Chapter 1 Promoting Measures to Develop and Support for Children and Young People in a Comprehensive Manner

Section 1 Formulating the National Youth Development Policy (2008)

The numbers of “NEETs” (not in employment, education or training) and permanent part-timers (“freeters”) have remained high. Our society has been flooded with various kinds of information, and the means of communication have been diversified. In order to respond to this situation, the National Youth Development Policy was formulated in December 2008 (decision by the Headquarters for Youth Development on December 12, 2008).

Section 2 Establishment of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People and the measures based on it

(Establishment and enforcement of the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People)

At the 171st Session of the National Diet in 2009, the government submitted a bill to promote comprehensive measures for youth. The House of Representatives amended the bill and unanimously approved the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”) in July 2009. The Act came into force on April 1, 2010 (Figure 1). The main provisions of the Act are as follows:

• Guidelines to establish a headquarters and to promote measures to develop and support for children and young people (hereinafter referred to as the “Guidelines”); development of plans for local communities and a framework including “one-stop consultation centers”

• Development of regional networks to support children and young people who have difficulties in their social lives.
Chapter 2  Providing Support for the Healthy Development of All Children and Young People

Section 1  Supporting Self-Development of Children and Young People

1  Support for Self-formation

(1)  Forming basic life habits

(Measures in school education)

The Courses of Study, revised in 2008 and 2009, (hereinafter referred to as the ‘new Courses of...
Study”) plan to improve moral education. It emphasizes guidance on morals to ensure that children, especially those in the lower classes at elementary school, learn basic rules regarding their life habits and their social lives, such as greetings, making moral judgments, and not doing what one must not do.

MEXT prepared learning material concerning moral education, “Watashitachi no Doutoku (our moral education),” by thoroughly revising “Kokoro no Noto (note of heart)” and distributed it to all elementary and junior high school students. In March 2015, MEXT partially revised the Courses of Study following the report of the Central Education Council entitled “On the Improvement of the Curriculum on Moral Education (October 2014).” Moral education will become a “special subject” at elementary school in FY 2018 and at junior high school in FY 2019 in accordance with this revision.

(Efforts by Society as a Whole to Develop Lifestyle Habits for Children)

MEXT is promoting a national campaign, “Early to Bed, Early to Rise, Don’t Forget Your Breakfast.” In FY 2014, the “Review Committee for Developing Lifestyle Habits for Children Centering on Junior High School Students and High School Students” met and prepared educational materials for junior and senior high school students and their guardians and teaching materials for teachers. In FY 2015, MEXT is to implement a new project to support the management of lifestyle habits mainly for junior and senior high school students.

As the executive office of the National Council for “Early to Bed, Early to Rise, Don’t Forget Your Breakfast,” the National Institution For Youth Education is making an effort to improve the rhythm of daily life for children.

(Promoting food education [“Shokuiku”])

The Second Plan for Promoting Shokuiku (March 2011) aims, by FY 2015, to reduce the percentage of “students in fifth grade who answer that they rarely have breakfast” to 0%.

The Cabinet Office created “A Guide to ‘Shokuiku?’” to allow all citizens to make their own appropriate efforts regarding their diets, and released it to the public.

MEXT is increasing the distribution of nutrition instructors who provide guidance on food to each prefecture.

MHLW (The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) is providing learning opportunities and information on food for pregnant women, nursing mothers and families with children.

MAFF (The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) provided support for efforts to promote the practice of “Japanese Dietary Patterns,” which have an excellent nutritional balance, and for educational farms where people working in agriculture, forestry and fisheries provide opportunities to experience agriculture.

The Food Safety Commission of the Cabinet Office provides information on food safety for children on its website. In addition, it holds the “Junior Food Safety Commission” for fifth and sixth graders and their guardians during summer vacations.

(2) Developing communication skills and norm consciousness

Throughout various educational activities at school, teachers tell students to have compassion for others and to open-mindedly respect others’ opinions and viewpoints different from their own. In addition, they emphasize the development of communication skills and provide lessons which profoundly incorporate presentations and discussion.

Educational facilities for youth provide various opportunities for hands-on experiences such as experiencing nature and the experience of lodging together for the purpose of nurturing social skills and cooperative attitudes.

The police hold delinquency prevention classes by dispatching officers to schools or in cooperation with volunteer youth officers.

MIC (The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) is developing and lending out educational materials for elementary, junior high and high school students to improve their media literacy.

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2 http://www8.cao.go.jp/syokuiku/data/guide/index.html

3 Composite capacity consisting of the following three capacities: 1) capacity to interpret the media contents independently, 2) capacity to access and utilize the media and 3) capacity to communicate with others, and to communicate with recipients of the information interactively, in particular, through the media
(3) Improving physical fitness
(Promoting activities to improve physical fitness in local communities)
ô Since FY 2013, MEXT has been implementing a model project intended to establish activities to improve the physical fitness of children in tandem with the whole local community including schools, families and sports clubs.

(Promotion of physical education and sports club activities at school)
ô MEXT is promoting smooth and safe implementation of the martial arts courses, which are compulsory at junior high school, with the use of external instructors.

2 Providing opportunities for various activities
(1) Securing opportunities for group play
ô MHLW is promoting establishment of children’s centers⁴ to provide children with the opportunities to play in groups and interact with children of different ages.
ô MEXT and MHLW are promoting the creation of safe and sound places for children to stay after school

(2) Promotion of reading activities
ô MEXT is promoting children’s reading activities by accelerating the formation of municipal plans and by holding the “Forum for the Promotion of Children’s Reading Activities” in accordance with the Act on the Promotion of Children’s Reading and the Third Basic Plan Concerning the Promotion of Reading Activities by Children (May 2013)⁵.

(3) Various activities in local communities
(Promoting experience-based learning activities)
ô MEXT, while promoting dissemination to ask families and companies to understand experience-based learning activities, gives awards to companies that promote experience-based learning activities.⁶
ô The National Institution For Youth Education is promoting a campaign, “Taiken no kaze wo okosou (Let’s create wind of experience),” in cooperation with youth organizations⁷ in order to mobilize the entire society to promote experience-based learning activities.

(Environmental education)
ô MOE (The Ministry of the Environment) and other relevant ministries are providing opportunities for life-long, high-quality environmental education at home, school, in offices, in local communities and other all places. This policy is based on the “Act on Promoting Environmental Conservation Activities through Environmental Education” and the “Basic Policy on Enhancing Environmental Conservation Activities and Motivation on Environmental Conservation and Promoting Environmental Education and Collaborative Efforts (Cabinet decision in June 2012).”⁸
ô MOE encourages environmental education to foster people who will be responsible for a sustainable society through the development and demonstration of environmental education programs that reflect the viewpoint of Education for Sustainable Development, ESD.
ô MEXT encourages environmental education at school and in society so that children can deepen their understanding of and interest in the preservation of the environment through various opportunities according to their developmental stage.

(Experiencing nature)
û MEXT is conducting publicity work so that families and corporations understand the significance of outdoor activities.

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⁴ A type of children’s recreational facility provided for in Article 40 of the Child Welfare Law (Act No.164 of 1945)
⁵ Homepage of the “Database for children’s reading” http://www.kodomodokusyo.go.jp
⁶ http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/sports/ikusei/taiken.htm
⁷ http://www.niye.go.jp/services/taikennokaze/
The National Institution For Youth Education is providing opportunities and places for outdoor activities by taking advantage of the locations and features of national youth education facilities.

In collaboration with MEXT, the Forestry Agency is promoting the “Project to Promote Forest Kids Club Activities,” which offers children opportunities for various experience-based learning activities in the forest. It is also working to set up “Yu-Yu no Mori” in the national forests, providing places for experience-based learning activities for school children.

MOE provides opportunities for children to have contact with nature during “Green Month” (April 15 – May 14), the “Commune-with-nature Campaign” (July 21 – August 20), and “Month for Hiking Nature Trails across the Country” (October 1 – October 31).

(Places for social volunteer activities and sports activities provided by the police)

The police promote the securing of opportunities for various activities for young people and the creation of places for them to stay. These include socially participatory activities, such as social volunteer activities, activities where one can experience the manufacturing process and sports activities, such as judo and kendo classes for youths, using training halls belonging to police stations.

(Encouraging cultural activities)

MEXT is promoting activities for children to experience culture and art by providing them with the opportunities to watch live performing arts and to experience and master traditional culture and culture developed in daily life.

(Promoting the educational programs with flowers and plants)

Collaborating with MEXT and MLIT, the MAFF is promoting the educational programs which provide children with opportunities to have contact with plants and flowers so that they can develop feelings of kindness and beauty.

(Promoting coexistence of cities and villages and exchanges between them)

MAFF, MEXT and MIC are providing support for activities which provide children with opportunities to stay in farming, mountain and fishing villages.

(4) Approaches to lifelong learning

(Efforts to enhance learning opportunities at institutions of higher education)

Japan Student Services Organization, JASSO, will start flexible operation of the scholarship system (ease re-loaning restrictions for the same degree level (e.g. undergraduate → undergraduate)) in FY 2014 in order to support young people who start to study again.

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11 http://www.kodomogeijutsu.com/
12 http://oyakokyoshitsu.jp/
MEXT is working to ensure and improve the quality of certification examinations that are administered by private companies in the education industry.

MEXT is providing information about support for women’s life planning on the website.

3 Improvement of academic abilities

(1) Establishing “solid academic abilities,” including knowledge and skills, the abilities to think, make decisions and express oneself to solve problems with the knowledge and skills and the desire to learn

- In order to implement the current Course of Study smoothly and steadily, MEXT is providing support for an increase in the number of teachers, the creation and distribution of necessary new teaching aids, and the improvement of equipment for science education. It is also supporting the improvement of educational activities about science, mathematics, foreign languages and other subjects.

- In FY 2015, MEXT is planning:
  - to understand and analyze the academic abilities and learning status of children based on the results of the National Assessment of Academic Ability.
  - to implement a grant-aid project to support the assignment of assistants in scientific observation and experiments to elementary and junior high schools and to increase the grant for the improvement of equipment for the science education based on the Science Education Promotion Act for the improvement of the science education.
  - to improve and expand the educational activities on Saturdays to all children with the assistance from people in local communities and private companies.
  - to promote learning from perspective of active learning for students to find and solve problems actively and in cooperation with other students and to enhance teaching personalized to the level of achievement in the class of each student (Figure 3 and 4).

The “Council on the English Education” conducted a study on an overall reform of the English education in elementary, junior high and senior high schools and compiled the study result in a report in September 2015.

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13 The assessment conducted in FY 2015 was an exhaustive assessment of all the students in the 6th grade of elementary school and the 3rd grade in junior high school. Their academic abilities in Japanese Language, arithmetic/mathematics and science were assessed.

### Figure 4  Schedule of implementation of the Current Government Guidelines for Teaching

1. **Basic goals**
   - (1) To nurture in students a “zest for life” based on the educational principles expressed in the revision of the Basic Act on Education
   - (2) To emphasize the balance between the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the nurturing of the abilities to think, judge and express
   - (3) To nurture in students a generous mind and sound body with the improvement in the moral education and the physical education

2. **Increase in the number of classes and details of the improvement of curricula**
   - (1) Increase in the number of classes
     The number of classes per week was increased by two in the lower grades and by one in the middle and upper grades at elementary school. The numbers of classes of Japanese Language, Social Studies, Arithmetic, Science and Physical Education were increased by approx. 10% in the six years of education. The number of classes per week was increased by one at junior high school. The numbers of classes of Japanese Language, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Foreign Language and Physical and Health Education were increased by approx. 10% in the three years of education.

   - (2) Major improvement of curricula
     - (a) Improvement of the language activities
       Language is the foundation of the intellectual activities such as reasoning and thinking, communication and the expression of one’s perception and emotion. In order to nurture the capacity in those areas, teaching methods using language as an important tool, such as preparation of reports using the knowledge and skills acquired in the classes and discussion in the class, shall be used in the classes of not only Japanese Language but also other subjects.
     - (b) Improvement of the mathematics and science education
       The curriculum has been improved from the viewpoints of the consistency with the international standards and logical consistency of the contents. The instruction with repetition, observation and experiments in the curriculum has been increased and improved.
     - (c) Improvement of the education on tradition and culture
       A curriculum that exposes children to local and Japanese tradition and culture and leads them to inherit and add new life to that tradition and culture has been included in the curriculum so that they can become the Japanese performing a significant role in the international community.
     - (d) Improvement of the moral education
       It has been clearly defined in the curriculum that the moral education shall be provided mainly in the moral education classes, but also in the entire educational activities of the school.
     - (e) Improvement of experience-based education
       The opportunities for the experience-based education have been increased in the curriculum with the promotion of social contribution activities and practical work experience including group activities in multiple-day school trips, activities to experience nature and work experience and volunteer activities.
     - (f) Improvement of the foreign language education
       The curriculum of the foreign language education has been improved with the inclusion of a period per week of mandatory foreign language activity in the 5th and 6th grades of elementary school, the increase by 30% per week of the foreign language classes at junior high school and the adoption of the principle, “English at the level appropriate for the students’ capacity shall be used in the English class.”

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(2) **Ensuring basic academic abilities**

- MEXT has been allocating more than the usual number of teachers to schools that exercise ingenuity and make improvements, such as using small-group education according to the students’ level of proficiency, team teaching and specialized instruction in elementary schools, and schools that require special attention.

(3) **Ensuring and improving the quality of high school education**

- MEXT is taking various measures including the revision of the Courses of Study and the promotion of school evaluations at each school.

(4) **Promoting the use of information technology in school education**

- MEXT and MIC have been implementing new joint projects utilizing the most advanced technologies including cloud technology, “Leading Education System Development Project” and “Leading Education System Demonstration Project” since FY 2014.

4. **Enhancing university education**

(1) **Enriching university education**

   - (Enhancing educational functions)
     - MEXT is providing financial support to and disseminating information on unique, distinctive and excellent activities conducted by universities. For example, MEXT is implementing “Acceleration Program for University Education Rebuilding” to support cutting-edge activities consistent with the new strategy for the educational reform.

   - (Maintaining and improving the quality of educational research)
     - MEXT guarantees the quality of universities from the application for approval for the establishment of the university to the year of completion. Also, it is striving to maintain and improve the quality of educational

research through an accreditation system.

(Enhancing advanced university education)

- MEXT is implementing the “Program for Leading Graduate Schools”\(^{16}\) in which single integrated degree programs for both the master’s and doctorate courses are to be developed and provided beyond the boundaries of specialties in the industry-academia-government partnership to support the fundamental reform of the graduate education.

(2) Enhancing specialized training college education

- MEXT is carrying out the following measures in order to promote Specialized Training College education.
  - MEXT has been operating the “Applied Professional Post-secondary Course” certification system since FY 2014. In this system, the Minister of MEXT certifies a Post-secondary Course of a Specialized Training College, which endeavors to improve the quality of practical vocational education systematically as an applied Professional Post-secondary Course.
  - Promoted the development of core specialists in a growth fields through industry-academia-government collaboration.

5 Enhancing financial support

(1) Child Allowance System

- The Child Allowance aims to contribute to a stable family lifestyle and play a part in the sound growth of children who will be responsible for society in the next generation as adults. It is provided to persons raising junior high school aged-children and younger.

(2) Financial support to senior high school students

- MEXT has provided financial support on tuition fees in the so-called free senior high school tuition system since FY 2010. In order to increase support to students of low-income households and to reduce the disparity between students attending public schools and those attending private schools, the provision of the law on the system was amended to set an income ceiling for the financial support in 2013.\(^{17}\) MEXT has been using the financial resource created by setting the income ceiling to increase the amount of the tuition support fund to students of low-income households attending private senior high schools and to establish and operate the “High School Supplementary Scholarship Fund” since April 2014.

(3) Support for scholarships

(Measures for elementary and secondary education)

- MEXT is subsidizing part of the expenses required by local governments to implement the “Kindergarten Attendance Promotion Project” which partially or completely subsidizes entrance and tuition fees with the Subsidies for Guardians of Children Entering Kindergarten. MEXT will expand the reduction of economic burden on guardians of households who are exempted from paying municipal tax in FY 2015.
- Each municipality provides school supplies to the guardians of students who are considered to have difficulty in attending elementary school or junior high school for financial reasons.

(Measures for higher education)

- MEXT is developing a “system of income-based repayment for financial aid” for senior high school students.\(^ {18}\) It established the “High School Supplementary Scholarship Fund,” a scholarship grant system, to reduce the education expenses other than tuition for senior high school students of low-income households in FY 2014.

(16) http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/kaikaku/hakushikatei/1306945.htm
(17) “Act to Partially Amend the Act on Free-Tuition Fee at Public High Schools and High School Tuition Support Fund” (Act No. 90 of 2013)
(18) A system to allow a grace period for the repayment of scholarship until a recipient begins to earn a certain income
(19) http://www.jasso.go.jp/
Section 2  Giving Children and Young People Support for their Social Development and Participation in Society

1  Support for participation in the development of society

(1) Promoting education regarding social development and participation in society (citizenship education)

(Measures for school education)
- The new Courses of Study emphasize the concept of participation in society and plan to enrich the quality of education. For example, it now deals with “important laws and rules for one’s social life” (elementary school), “the importance of contracts” (junior high school), and “citizens’ participation in the judiciary” (elementary school, junior high school and high school).
- In FY 2013, MEXT commissioned boards of education to conduct research on the development of a program intended for schools and local communities to jointly provide hands-on, practical education to solve specific problems each community has. It is now trying to disseminate the results.

(Legal education)
- MOJ (The Ministry of Justice) is distributing teaching materials and leaflets as well as dispatching lecturers to schools to disseminate and develop legal education.20

(Tax education)
- The National Tax Agency, in collaboration with the relevant ministries and private organizations, dispatches instructors to teach seminars for school teachers and tax classes.

(Education in financial matters)
- The Financial Services Agency strives to improve the financial literacy of students with provision of lessons on financial matters based on the “Financial Literacy Map” to college students, free distribution of the “Guidebook to Learn Personal Finance from Basics”21 and other introductory materials on finance to senior high schools, technical colleges, junior colleges and universities and dispatch of lecturers to senior high schools.

(Education about rights and duties of workers)
- MHLW is promoting educational activities regarding the rights and duties of workers and various systems for workers

(2) Securing opportunities for children and young people to express their opinions

- The Cabinet Office is carrying out the “Project for Gathering Opinions from Youth” in order to provide opportunities for children and young people to actively express their opinions and to heighten their sense of participation in society.22 In FY 2014, persons responsible for policy in the relevant ministries and agencies and Youth Special Report Members will have discussions and exchange opinions face-to-face at the “Youth Round Table”.
- The National Institution For Youth Education organizes the “National Convention of Young People’s Opinions” every year. At the convention, junior high school students from all over Japan present their opinions to the society and the world.

2 Promoting participation in society

(1) Promoting volunteer activities and other such ways to participate in society

- Regarding school education, socially participatory activities including volunteer activities are being carried out during time designated for the periods of integrated study and special activities.
- The National Institution For Youth Education holds the “National Conference for Research Exchange for Student Volunteers and Supporters.”

(2) International exchange activities

(Improving international education to respond to globalization)
- MEXT is providing support for programs in which prefectural governments subsidize costs when high school students study abroad and public interest corporations also invite foreign high school students to

20 http://www.moj.go.jp/housei/shibouhousei/index2.html
22 http://www.youth-cao.go.jp/
high schools in Japan for short stays. In addition, it aims to motivate Japanese students to study abroad by implementing a campaign to promote such study, “Tobitate (fly high)! Young Ambassador Program.” The ministry developed the “Japan Public-Private Partnership Student Study Abroad Program – Tobitate! Young Ambassador Program” in FY 2014 for college students. The ministry intends to include senior high school students in the program from FY 2015 on.

(Developing global human resources through international exchanges)

The Cabinet Office has conducted an international youth exchange program with the aim of developing human resources who can play an active role in leadership in response to a globalizing society. (Figure 5)

Figure 5 International Youth Exchange Program

Source: Cabinet Office

- MEXT implemented the “International Exchange Program at National Youth Education Facilities” in FY 2014.
- The National Institution for Youth Education is conducting the “Japan-China-Korea Children’s Story Exchange Program” which aims to help the students better understand the characteristics of each other’s cultures and what they have in common through picture books and fairy tales.
- MOFA (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan) has implemented “JENESYS 2.0,” a youth exchange program between Japan and Asian and Oceanian countries and regions and the “KAKEHASHI Project –The bridge for tomorrow-,” a youth exchange program between Japan and the United States and Canada.

Section 3 Ensuring Health and Peace of Mind for Children and Young People

1 Ensuring and promoting health

(1) Ensuring safe pregnancy and childbirth, improving pediatric medicine

(Ensuring safe pregnancy and childbirth)

- MHLW is providing support for the reduction of the economic burdens associated with pregnancy and childbirth, the development of a system for perinatal medical care for ensuring preparedness to receive patients transported by ambulance and support for infertility treatment. It is also working on providing information on pregnancy and childbirth, developing the counseling and support system and disseminating the “maternity emblem.”

(Improving regional healthcare)

- MHLW is promoting projects for maternal and child health such as medical checkups and health guidance for pregnant women and infants. In FY 2014, it will implement a model project to provide continuous support from pregnancy and delivery until the time period for raising the child. In FY 2015, MHLW is to establish the “Centers for Comprehensive Support to Child-rearing Families” to reinforce the projects for maternal and child health as those mentioned above.

(Improving pediatric medicine and vaccinations)

23 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/01_f.htm
MHLW is promoting the improvement of pediatric medicine, including pediatric emergency medicine. It provides support for the development of pediatric urgent care centers, pediatric emergency hospitals and pediatric critical care centers as well as the implementation of the pediatric emergency telephone counseling service (#8000). MHLW made an amendment to the “Order for Enforcement of the Preventive Vaccinations Act” to include the vaccination against chickenpox in the vaccination schedule provided in the order. This amendment came into force in October 2014.

(2) Dealing with issues specific to adolescence
- MEXT has created educational materials that comprehensively describe smoking, drinking, drug abuse and infectious diseases and is distributing them to elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools.
- MHLW has set a goal of eradicating underage smoking and drinking through the programs “Healthy Japan 21” and “Healthy Parents and Children 21” and is providing information on the effects of smoking and drinking on people’s health through symposiums and its website. In April, it published the committee report on “Healthy Parents and Children 21 (Second Phase)” which it was to launch in FY 2015. MHLW defines “Health Measures from School Age and Adolescence to Adulthood” as one of the basic agenda items of the second phase and intends to implement such measures.

(3) Promoting health education
- At school, pursuant to the School Health and Safety Act, school nursing staff and relevant teachers collaborate and offer health guidance. They are also making efforts to improve first aid, health consultations and health guidance in collaboration with the relevant institutions. As for issues about sex, children are given guidance throughout their years at school, mainly in PE and health classes, and extracurricular activities.

2 Improving counseling systems
(1) Improving the counseling system at school
- MEXT is increasing the distribution of school counselors and school social workers (Figure 6). MEXT also holds workshops and symposiums for teachers and creates reference materials for guidance.

Figure 6  School counselors and school social workers

24 Subsidies had been provided to support the pediatric emergency medical service core hospitals and the pediatric emergency telephone consultation services until FY 2013. Since FY 2014, the funds for Securing Comprehensive Medical and Long-Term Care in the Community has been available to fund the hospitals and consultation service.
25 For junior high school students: http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kenko/hoken/08111804.htm
For high school students: http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kenko/hoken/08111805.htm
26 It was completely revised in July 2012 to schedule the national campaign to be from FY 2013 to 2022.
27 http://rhino.med.yamanashi.ac.jp/sukoyaka/ (Official website)
28 The planned implementation period is from 2015 to 2024.
29 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/seitoshidou/1302910.htm
(2) Counseling at medical institutions in local communities

- MHLW is taking the following measures:
  - It promotes the establishment of “Regional Centers for Child Care Support”.
  - It promotes counseling provided by doctors, public health nurses and licensed psychiatric social workers at mental health and welfare centers, health centers and child consultation.
  - It promotes counseling and educational activities performed by young people of the same generation who share a sense of values.
  - It provides support for counseling for handicapped children to all guardians whose child uses support for admission to facilities from April 2015.
  - It runs the “Project for a Medical Care Network for Children’s Minds,” which is intended to establish a support system centered around key hospitals in each prefecture and to collaborate with medical institutions and health care institutions.

Section 4 Providing Support for the Vocational Independence and Employment of Young People

(1) Cultivating attitudes toward work and labor, developing the abilities necessary for vocational independence

(Promotion of career education and vocational education)

- MEXT, MHLW and METI (The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) jointly hold the “Symposium for Collaboration for the Promotion of Career Education” to encourage schools, communities and industry to work together and promote career education as one.30 (Figure 7)

- MEXT and METI are sponsoring the “Awards for Collaboration for the Promotion of Career Education,” which commends concerned people at schools, in the community or industry for their collaborative activities.

- Other than those measures mentioned above, MEXT also is taking the following measures:31
  - It promotes the establishment of organizations that support career education at schools in communities, such as support for educational activities including visiting lectures by companies and searching for companies that provide workplace experience and internships and making arrangements for them (Regional Career Education Support Councils).32
  - It is conducting research on the provision of career education in the general course in senior high schools.33
  - It is implementing a project to assign internship coordinators to senior high schools.
  - It is implementing a program, “Assist Caravan to Promote Career Education,” for teachers of senior high schools everywhere in Japan to better their understanding of the meaning and importance of career education.
  - It has created a brochure that is useful in the preparation of a customized annual curriculum of the career education at each elementary, junior high and senior high school, distributed it to the

30 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/detail/1342369.htm
31 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/index.htm
32 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/detail/1339053.htm
33 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/detail/1338650.htm
schools and published it on its homepage to make teachers aware of the purposes of career education and improve its contents.\(^{34}\)

- It distributes videos and materials for career education training provided by schools and school boards on the website of MEXT.\(^{35}\)
- It has been running the “Portal Site Serving as a Bridge between Children and Society,”\(^{36}\) which is a special site designed to match the support desired by schools to the support that can be offered by communities, society and industry.

- MHLW is conducting the “Career Search Program” by dispatching people who work at companies to junior high schools and high schools as instructors to help students understand and think about the realities of various occupations and industries, the meaning of work, and a working life. It is also conducting the “Experts on Career Education Development Program,” which offers short courses to train personnel who plan and carry out career education.

- METI is sponsoring the “Career Education Award,” which honors companies and organizations that perform visionary activities in support of education.\(^{37}\) METI has defined the basic ability to work at a company or in a local community as the “basic ability required of a working member of society”\(^{38}\) and is promoting the development and evaluation of this ability through university education.

**Promotion of internships (work experience)**


- METI, aiming for the promotion of long-term internships, has worked for the establishment of tools/methods to encourage companies that provide internships and for the development of a practical guide for specialists who connect industry and academia and publicizes on the homepage.\(^{39}\) It also held symposia at three locations as a measure to promote internship.

**Educating young women**

- The Cabinet Office provides young women with information on fields of science and technology where women’s participation is low.

- MHLW has created material which prompts female students to analyze their future from various viewpoints to select a job or an academic career appropriate for them and delivered the material to them through senior high schools, colleges and universities. MHLW also strives to educate female students through universities and colleges to use the “Comprehensive Positive Action and Work-Life Balance Support Site”\(^{40}\)(which is to be integrated with the “Visualization” site of the Cabinet Office in FY 2015) in their job search to study how women work in companies and what positive actions they are taking.

- MEXT has prepared a booklet to promote support for career development from the standpoint of gender equality.

- METI has been conducting the “Project to Discover New Recruits for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.” It provides support for small and medium-sized enterprises to offer opportunities to fill in the blank periods to women who once resigned from their work when they had children or for other reasons and want to obtain new employment.

- In collaboration with universities, the National Women’s Education Center\(^{41}\)-provides training courses and information for female students to learn about career development as women.

**Ability development**

**Public vocational training**

- MHLW carries out public vocational training, using various private educational and training

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34 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/detail/1312372.htm
35 http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/career/detail/1315412.htm
36 http://kakehashi.mext.go.jp/
40 http://www.positive-ryouritsu.jp/
41 http://www.nwec.jp/
organizations including universities, in addition to public facilities for the development of vocational capabilities. Also, the job applicant support system provides young people who are ineligible for unemployment insurance with fine-tuned employment support.

(Job Card system, Development of young skilled human resources)

MHLW supports the Job Card system with the following measures. It conducted a study for the review of the Job Card system in FY 2014. It plans to introduce a new system in FY 2015. (Figure 8)

- Providing consulting by career consultants using the Job Card
- Providing opportunities for receiving practical vocational (career capability development program)
- Promotion of the use of the Job Card, on which information for the evaluation of vocational abilities are compiled, in job hunting.

MHLW is also implementing the “Project for Supporting Development of Young Skilled Human Resources (Monozukuri (Craft) Meister System)” in which Meisters provide young technicians with practical training and opportunities to work at their workshops in order to develop and maintain young human resources in Monozukuri. In addition, it is promoting transfer of technology to young workers and development of core human resources in a company by expanding the “Career Development Promotion Subsidies” which provide subsidies for part of the training expenses and wage of trainees to business operators engaged in human resource development.

Figure 8 Job Card system

(1) Flow of path to employment