensive measures to support self-reliance, including support for child rearing, livelihood support, employment support, support for childcare expenses and other economic support. In addition, it is strengthening measures concerning support for the employment of mothers of fatherless households and fathers of motherless households and is also requesting the cooperation of private businesses under the Act on Special Measures concerning Support for Employment of Mothers in Fatherless Households and Fathers in Motherless Households, which came into force in March 2013.

(3) Breaking the cycle of poverty across generations
   ○ MHLW is conducting the “Learning Support Volunteer Program,” which sends college student volunteers to single-parent households to provide learning support for children and counseling on their future. In FY 2013, aiming to break the cycle of poverty, MHLW will implement a model project to help needy people by providing them with comprehensive counseling support, various kinds of employment support and livelihood support. The Cabinet has also introduced on a bill to support the self-reliance of needy people and a bill to amend part of the Livelihood Protection Act and submitted them to the Diet in order to institutionalize new measures for employment support and self-reliance support for needy people and to reform the livelihood protection system.
   ○ The Cabinet Office released the “Survey on Attitudes toward Life of Parents and Children” in May 2012. As an analysis, the survey compared those who are classified as belonging to the “relatively poor class” with those who do not.

(4) Understanding the situation
   ○ MHLW has an understanding of the relative poverty rate of children due to the Comprehensive Survey of the Living Conditions, Health and Welfare of the People.

5 Creating places for children and young people in difficulties

6 Support for the children and young people who need special consideration, including foreigners

(1) Promoting measures based on the “Action Program on Measures for Permanent Foreign Residents of Japanese Ancestry”
   ○ The government is promoting measures in each area in collaboration with the relevant ministries based on the “Action Program on Measures for Permanent Foreign Residents of Japanese Ancestry.”

(2) Improving education for foreign children
   ○ When public schools accept foreign children, MEXT assigns additional Japanese-language teachers to those schools and gives practical training to these Japanese-language teachers.

(3) Promoting the employment of young permanent foreign residents
   ○ Hello Work holds informational sessions on employment support for foreigners of Japanese ancestry and provides them with individual employment support.

(4) Measures for people with a gender identity disorder
   ○ The Human Rights Organs of the Ministry of Justice (Civil Liberties Bureau, Regional Legal Affairs Bureaus, District Legal Affairs Bureaus and their branch offices, and Civil Rights Commissioners) are conducting a campaign under this year’s slogan: “Eliminate discrimination based on gender identity disorders.”

73 http://www8.cao.go.jp/teiju/index.html
74 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/003.htm
MEXT is requesting that the parties concerned give due consideration to children with a gender identity disorder when providing educational counseling.

(5) Providing support for teenage parents

- MHLW gave a grant for pregnancy checkups until FY 2012 so that pregnant women could have necessary checkups (around 14 times). From FY 2013, the grant-in-aid will become the responsibility of local government bodies, and this will be a permanent system. MHLW also provides young people who are worried about pregnancy or childbirth with support through maternal and child health projects and with counseling through a project of the Women’s Health Support Center.

Section 2 Protecting Children and Young People from being hurt

1 Measures against child abuse

(1) Developing measures against child abuse

(Precautions)

- MHLW is promoting the development of a user-friendly counseling system by implementing the following measures.
  - Home Visiting Services for All Families with Infants (Hello Baby Project): Health care workers visit all families with a baby four months old or younger in order to become familiar with the child care environment in those homes and to provide information and counseling to relieve parents’ anxieties and worries.
  - Home Visiting Services for Childcare Support: Public health nurses, midwives, or childcare workers visit the families that sorely need childcare support to give them counseling, guidance or advice.
  - Project on Community Centers for Child Rearing: This project provides parents and their young children with counseling and places for mingling.

In November 2012, MHLW notified local governments of matters for municipalities and the Local Councils for Children in Need of Protective Care to consider when getting to know and giving support to the families that sorely need childcare support as well as matters to consider regarding the promotion of collaboration with medical institutions.

- In order to alleviate guardians’ anxieties about child rearing and to prevent them from becoming isolated from the community, MEXT is providing support for the following activities: taking advantage of the opportunity provided by medical examinations performed before students enroll in school to hold parenting classes in the community; providing opportunities to learn about home education; and giving counseling through home education support teams.

(Early detection, quick response, and protection)

- MHLW is promoting the following measures: ensuring reporting of child abuse, securing child welfare commissioners to strengthen the system of child consultation centers; strengthening the municipal systems; and providing training to develop expertise and sharing know-how regarding child abuse.
  - In FY 2013, MHLW provided funds for a program to strengthen the system for checking on the safety of children whose abuse was reported, a program to inform the public of which agencies to report child abuse to and a program to improve the quality of workers at child consultation centers. These programs had previously been sponsored by the “Safe Childcare Fund”.
  - It is promoting activities to enhance the functions of the Local Councils for Children in Need of Protective Care (Community Networks for Child Protection) (Figure 13).

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75 http://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo_kosodate/dv-jinshin/#hasseiyobou
78 Under Article 25-2 of the Child Welfare Act, local governments shall make efforts to establish this kind of council.
In December 2012, it collected examples of the activities of some local governments that were actively taking advantage of the presence of Local Councils for Children in Need of Protective Care and published them as “Practical Examples of the Local Councils for Children in Need of Protective Care” to provide information on these activities.

- The police are striving to find child abuse cases at an early state and to protect the victims immediately, through street guidance, counseling, reporting, investigations and surveys.
- The Human Rights Organs of the Ministry of Justice deal with reported cases of child abuse appropriately, in collaboration with child consultation centers. They also take appropriate measures according to each case, for example, by admonishing the assailant.
- MEXT has established the Council for the Promotion of a Network to Watch and Bring up Children (5 ministries and 42 private organizations were participating as of the end of December 2012). The council discusses how to smoothly collaborate in order to promote the improvement of the counseling system for children, including responses to child abuse cases.

Figure 13 Presence of Local Councils for Children in Need of Protective Care (Community Networks for Child Protection) and Abuse Prevention Networks

Source: Surveyed by MHLW
Note 1: The survey had been conducted on June 1 until FY 2005; it has been conducted on April 1 since FY 2006.
2: Only Abuse Prevention Networks were counted until FY 2004; since FY 2005 the total number of Community Networks for Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Networks has also been included.
3: The figures for FY 2011 exclude the figures for municipalities in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, which were affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

(2) Case studies, research and training

- The committee of experts that studied the cases of abused children in need of protective care (reported by the Sectional Meeting on Children of the Social Security Council) submitted its 8th report to MHLW. Based on this report, MHLW sent local governments a notice to urge them to provide early support for the families in need of childcare support, to promote a campaign intended to provide information to young people, to fully implement measures to protect children’s safety, to improve the systems of institutions dealing with abuse cases and to strengthen collaboration with these relevant institutions. It also provides support for the studies and training.

81 http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chousa/shotsou/068/
2 Enriching social care

(1) Promoting family-based child care
   MHLW is promoting the operation of small-scale group care and establishment of group homes. In November 2012, it sent out a notice, “Promotion of Downsizing Child Care Facilities and Family-Based Childcare (A Guide to Downsizing)” to prefectural governments, designated cities and cities having child consultation centers to make the significance of downsizing and its challenges known to these parties.

(2) Promoting adoption and support for foster parents
   MHLW is promoting adoption based on the “Adoption Guidelines,” which clearly set forth the principle of “adoption first.” It is promoting local governments’ activities by implementing projects for institutions to support foster parents and by allocating counselors specializing in supporting foster parents to children’s homes and infant homes.

(3) Expanding measures for self-reliance support for older children
   MHLW sponsors the Program to Provide Support for Children’s Independent Lives (Independence Support Homes), which is run by prefectural governments. It is also implementing the “Aftercare Program for Discharged Children” to provide support for their life in the community and their independence after they are discharged from facilities.

(4) Improving the functions of institutions
   MHLW is improving the quality of the operation of institutions by deciding the policies on how children’s homes are operated, the policies on child care at foster parents’ homes and family homes and the standards for third party evaluations. In FY 2012, it increased the numbers of the child guidance workers and childcare staff assigned to social care facilities for the first time in over 30 years.

(5) Preventing children placed in child care facilities from being abused
   MHLW is preventing children placed in child care facilities from being abused based on the “Guidelines for Responses to Abuse of Children Placed in Childcare Facilities.”

83 http://www.crc-japan.net/index.php
86 The local governments that have raised the adoption rate have been making various efforts. These include assigning staff in charge of adoption to child consultation centers, improving institutions to support foster parents, holding meetings to present their experiences with adoption, publicity work in collaboration with municipalities, and word-of-mouth communication through NPOs and citizen’s activities.
87 http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/kodomo/syakaiteki_yougo84.html
3 Measures against crimes that endanger the welfare of children and young people

(1) Enforcement of regulations
- The police are striving to actively enforce existing regulations and to find and protect victims (Figure 14).
- Public Prosecutors’ Office actively applies relevant laws and regulations to these cases and is striving to have strict punishments imposed.

(2) Issues of child prostitution and child pornography
- The government formulated “The Second Set of Comprehensive Measures to Eliminate Child Pornography” in May 2013. The relevant ministries are jointly promoting these measures to eliminate child pornography.
- The Cabinet Office holds meetings of the Council for the Promotion of Measures to Eliminate Child Pornography (Chair: Senior Vice Minister of the Cabinet Office). It also holds public symposiums to broaden the national campaign for the elimination of child pornography.
- The police are striving to actively enforce regulations under the Act on Punishment of Activities Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children. In 2012, a record high of 1,268 people were arrested in 1,596 cases.

(3) Issues of “online dating sites” and “community sites”
- The police make arrests for violations of the Act Concerning Regulation of Actions that Lure Children through Internet Dating Services; for violations of the Act on Punishment of Activities Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children; and for violations of the Juvenile Protection Ordinance.

(4) Preventing children from becoming victims of crime
(Safety management at school)
- MEXT is promoting safety management at school based on the “School Safety Promotion Plan” (Cabinet decision in April 2012). In addition, School Guards and School Leaders, who are former police officers, patrol schools and train school safety volunteers.

(Use of information obtained from relevant institutions and organizations)
- The National Police Agency is provided by the Ministry of Justice with information related to the release of prisoners who have committed violent sex crimes against children and use that information to accelerate the investigation and prevention of other such crimes.
- The police are developing an information-sharing system among police stations, schools and school boards, so that information on the cases of child victims, suspicious approaches to children, and stalking children can be swiftly provided for guardians. Prefectural police departments make this information publicly available on their websites and distribute information via e-mail. In addition, a private organization commissioned by the National Police Agency is operating “Anonymous Report Dial,” which accepts reports from citizens by phone or over the Internet.

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89 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kenko/anzen/1320286.htm
Taking care of children and young people who have become victims of crime and their families

- The police continue to give counseling to victims of crime and to provide guidance and advice through juvenile officers. “Counseling Advisors for Juvenile Victims,” commissioned external experts, give the police appropriate guidance and advice to provide support for victims. The police have also commissioned volunteers, “Juvenile Victim Supporters,” to visit victims frequently. In collaboration with these people, the police are promoting support activities.
- MEXT has school counselors and school social workers provide support for children who have become victims of crime to ease their suffering.

Measures for bullied children and suicides

(1) Measures for bullied children

(Promoting comprehensive measures against bullying)
- In July 2012, MEXT published comments by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, entitled “To All School Staff and Members of the Boards of Education,”90 to urge all the parties to deal with the problem. In September of the same year, it formulated the “Comprehensive Policy on Bullying and Safety at School,”91 which states what to deal with and by when.
- The Education Rebuilding Council published a report, “How to Deal with the Bullying Problem” in February 2013. It stated that all the people in Japan should share the following understandings: “Bullying must never be allowed,” and “Bullying is a dirty deed” and also that we should provide children with an education that will not allow them to become “an assailant, victim or bystander.” For this purpose, the report suggested making morality a subject with a new educational framework and enacting a law that will be needed as society as a whole grapples with bullying.

(Promoting precautions, early detection and quick responses by schools and school boards)
- “The Emergency Survey on the Realities of Students and Measures Taken by Schools and School Boards regarding Bullying”92 was published in November 2012. It showed that the number of identified bullying cases was about 140,000 and that the measures taken by schools and school boards should be improved.
- On November 27, 2012, MEXT issued a notice, “About Thorough Implementation of the Measures Based on ‘the Emergency Survey on the Realities of Students and Measures Taken by Schools and School Boards regarding Bullying.’”93 It made the following points known to the chairs of the boards of education of prefectures and designated cities, prefectural governors and presidents of national universities that have attached schools: a questionnaire survey should be sure to be carried out; additional, necessary measures (individual counseling and counseling through the use of diaries) should be taken; it is important for a school as a whole to make a response systematically; it is important for schools to cooperate with relevant agencies, such as the police; schools need to hide nothing when school evaluations and teacher evaluations are conducted so that the real situation can be understood and appropriate responses can be carried out.
- In order to respond to bullying on the Internet (for example, malicious slander about a particular child on a bulletin board on the Internet), MEXT is distributing educational leaflets for children and guardians and a manual for schools and teachers on how to deal with the issue. In September 2012, it compiled examples of actions taken and materials regarding how to carry out and maintain a “school net patrol” efficiently and effectively, and distributed them to school boards94.
- In FY 2013, MEXT will promote comprehensive measures, including precautions, early detection, quick response, establishment of a support system, use of external personnel, strengthening of...
teachers’ leadership and the improvement of in-house training of teachers (Figure 15).

### Figure 15  Comprehensive Program to Promote Measures against Bullying (FY 2013)

The government will enhance the structure of the “Office for Support of Safety Measures for Children” and provide strong support for schools and the school boards so that they can respond to serious issues such as bullying swiftly and appropriately.

1. The government and municipalities will use external personnel to establish a support system to deal with bullying.
   - Third parties control and solve the problem; External experts provide support for schools.

### Precautions

- **Promoting moral education and hands-on activities**
  - Promote moral education to foster superb human qualities such as sociability, norms consciousness and compassion by revising and distributing the Notebook of the Heart.
  - Conduct educational activities that employ dialogue, discussion, expression, training in social skills and peer support.
  - Promote hands-on activities to develop students’ social skills.

- **Early detection and quick response**
  - Use external personnel to provide educational counseling; strengthen the collaboration with other organizations.

### Improve training for teachers, support the organization of school teachers

1. **Increase the number of teachers**
   - Increase the number of teachers to improve teachers’ leadership, which is the basis of educational reform. To provide support for schools that give special guidance on bullying problems, the additional number of teachers will be greater.

2. **Improve training of teachers**
   - Teachers’ training centers provide training for development of leaders in terms of proper responses to bullying.
   - School counselors are used to conduct in-school training to develop teachers’ counseling skills at all junior high schools (see above).

### Conduct practical research on “Measures for various issues related to student guidance such as responses to the bullying problem.”

Source: Material provided by MEXT

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**Provide counseling for bullied children**

- MEXT provides 24-hour telephone counseling on bullying. The phone number (0570-0-78310)\(^95\) is the same across the country so that children can call and receive counseling on bullying anytime from anywhere in the country, including at night and on holidays. In FY 2013, the number of flyers for the telephone counseling distributed to each school will be increased from the equivalent of the number of students in one grade to that of students in four grades to make it more widely known.

- The police are developing an environment that allows bullied children to feel free to receive counseling. This approach includes establishing youth support centers outside police facilities, setting up a youth counseling service, making the telephone number for youth counseling toll-free and starting e-mail counseling services.\(^96\) In order to promote these measures, the National Police Agency issued a notice, “About appropriate responses to bullying problems at school” to prefectoral police departments in January 2013.

- The Human Rights Organs of the Ministry of Justice provide the “Internet Human Rights Counseling Service” (SOS e-mail)\(^97\) and the “Children’s Human Rights 110” toll-free telephone service.\(^269\)

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95 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/seitoshidou/1306988.htm
96 Refer to Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 1, 3, (2) “Prevention of delinquency, counseling activities”
97 https://www.jinken.go.jp/soudan/PC_CH/0101.html
counseling (0120-007-110)\textsuperscript{98}. They also distribute “Children’s Human Rights SOS Mini-Letters” (envelopes with paper)\textsuperscript{99} to elementary school students and junior high school students across the country (Figure 16). In FY 2012, these services were more widely publicized, and the service hours of the telephone counseling service, “Children’s Human Rights 110,” were extended. When the staff receives information on bullying cases, they investigate them as cases involving infringement of human rights and make efforts to halt the bullying and to prevent its recurrence in collaboration with teachers and schools in order to help bullied children. If they regard teachers’ or schools’ responses to bullying cases as inadequate, they urge the teachers and schools to improve the situation. In FY 2013, these human rights counseling services will be given more publicity.

\textbf{Figure 16} Children’s Human Rights SOS e-Mail, Children’s Human Rights SOS Mini-Letter


\textsuperscript{98} http://www.moj.go.jp/JINKEN/jinken112.html
\textsuperscript{99} Children write down what they want to receive counseling for, remove the envelope from the back, put the letter into the envelope and mail it. It will be delivered to the nearest district legal affairs bureau. There is no need to put a stamp on the envelope. http://www.moj.go.jp/JINKEN/jinken03_00013.html
(2) **Measures against suicide**

- The relevant ministries of the government are jointly promoting comprehensive measures against suicide based on the “General Principles of Suicide Prevention” under the Basic Act on Suicide Prevention. The General Principles state that adolescents easily lose their mental stability and traumas they suffer could affect them for the rest of their lives; thus, taking measures against the suicide of children and young people is important.
- MEXT is further improving the educational counseling system by, for example, allocating more school counselors and school social workers.

6 **Education to prevent harm**

(1) **Safety education**

*(Safety education at school)*

- MEXT is providing support for the holding of “crime prevention classes,” “traffic safety classes” and “disaster preparedness classes.” In addition, it has implemented a model project designed to develop a new method of disaster preparedness education based on the lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake. MEXT has also revised the comprehensive reference materials on disaster preparedness education for school teachers.

*(Crime prevention education and traffic safety education provided by the police)*

- The police hold crime prevention classes at kindergartens, nursery schools and elementary schools in collaboration with schools and school boards. The police also provide traffic safety education at nursery schools and other schools in cooperation with the relevant institutions and organizations.

*(Various activities concerning disaster preparedness)*

- The Cabinet Office holds a disaster preparedness poster contest intended for people of all ages.
- The Fire and Disaster Management Agency has set up “Child Disaster Preparedness e-Land” on its website. This website explains in an easy-to-understand way how to prepare for disasters such as earthquakes and damage caused by storms and floods as well as how to respond to them for children ranging in age from toddlers to junior high school students\(^{100}\).
- The Japan Meteorological Agency provides disaster preparedness education through various programs in collaboration with educational institutions.

(2) **Improving the ability to use media**

*(Promoting information moral education)*

- The New Government Guidelines for Teaching for elementary schools and junior high schools newly prescribe that students shall “learn information morality” through instruction in each subject and that teachers shall “pay attention to the instructions regarding information morality” in moral education class. The New Government Guidelines for Teaching for high schools prescribe that information morality shall be taught in a compulsory, common subject “Information.”
- MEXT is distributing “Guidance Concerning Digitization of Education,”\(^{101}\) which gives teachers concrete examples for their teaching and “Practical Guidance on Information Moral Education,”\(^{102}\) which provides reference materials to help elementary school teachers and junior high school teachers teach information morality.

*(Improving media literacy)*

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has enriched the contents of the program to comprehensively develop children’s ICT media literacy.\(^{103}\) In FY 2013, it will improve and revise a model system to develop practical media literacy and disseminate it.

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\(^{100}\) Intended for toddlers, preschoolers and children in the lower grades of elementary school ([http://open.fdma.go.jp/e-college/e-land/ryuutai.html](http://open.fdma.go.jp/e-college/e-land/ryuutai.html))

\(^{101}\) [http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/zyouhou/1259413.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/zyouhou/1259413.htm)
