be promoted. Furthermore, it specifies that multi-stream education systems for children who cannot settle into existing schools due to various reasons, including bullying and developmental disabilities, should be enhanced. In light of the Urgent Policies, necessary expenses were included in the FY 2015 Supplementary Budget and the FY 2016 Budget, and relevant bills were submitted to the ordinary Diet session held in 2016.

- The Plan to Realize the Dynamic Engagement of All Citizens is to be compiled in May 2016.

Chapter 2  Sound Development of All Children and Young People

Section 1  Support for Self-development

1 Acquisition of daily life skills

(1) Formation of basic lifestyle habits

(Efforts made in school education)
- The national curriculum standard as revised in 2008 and 2009 (hereinafter referred to as the current national curriculum standard) plans 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.
- In light of the first proposal from the Education Rebuilding Implementation Council, the national curriculum standard was partially revised on March 27, 2015, in order to position moral education as a special school subject at elementary schools from FY 2018 and at lower secondary schools from FY 2019. Also, since April 2015, it has been possible to implement the revised national curriculum standard wholly or in part, as a transitional measure.

(Formation of children’s lifestyle habits through efforts made by all of society)
- MEXT is promoting the “Early to bed, early to rise, don’t forget your breakfast” national campaign. In FY 2015, MEXT supported pioneering efforts made in local communities by newly conducting the Project to Support the Management of Lifestyle Habits Particularly for Lower and Upper Secondary School Students as an empirical study to improve the life habits of children, particularly of lower secondary and upper secondary school students, through collaboration between families, schools, and local communities, and it is conducting the nationwide promotion of efforts to be made to effectively and practically improve life habits by examining and analyzing the results of pioneering efforts and thereafter broadly disseminating them.

(Promoting Shokuiku (food and nutrition education) activities)
- The percentage of people in their twenties who skip breakfast has remained particularly high.

Figure 10  Percentage of people who skip breakfast

![Figure showing percentage of people who skip breakfast](image)

Source: “National Health and Nutrition Survey,” MHLW
Note: Skipping a meal includes the following three cases: 1) Not having a meal, 2) Getting nutrients by taking pills or an energy drink only, 3) Having sweets, fruits, dairy products, or one’s favorite drink only.

- In FY 2015, efforts were made to promote Shokuiku (food and nutrition education) for children and young people, while the goal of reducing the percentage of people who skip breakfast was set based on the Second Basic Program for Shokuiku Promotion (approved by the Shokuiku Promotion Council on March 31, 2011).
The Third Basic Program for Shokuiku Promotion (approved by the Shokuiku Promotion Council on March 18, 2016), which was newly prepared and is a 5-year program starting in FY 2016, specifies that food and nutrition education should be promoted particularly for the young generation, among which there are many issues in knowledge, attitudes, and practice regarding food and nutrition education, as one of the challenges to be addressed in a focused manner, and it also sets new goals regarding the young generation, including an increase in the percentage of young people who lead well-balanced dietary lives, thereby making further efforts to promote food and nutrition education for children and young people while continuing to make ongoing efforts.

MEXT is increasing the allocation of diet and nutrition teachers who provide guidance on food.

The MHLW is providing learning opportunities and information on food for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and families with children.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is promoting the practice of “Japanese dietary patterns,” which provide an excellent nutritional balance with rice as a staple food together with various kinds of supplementary foods, along with promoting eating education, by means such as the operation of educational farms for deepening the understanding of food and the agriculture, forestry, and fishery industries.

The Food Safety Commission of the Cabinet Office provides understandable information on food safety for children on its website, using illustrations. Also, it holds meetings of the Junior Food Safety Commission, which provides opportunities for fifth and sixth graders and their guardians to learn about food safety in a fun way and deepen their understanding.

(2) Fostering of norm consciousness, etc.

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

Youth education facilities provide various opportunities for experience-based learning activities such as experiences in nature and overnight group trips, in order to nurture sociability and cooperative attitudes.

The police hold delinquency prevention classes by dispatching officers to schools and in cooperation with juvenile police volunteers.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) is developing and lending out educational materials for elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school students to improve their media literacy, and it is providing packages of practical teaching materials for teachers.

(3) Promotion of experience-based learning activities

The more people experience nature and participate in activities in local communities in their childhood, the stronger their willingness, interests, and career awareness appear to become after they have grown up.

The percentage of students who participate in activities to experience nature conducted by organizations other than schools is on the decrease.

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**Figure 11** Relationship between experiences in childhood and willingness and interests in adulthood

**Figure 12** Number of class periods for experience-based learning activities

Source: Surveyed by MEXT

Note: The values for elementary schools are the averages of the total numbers of class periods for experience-based learning activities provided for fifth graders at each school throughout a school year. (A class period is 45 minutes.) The values for lower and upper secondary schools are the averages of the total numbers of class periods for experience-based learning activities provided for students in the second year at each school throughout a school year. (A class period is 50 minutes.)
MEXT, while promoting public awareness to ask families and companies to understand experience-based learning activities, is making efforts to honor companies that promote experience-based learning activities. The National Institution for Youth Education is promoting the “Taiken no kaze wo okosou” (Let’s create a wind of experience) campaign in cooperation with youth organizations, in order to mobilize all of society to promote experience-based learning activities.

(4) Promotion of reading activities
- MEXT is promoting children’s reading activities, based on the Act on the Promotion of Children’s Reading (Act No. 154 of 2001) and the Third Basic Plan concerning the Promotion of Reading Activities by Children (approved by the Cabinet in May 2013).
- MEXT is promoting the improvement of library and community center environments so that they can serve as facilities that are convenient and readily accessible for local residents.

(5) Improvement of physical fitness
- A little more than ten percent of fifth-grade girls and about twenty percent of eighth-grade girls do little exercise every week.

(6) Promotion of efforts made to improve physical fitness in local communities
- The Japan Sports Agency is promoting comprehensive measures taken to improve children’s physical fitness, as well as promoting activities conducted to improve physical fitness at schools and in local communities. Since FY 2013, it has been conducting 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 schools)
- The Japan Sports Agency is promoting the smooth and safe provision of budo (traditional martial arts) courses, which are compulsory at lower secondary schools, with the use of external instructors, along with making efforts to enrich the instruction given in sports club activities. In FY 2015, it made efforts including the improvement of the instruction given in physical education including budo courses, by means such as improving the capacity of teachers in charge of physical education and strengthening their ability to instruct students.

(6) Approaches to lifelong learning
(Efforts made to enrich learning opportunities at institutions of higher education)
- In FY 2014, the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) started flexible operation of the scholarship loans programme (easing of re-loaning restrictions for the same degree level), in order to support young people who start to study again.

(Appropriate evaluation of learning outcomes)
- MEXT is making efforts to ensure and improve the quality of certification examinations that are administered by private companies in the education industry.

(Women's lifelong learning)
- To drive female human resources in local communities who have left their jobs to participate in society through learning, MEXT, since FY 2015, has been holding deliberations on the formation of networks between entities including relevant agencies in local communities, universities, and centers for gender equality and the ideal state of efforts to be made through such networks, and it has been conducting the nationwide dissemination of these deliberations.

(Lifelong learning to realize gender equality)
- Starting in FY 2016, MEXT will make efforts to prepare teaching materials and guidance manuals that will support young people’s life planning, so that, when choosing their career paths, upper secondary school students can comprehensively consider not only entrance into universities and employment but also how they should lead their future lives, taking various life events such as marriage, childbirth, and child-rearing into consideration.

2 Improvement of academic abilities

(1) Establishing solid academic abilities, including knowledge, skills, the abilities to think, make decisions, and express oneself, and the desire to learn
- To smoothly and steadily implement the current national curriculum standard, MEXT is providing support for an increase in the number of teachers, the preparation 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 2016, 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 support the allocation of assistants for scientific observation and experiments to elementary and lower secondary schools and to increase grants for the improvement of equipment for science education pursuant to the Science Education Promotion Act (Act No. 186 of 1953), for the purpose of enriching scientific observation and experiments carried out at schools including elementary and lower secondary schools, and
  • to improve and expand educational activities on Saturdays for all children with assistance from people in local communities and private companies.

(2) Ensuring basic academic abilities, etc.
- 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 students’ levels of proficiency, team teaching, and specialized instruction in elementary schools, and schools that require special attention.

(3) Ensuring and improving the quality of upper secondary school education
- MEXT is taking various types of measures including the revision of the national curriculum standard and the promotion of school evaluations at each school.

(4) Promoting the use of information technology in school education
- MEXT and the MIC, through collaboration between both Ministries, have been implementing new joint projects utilizing the most advanced technologies including cloud technology on a demonstration basis at twelve schools in three areas since FY 2014.
3 Enrichment of university education, etc.

(1) Enrichment of university education

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

(Maintenance and improvement of the quality of educational research)
- MEXT is making efforts to maintain and improve the quality of educational research through an evaluation and certification system in which all public and private universities are periodically evaluated by evaluation organizations accredited by the MEXT Minister.

(Enhancement of advanced university education)
- MEXT is conducting the Program for Leading Graduate Schools, in which integrated degree programs for both master’s and doctoral courses are developed and provided, crossing the boundaries of specialties through industry-academia-government partnerships, thereby supporting the fundamental reform of graduate education.

(Study support services)
- MEXT is promoting efforts made in universities by disseminating the results of surveys on efforts made in each university to support students’ study activities, which have diversified.

(2) Enrichment of specialized training college education
- MEXT is making the following efforts in order to promote post-secondary training college education.
  - Professional Post-Secondary Course system, in which the MEXT Minister certifies post-secondary courses provided at specialized training colleges that are making efforts to secure the quality of more practical vocational education in an organized manner as Professional Post-Secondary Courses
  - A project to strategically promote measures including the development of core professionals in growing fields, in which educational institutions including specialized training colleges develop and demonstrate educational programs that will facilitate the learning of participants such as working adults through collaboration with industry

Section 2 Securement of Health and Peace of Mind for Children and Young People

1 Promotion of health education and the securement and promotion of health, etc.

(1) Promotion of health education
- At schools, the nursing teachers and relevant teachers collaborate and offer health guidance in an organized manner. They are also making efforts to improve first aid, health consultations, and health guidance through collaboration with relevant institutions including medical institutions in local communities.
(2) Responses to issues specific to adolescence

For the last ten years, the number of obese children has been decreasing. Meanwhile, that of underweight children has been on the increase.

![Percentage of youths classified as obese youths and underweight youths](image)

Source: "School Health Survey," MEXT

Note 1: Calculation method was changed in FY 2006.

Note 2: Obesity rates are calculated based on standard weight by gender, age, and height; youths who are at least 20% overweight are classified as obese youths, and those who are at least 20% underweight are classified as underweight youths.

Note 3: The Survey has covered upper secondary school students since FY 2006.

MEXT has prepared educational materials that comprehensively describe smoking, drinking, drug abuse, and infectious diseases and is distributing them to elementary schools, lower secondary schools, and upper secondary schools, so that children can maintain their mental and physical health by themselves.

The MHLW is providing information on the influences of smoking and drinking on people’s health through symposiums and its website. Also, it is promoting various efforts, including the dissemination of education on correct information, aiming to reduce the teenage abortion rate, the ratio of teenagers with sexually transmitted diseases, and the ratio of underweight children among children and students.

(3) Education regarding pregnancies, childbirth, and child-rearing

According to the national curriculum standard, the goal of education regarding sex to be provided at schools is to ensure that students acquire correct knowledge on pregnancy and childbirth so as to act appropriately, and accordingly, instructions are given throughout all educational activities conducted at schools.

The MHLW is making efforts to disseminate information and provide education on pregnancies, childbirth, and child-rearing, by means such as holding health classes and lectures provided by specialists including doctors and public health nurses who have expert knowledge.

(4) Support for teenage parents

The MHLW is taking regional financial measures for all of the expenses associated with the necessary number of pregnancy checkups and items in such pregnancy checkups, so that pregnant women can have such pregnancy checkups, which also serve as an opportunity for such women to receive advice on pregnancies, childbirth, and child-rearing from specialists including doctors and midwives.

(5) Securement of worry-free and safe pregnancies and childbirth, and improvement of pediatric care

Securement of worry-free and safe pregnancies and childbirth

The MHLW is making efforts to reduce the economic burdens associated with pregnancy and childbirth, to develop a system for perinatal medical care, to ensure hospitals’ preparedness to receive patients transported by ambulance, and to provide support for infertility treatment. It is also making efforts to provide information on pregnancy and childbirth, to develop counseling and support systems, and to raise public awareness of the Maternity Mark.

Improvement of regional healthcare

The MHLW is promoting projects for maternal and child health such as medical checkups and health guidance for pregnant women, infants, and preschool children provided by municipal governments. In FY 2015, it took measures such as the development of one-stop bases providing comprehensive counseling support seamlessly from the time of pregnancy through child-rearing to meet various kinds of needs (comprehensive support centers for child-rearing).
(Improvement of pediatric medicine and vaccinations)
- The 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 provision of a pediatric emergency telephone counseling service (#8000), which is intended to resolve guardians’ anxieties.

2 Improvement of counseling systems related to children and young people

1) Public announcements and awareness-raising activities concerning consultation services, etc.
- The Cabinet Office is making efforts to provide thorough information on the dedicated consultation services and consulting agencies on its website, so that children and young people can consult properly when facing difficulties such as child abuse, bullying, social withdrawal, and non-attendance at school.

2) Improvement of Child & Youth Counseling Centers
- The Cabinet Office provides training for the staff of public counseling institutions including youth centers that will be able to function as Child & Youth Counseling Centers.

3) Improvement of counseling systems in schools
- MEXT is increasing the allocation of school counselors and school social workers. MEXT also holds workshops for teachers (Figure 16).

4) Improvement of counseling systems in local communities
- The MHLW is taking measures such as promoting the establishment of Regional Centers for Child Care Support, promoting the counseling provided at mental health and welfare centers, public health centers, and child guidance centers, promoting counseling and educational activities performed by young people of the same generation who share a sense of values, providing support for counseling for children with disabilities to all guardians whose children use support for admission to facilities in principle, running the Project for a Medical Care Network for Children’s Minds, and opening the Consultation Hotline for Working Conditions.
- On July 1, 2015, the Consumer Affairs Agency began to operate a three-digit telephone number (188) as a consumer hotline available from anywhere in Japan that provides information on nearby consumer counseling centers.
(5) Measures for preventing bullying

For the last three years, there have been no drastic changes in the number of cases identified as bullying, but that of such cases at elementary schools has remained high.

The number of young people who were arrested or taken into custody by the police because of bullying decreased by about 40% in 2014 compared to that of the previous year.

### Figure 17
Number of cases identified as bullying (occurrences)

(1) Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Lower Secondary School</th>
<th>Upper Secondary School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<td>12,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Survey and Guidance on Undesirable Behavior in Students” MEXT

Note 1: Bullying is defined as follows: “acts committed by a person a student has a certain personal relationship with that have physical or psychological impacts on the student, thereby causing him/her to suffer mental and physical anguish (including those committed on the Internet).” Note that it does not matter whether the incident occurs at school or another place.

2. The survey has covered special education schools since FY 1994 and national schools, private schools, and secondary schools since FY 2006.

3. The survey methods changed in FY 2006; the number of specifically reported occurrences of bullying was counted until FY 2005, and the number of all cases identified as bullying has been counted since FY 2006.

4. The survey has covered correspondence courses provided by upper secondary schools since FY 2013.

### Figure 18
Arrests and guidance in cases resulting from bullying

(1) By school type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Lower Secondary School</th>
<th>Upper Secondary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note 1: The term “cases resulting from bullying” includes “cases of bullying” and “cases of retaliation against bullying.” “Cases of bullying” are defined as cases in which “a single person or a group physically attacks or psychologically oppresses a certain person or group (such as through intimidation, harassment, or ostracism) one-sidedly and repeatedly, thus inflicting pain on the victim(s)” (excluding cases due to conflicts between delinquent groups such as motorcycle gangs, and limited before 2013 to cases in which physical attacks or psychological oppression continued repeatedly). These cases involve crimes (including illegal behavior) committed by elementary school students, lower secondary school students, or upper secondary school students, who are arrested or given guidance by the local police.

2. Multiple answers can be given for causes or motives. The causes or motives for cases of retaliation against bullying were all included under “Other” until 2007. They have been included under each cause or motive since 2008.

### Comprehensive promotion of measures for preventing bullying

In FY 2016, MEXT will continue to comprehensively take the following measures regarding various issues related to giving guidance to students including the problem of bullying.

- Promotion of efforts made to utilize a broad range of external experts so as to provide coordination and support toward solutions for the problem of bullying
- Proactive prevention of bullying by means such as promoting moral education
- Early-stage detection and responses by means such as assigning more school counsellors and school social workers
- Increase in the quota of teachers and school staff and the enrichment of training for teachers in order to support schools addressing problematic behaviors such as bullying
- MEXT is also distributing leaflets prepared to raise the awareness of children and their guardians to boards of education, for the purpose of addressing bullying via the Internet and bullying using cellular phones (cyberbullying). MEXT established the Council for Measures to Prevent Bullying in June 2014 and held the National Children’s Summit on Bullying in January 2016.