

**The 15th ASEAN & Japan
High Level Officials Meeting On Caring Societies**

**Current Practice for the Care of
Children in the Community**

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This is a junior high school classroom. There are not only students (in blue clothes) but also toddlers and mothers. This is called a “childrearing salon”, a trilateral activity (community, school, and municipal administration) held once a month for the support of childrearing of mothers and the promotion of students’ knowledge on child development. There are 20 salons like this in Munakata City, Fukuoka Prefecture. This kind of community-based activity has become popular nationwide. It has great potential. Questions: What is the key for this new kind of community-based activity? And what is important in order to ensure their sustainability?

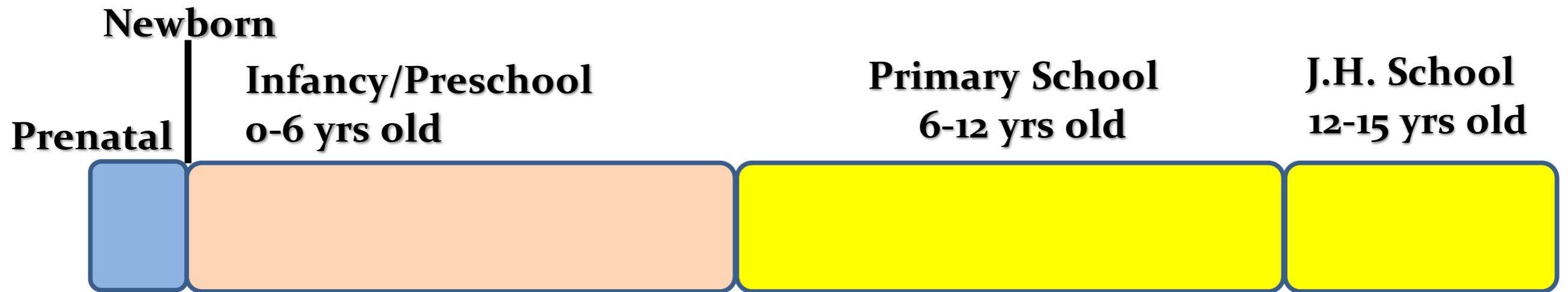
Today's Subjects

- 1. Abused children**
- 2. Children in foster homes**
- 3. Children exhibiting high levels of school absenteeism**
- 4. Children below the poverty Line**

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Official agencies handling child abuse cases



1. **Prefecture: Child Guidance Center** (One of the two authorities with the power to restrict parenting)



2. **Prefecture: Police Department** (The other authority with the power to restrict parenting)



3. **Municipality: Child Welfare Division**



4. **Municipality: Child Health Division**



5. **Municipality: Board of Education, Schools**



There are at least 5 agencies/sectors in charge of child abuse, which causes inter-section communication problems. On the other hand, as community is not divided into sections, community activity could be flexible.

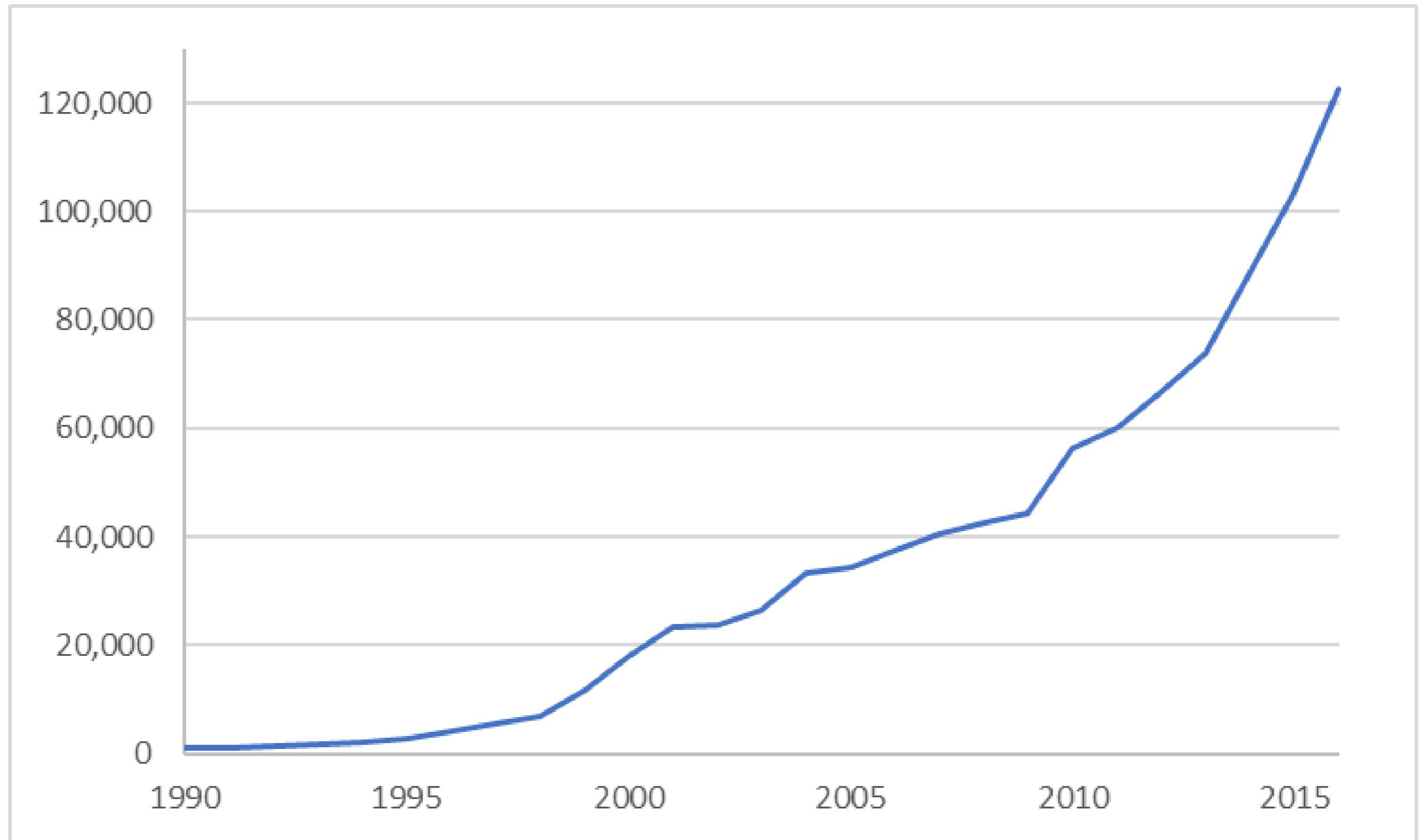
Related Acts concerning **child abuse**

- 1. Child Welfare Act, 1947**
- 2. Child Abuse Prevention Act, 2000**

Definition of child abuse written in the Act #2:

Physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect

Reported numbers of child abuse case to Child Guidance Centers



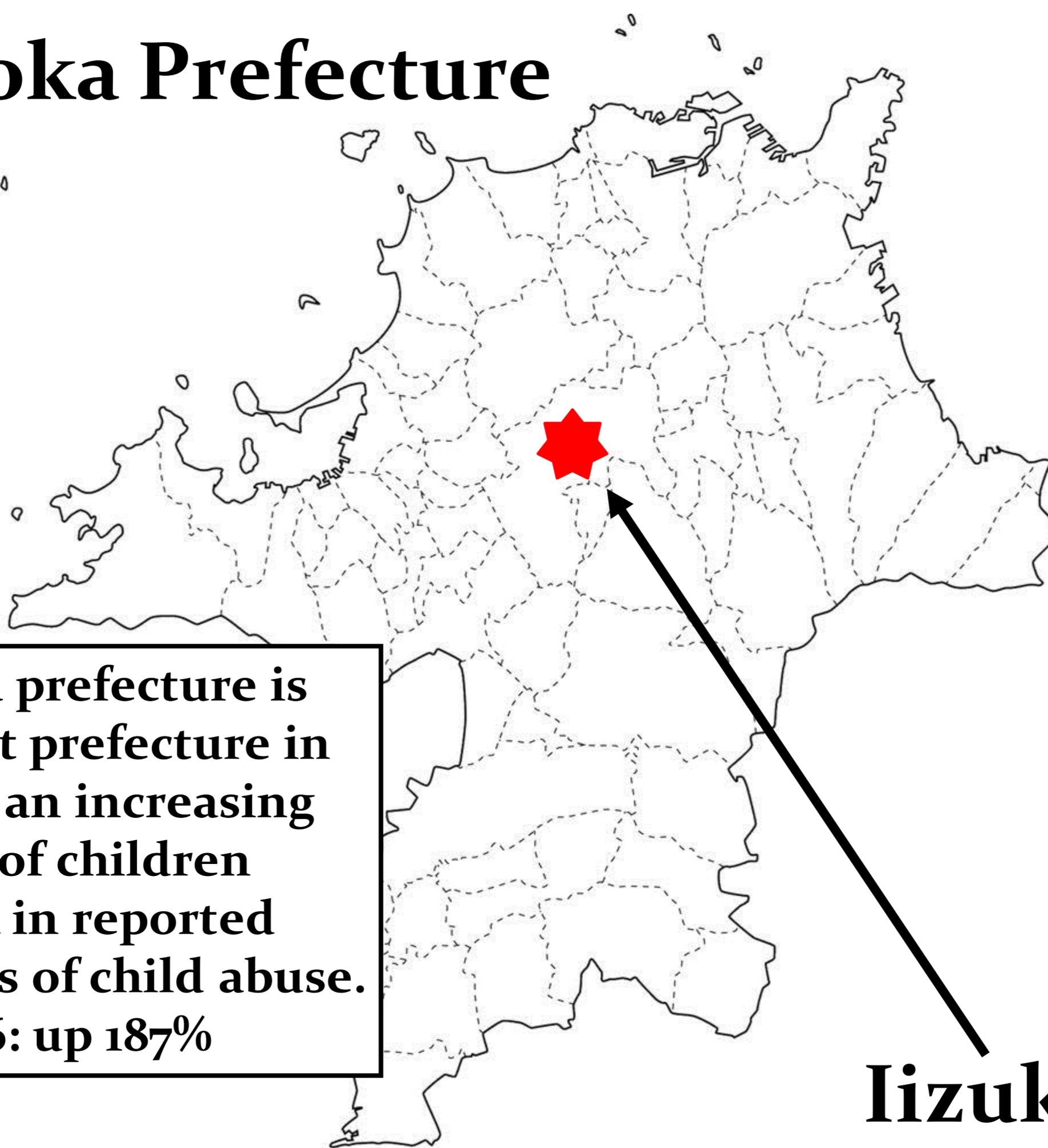
Child Guidance Center: 208 centers, nationwide

Cooperation regarding **child abuse**

- 1. Every municipality must establish “Local councils determining measures for children who need protection”, based on legal provisions and cooperating with relevant organizations, including community groups.**
- 2. Various kinds of community-based support networks run across the nation.**

Two cases to be shown: Iizuka City, Fukuoka, Japan

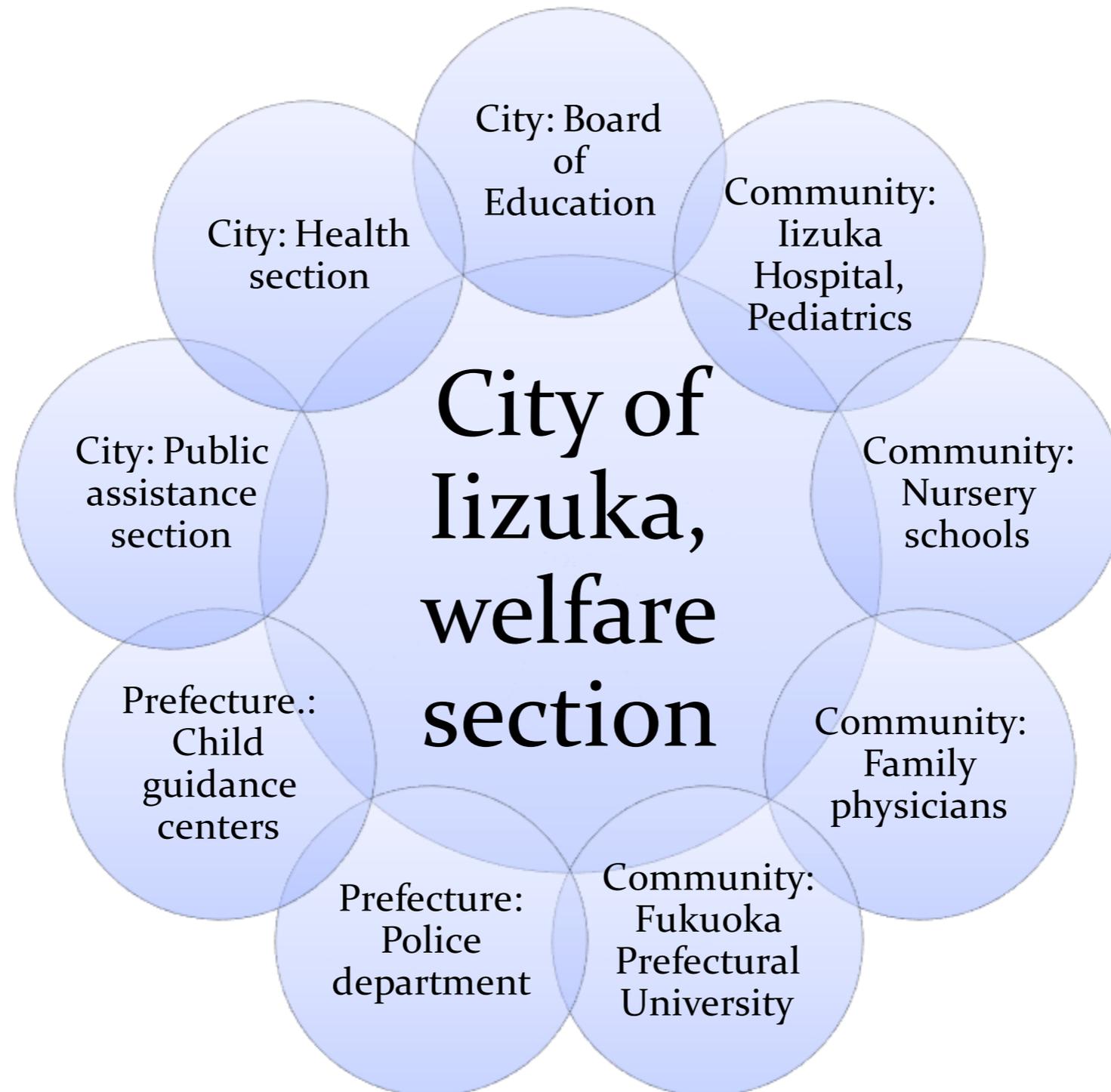
Fukuoka Prefecture



Fukuoka prefecture is the worst prefecture in terms of an increasing number of children involved in reported instances of child abuse. 2015-2016: up 187%

Iizuka City

Council measures concerning children who need protection



City of Iizuka

Council measures concerning children who need protection*

- 1. City: Welfare section (secretariat of the council)**
- 2. City: Health section**
- 3. City: Public Assistance section**
- 4. City: Board of Education**
- 5. Prefecture: Tagawa Child Guidance Center**
- 6. Prefecture: Police department**
- 7. Community: Iizuka Hospital, Pediatrics**
- 8. Community: Family physicians**
- 9. Community: Fukuoka Prefectural University**
- 10. Community: Nursery schools**

***All reported cases have been reviewed/updated in terms of their measures.**



Council of City of Kita-akita, from website of the city

Iizuka Hospital

Community Child Protection Team*

1. Cases are reviewed in order to determine the effectiveness and the speed of the team's response. For privacy reasons, only a limited number of team members are interviewed.
2. A better community network for saving children is the constant objective.
3. Concerning child abuse prevention, campaigns are run in cooperation with local communities.
4. A research project, creating an information system for ALL children from prenatal period to 15 years of age, has been started (at Kama City).

***Meetings are held every month.**

Community Child Protection Team



Iizuka Hospital*

Community Child Protection Team

1. Iizuka Hospital, Pediatric division
2. Iizuka Hospital, Pediatric Surgery division
3. Iizuka Municipal Hospital, Pediatric division
4. Head of Nursery School Network
5. Head of residents' association in an impoverished area
6. Head of community child-rearing network
7. A city councilor
8. A lawyer
9. A local gynecologist
10. Fukuoka Prefectural University
11. City of Iizuka, health section & welfare section

***Many local abused children are taken to this hospital.**



The community child-protection team at a buzz session in the hospital

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Related Act concerning foster homes

- 1. Child Welfare Act, 1947**

Foster homes are one of the 14 “child welfare institutions” receiving public support.

Child welfare institutions

1. Midwifery center
2. Infants' center
3. Maternal and child-rearing support facility
4. Nursery center
5. Children's recreational facility
6. Foster home
7. Institution for mentally retarded children
8. Daycare institution for mentally retarded children
9. Institution for blind or deaf children
10. Institution for orthopedically impaired children
11. Institution for severely retarded children
12. Short-term therapeutic institution for emotionally disturbed children
13. Child self-reliance support facility
14. Child and family support center

Statistics regarding **foster homes**

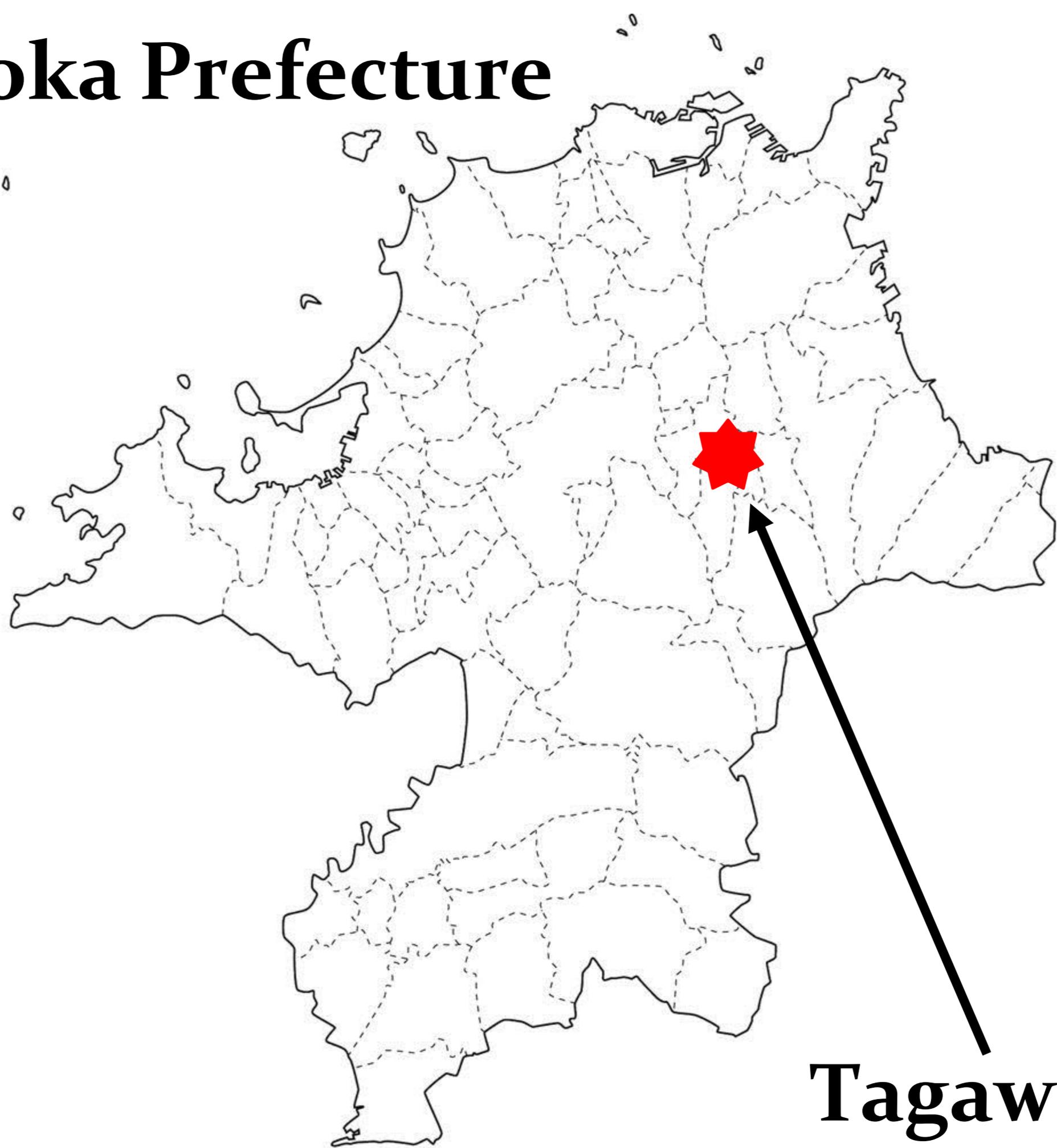
- 1. The number of foster homes: 603, nationwide (2016).**
- 2. The number of children living in foster homes is 27,288 (2016).**
- 3. Residential styles are changing from a 'large group style' to a 'small family style'.**
- 4. The main reason for admission is child abuse (37.9% 2013), instances of which are increasing.**
- 5. The proportion of those with disabilities is 28.5% (2013), which is increasing.**
 - 1st intellectual disability (43.1%),**
 - 2nd pervasive developmental disorder (18.4%)**

Facts: children in foster homes

- 1. The percentage of children who suffered abused is 59.5%.**
- 2. Those from single-mother families are 45.4%.**
- 3. Those who never had any contact with any family member are 18.0%.**
- 4. Those who will stay in the foster home until becoming an adult is 55.1%.**
- 5. Those who exhibit low level of academic performance are 34.6%.**
- 6. Those who exhibit a deficiency in terms of social norms of behavior are 25.3%.**
- 7. Among 15-18 year-olds, those who are victims of bullying are 34.7% (boys 29.7%, girls 40.5%).**
- 8. Among 15-18 year-olds, those who have experience of traveling are 22.0% (few family/joyful experiences).**

Community activity in Tagawa area will be shown.

Fukuoka Prefecture

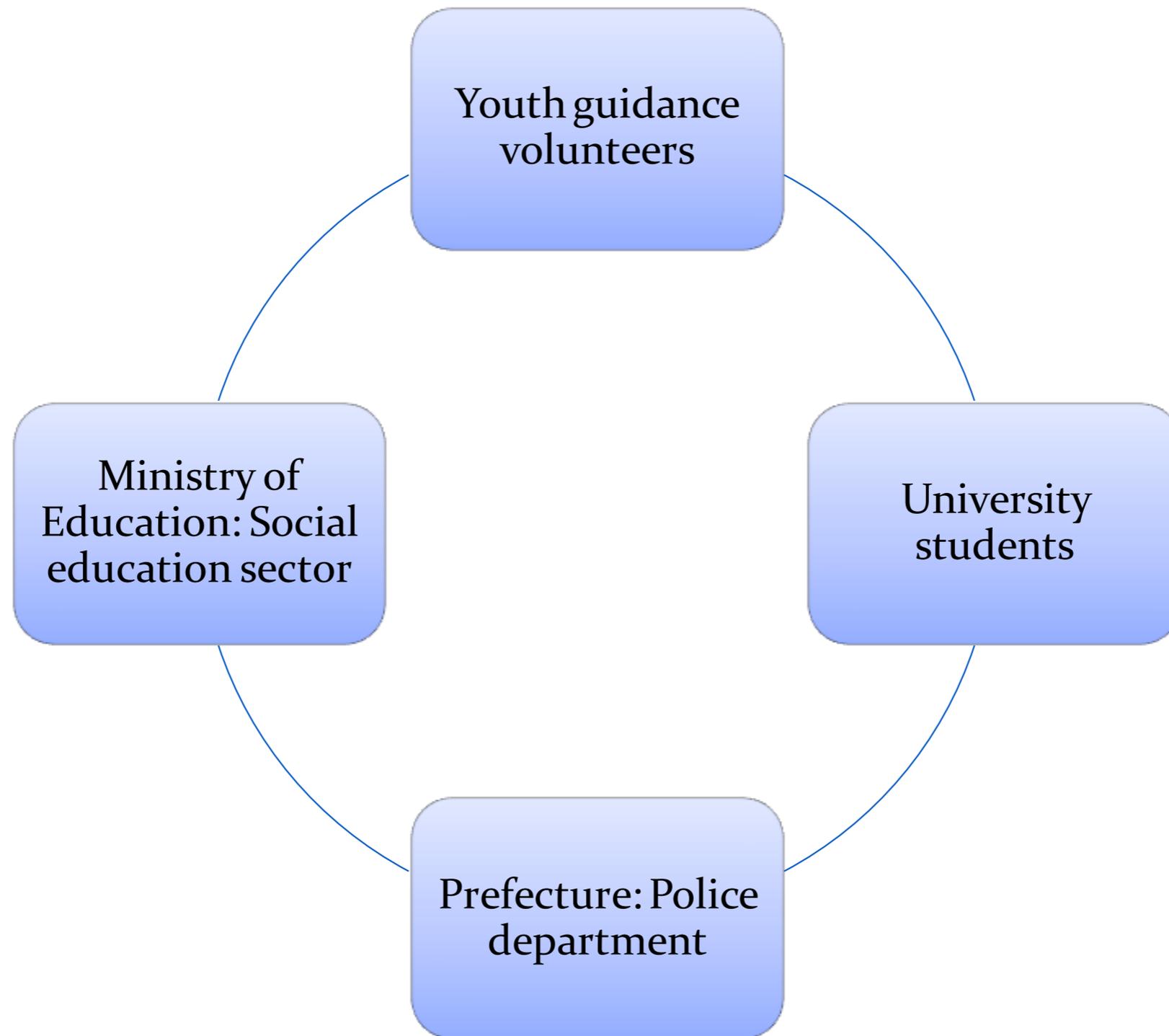


Tagawa area

Community support in Tagawa

- 1. To combat a deficiency in social norms regarding behavior, local youth guidance volunteers, police officers and university students are working together to give children opportunities in sports activities, so as to imbue them with experience and greater emotional control.**
- 2. To combat low academic performance, university students have given the children study support after school.**
- 3. To combat their lack of family experience, the social education sector of the Ministry of Education (MEXT) and university students lead them on a two-day excursion outside of the foster home.**

Community support for children in foster homes





Children from foster homes enjoying planting seeds outside of a government facility

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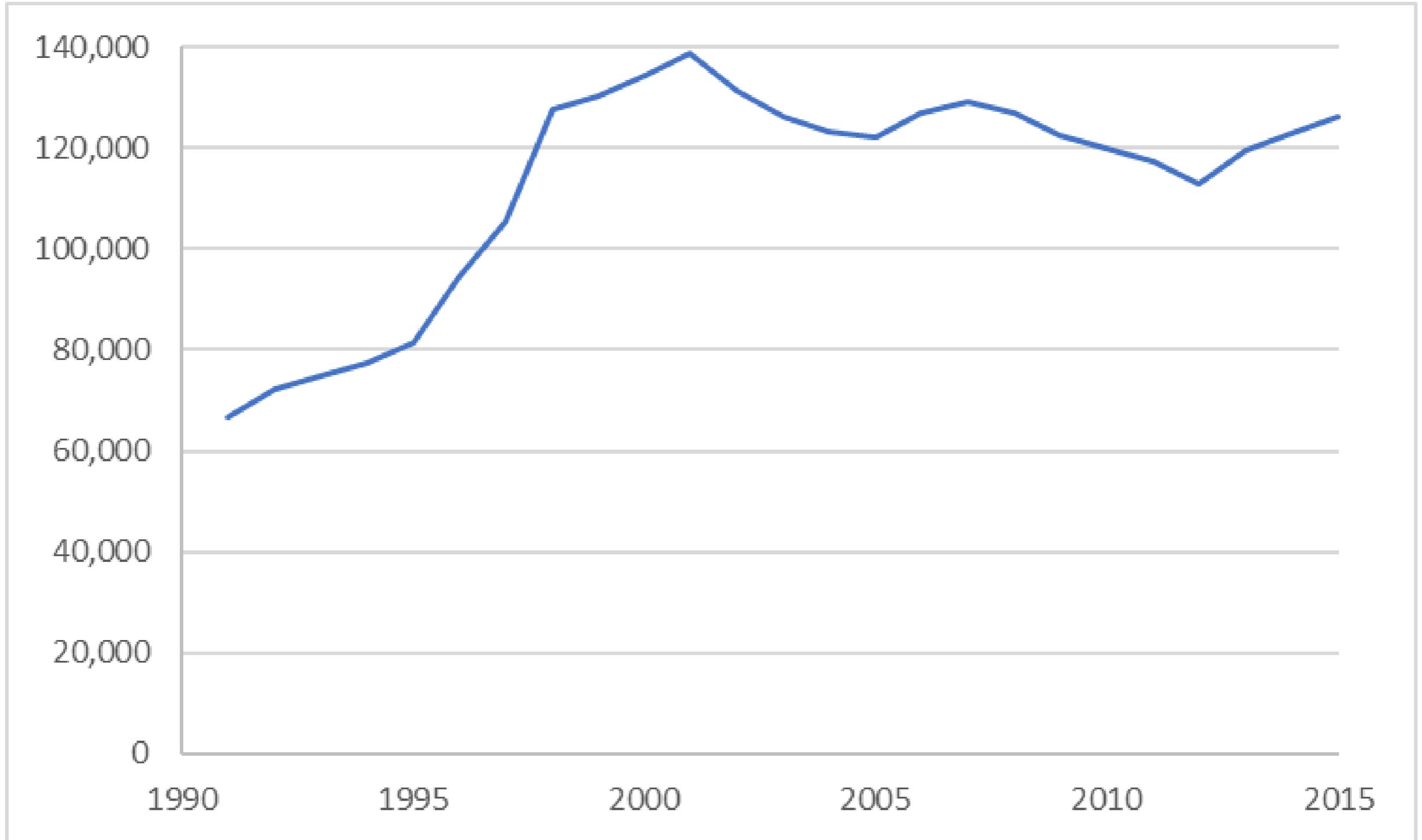
Related Acts concerning **absenteeism**

- 1. Guarantee for Education Opportunity Act, 2016**

Alternative schools, e.g. free-schools, are accepted as an option.

Number of students exhibiting school absenteeism

Data for Compulsory Education: Primary school and Junior High school



The most recent number is 126,009 [12.6 per 1,000 students].

The current situation regarding absenteeism

- 1. The definition for school absenteeism is “more than 30 days absence from school over a year (excluding illness-related absence)”.**
- 2. The percentage of those who school absentees who were absent for more than 90 days was 57.4% (2015 data).**
- 3. “Apathy” is the most prevalent factor (30.2%).**
- 4. Factors contributing to “apathy” are “family malfunction” and “low academic performance”.**

Absenteeism continues...

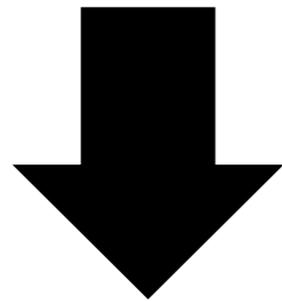
Resulting in

- i) Incomplete high-school education**
- ii) An inability to interact with society in adulthood**

About 60% of children exhibiting absenteeism from school later suffer from a inability to interact with society in adulthood. Health and/or welfare services hardly ever reach out to them. Prevention is the key.

Withdrawal from school/society

a) Absenteeism from school



b) Social withdrawal: “Hikikomori”

“Hikikomori” is a Japanese phenomenon in which a young person, usually male, withdraws entirely from society, isolating and often confining themselves to their home.

Social withdrawal: “Hikikomori”

Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010

Pronunciation: /hiˌkɛkəˈmɔːri/

noun (plural same)

(in Japan) the abnormal avoidance of social contact, typically by adolescent males

• a person who avoids social contact

Origin:

Japanese, literally 'staying indoors, (social) withdrawal'

Estimated number of social withdrawal (15-39 yrs), 2015

	Estimated number all over Japan (in thousand)	
<i>Go out only when they have tasks concerning their hobbies, though they stay home usually</i>	365	Semi withdrawal
Go out to nearby places such as convenience stores, though they stay home usually	121	
<i>Don't go outside of their homes, though they do go outside of their rooms</i>	55	Withdrawal in a narrow sense
almost never go outside of their rooms		
<i>Sum up</i>	541	Withdrawal in a broad sense

Semi withdrawal



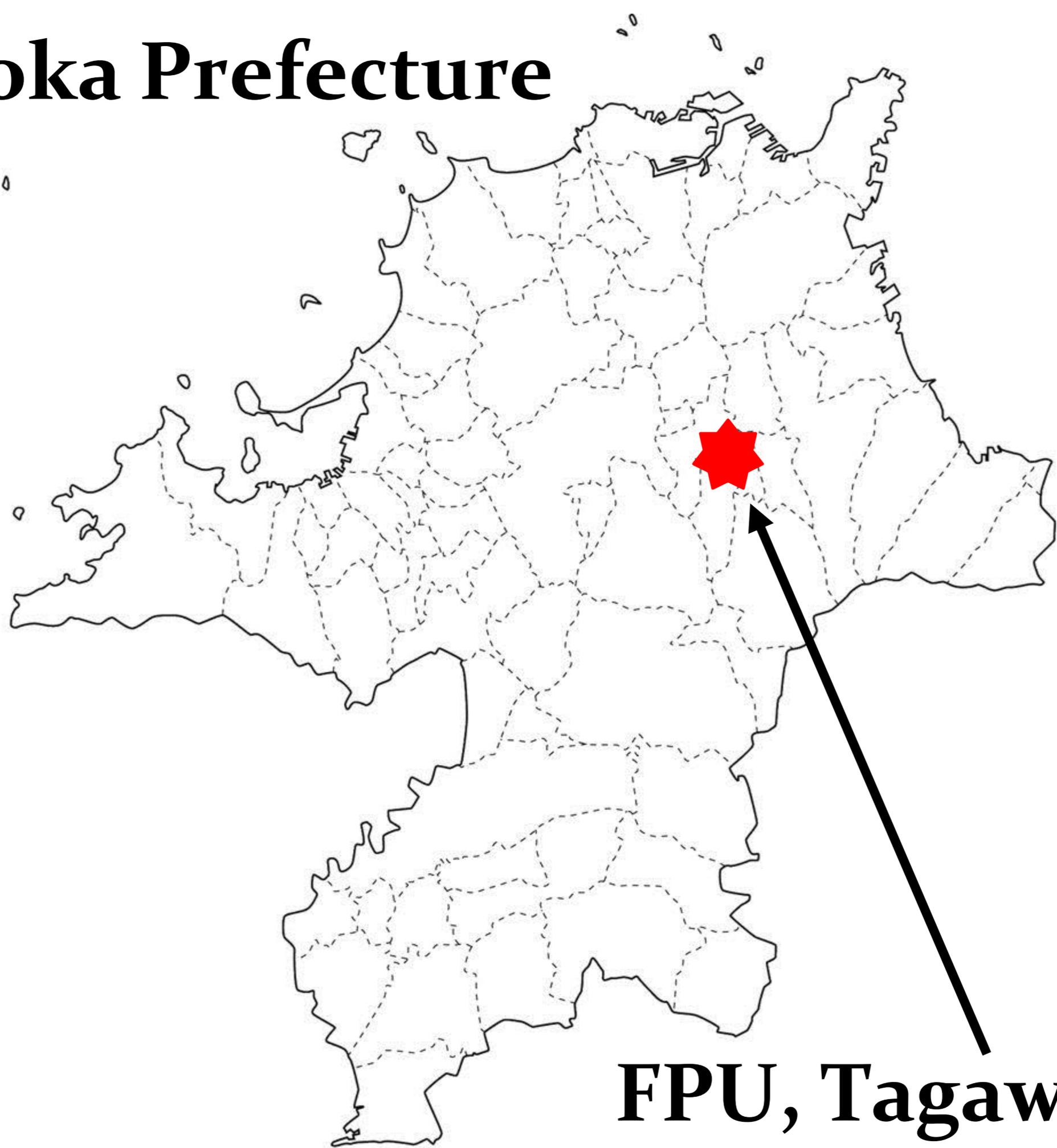
Withdrawal in a narrow sense



Withdrawal in a broad sense

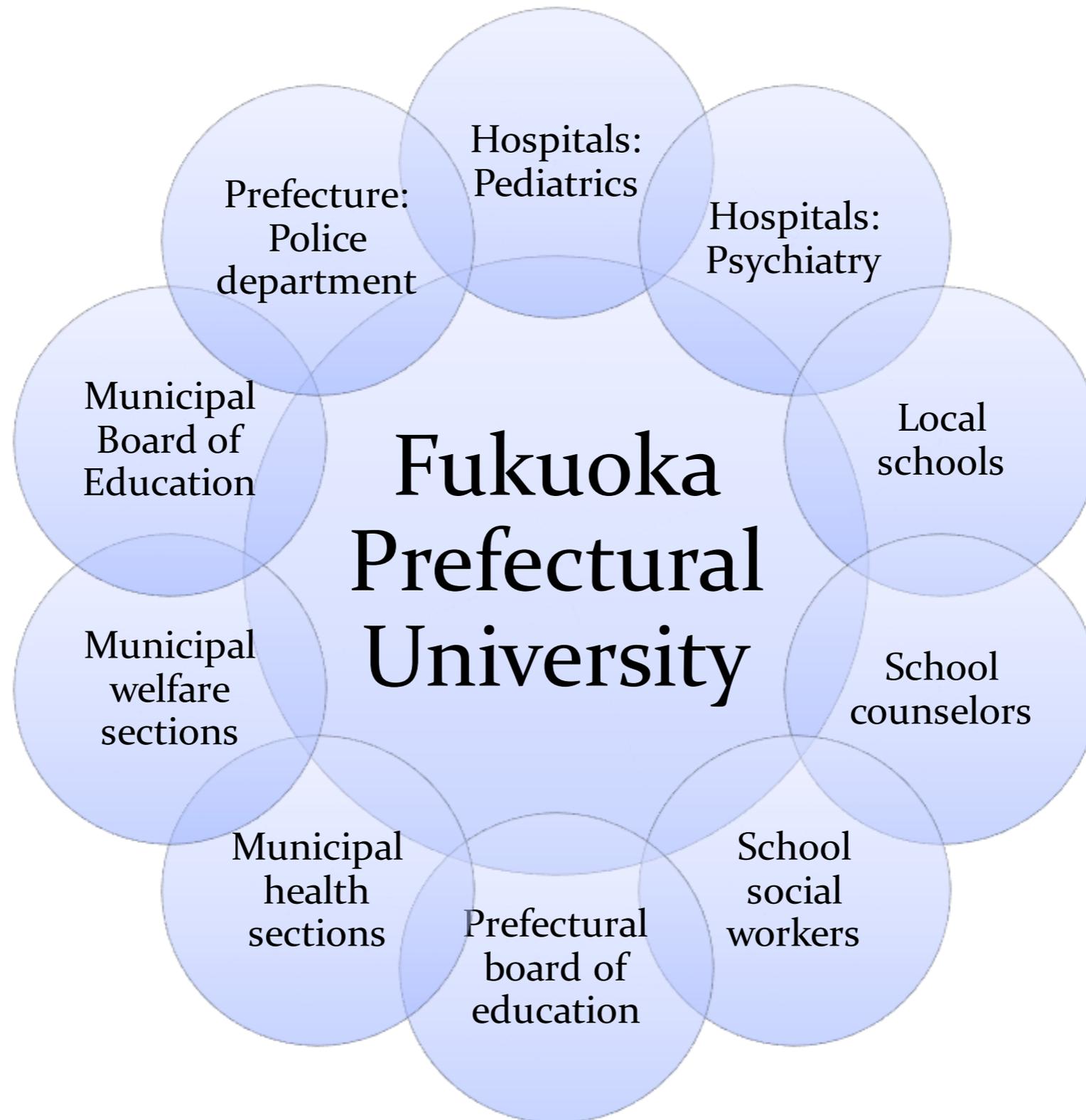


Fukuoka Prefecture



FPU, Tagawa City

Community support for children exhibiting absenteeism



Fukuoka Prefectural University (FPU)

- 1. FPU has a Support Center for Children exhibiting Absenteeism -- the only institution in any Japanese university (779 universities).**
- 2. The center gives consultation to parents, teachers, and related persons (3,766 total cases, 2016FY).**
- 3. The center runs an alternative school (free school) for children exhibiting absenteeism, the only free school run by any Japanese university.**
- 4. More than 60% of children attending the free school go back to school -- a good percentage.**
- 5. The university students help children exhibiting absenteeism in terms of their communication, classroom study, and with outdoor activities (3,015 person-times, 2016FY).**
- 6. The center held inter-sector (including local government) case conferences (80 times a year).**



The free school in FPU. Around 10-14 students from various schools (primary, junior-high, high schools) are attending the class, open every weekday, 8:30-17:00.



The free school at FPU. A volunteer teacher (graduate student) teaches a science class. The classroom hours are aligned to the university class hours, so as to enable the participation of the university students.



An outdoor activity for children exhibiting absenteeism, conducted by FPU students. The children came from the Free School at FPU and other facilities in Fukuoka Prefecture.



Day 1 of the outdoor activity: Children tried to make meals for themselves, with FPU students' support. They had seldom experienced this kind of group activity previously.



Day 2 of the outdoor activity: As a big typhoon was approaching, they enjoyed indoor activities at a prefectural facility run by the social education department.

Today's Subjects

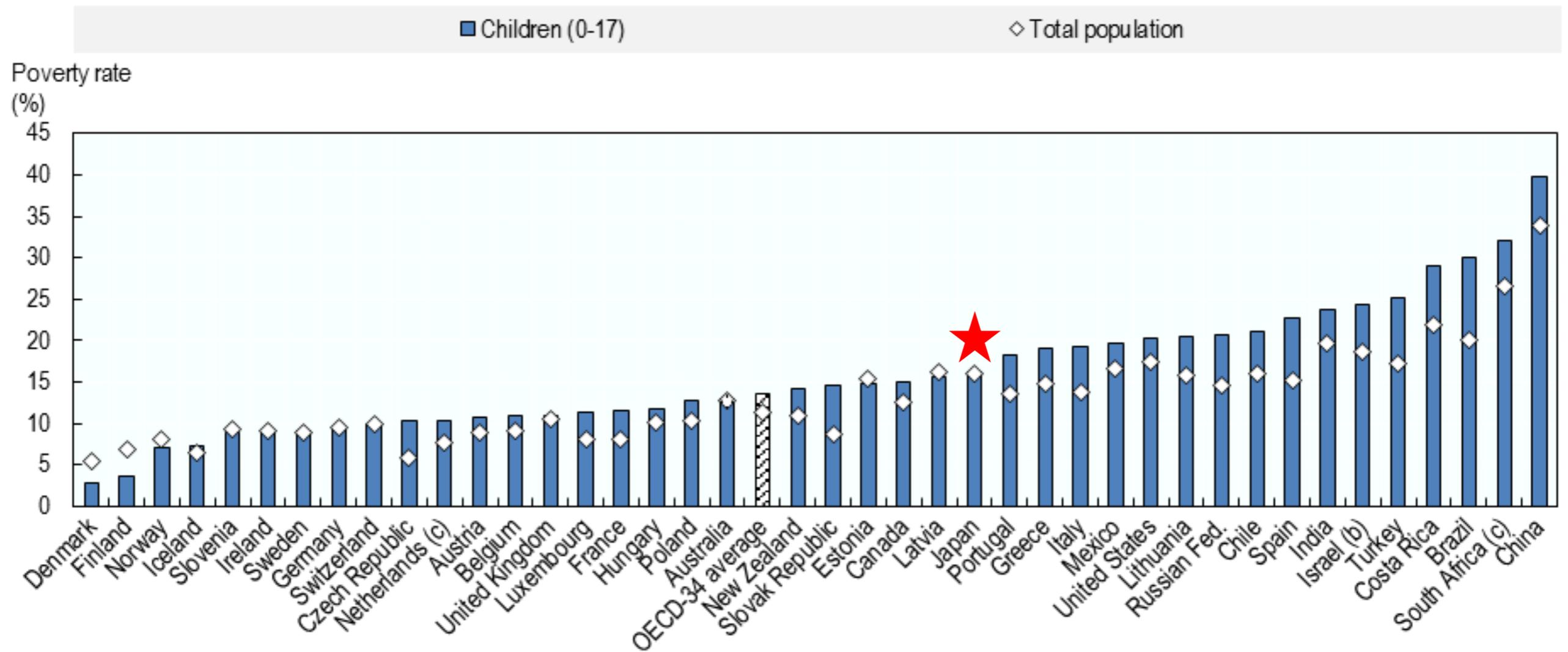
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Related Acts for children in poverty

- 1. Public Assistance Act, 1950**
- 2. Act on Aid for School Attendance, 1956**
- 3. Child Allowance Act, 1961**
- 4. Act on the Advancement of Measures to Support Children in Poverty, 2013**

Child income poverty rates, 2014 (OECD)

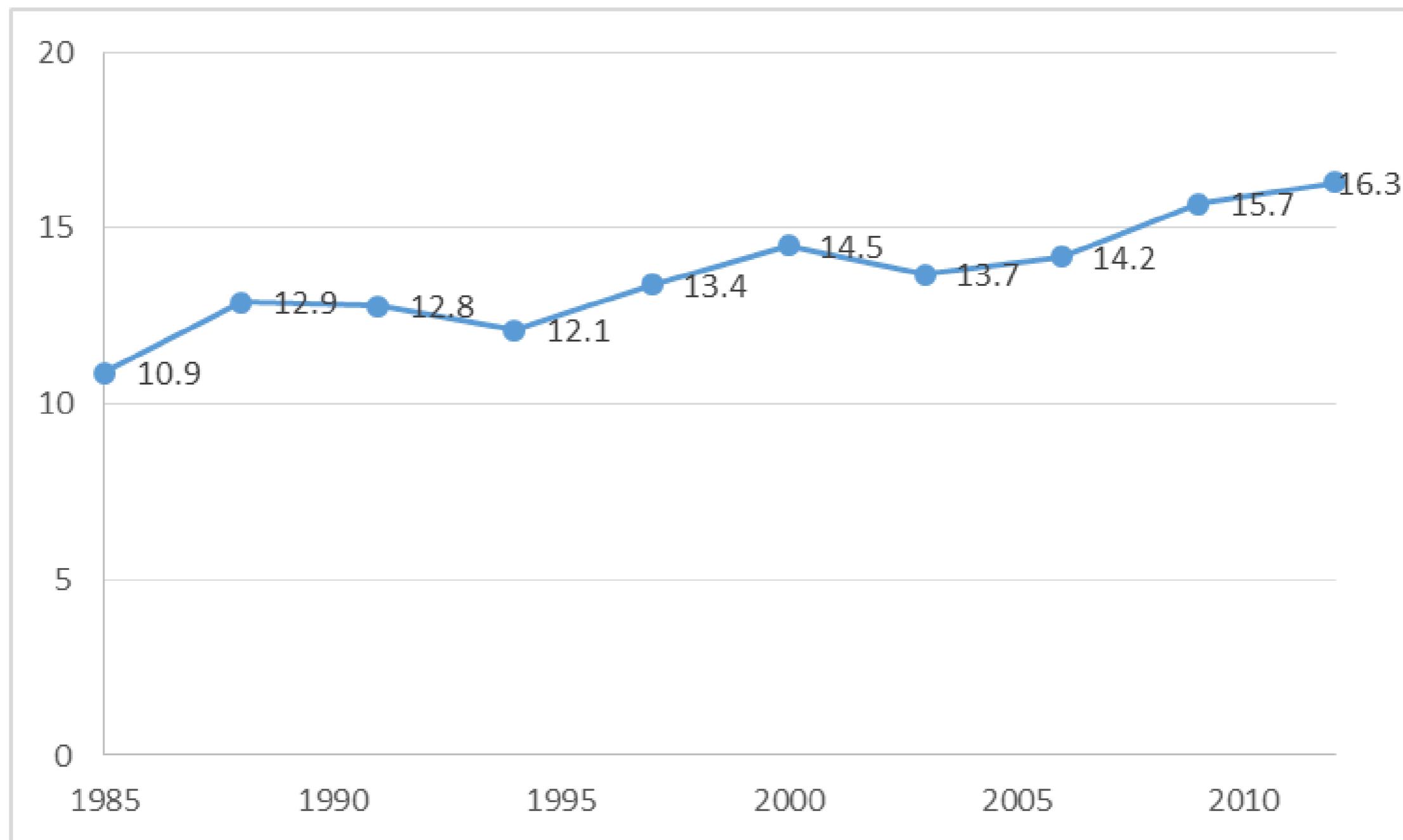
Share (%) of the total population and of children (0-17) with an equivalised post-tax-and-transfer income of less than 50% of the national annual median equivalised post-tax and transfer income



Japan: 16.3% for children in 2014, up from 15.7% in 2009

Child income poverty rates, 1985-2012 (Japan)

Share (%) of the total population and of children (0-17) with an equivalised post-tax-and-transfer income of less than 50% of the national annual median equivalised post-tax and transfer income



Poverty rates in households with children and a working-age head, by household type and household employment status, 2014 (OECD)

Proportion (%) of individuals in households with children and a working-age head with an equivalised post-tax-and-transfer income of less than 50% of the national annual median equivalised post-tax-and-transfer income

Household type: Employment status:	All households with a working age head	Single adult with at least one child ^b		Two or more adults with at least one child ^b		
		Jobless	One worker	Jobless	One worker	Two or more workers
OECD-33 average	-	64.2	23.2	59.4	20.7	4.2
Australia	10.8	76.1	17.7	59.3	12.2	1.3
Norway	8.7	54.9	14.3	57.0	18.5	1.3
Iceland	..	28.0	27.9	15.2	26.6	2.1
New Zealand	10.8	90.2	22.9	56.5	13.5	3.1
United States	16.8	86.8	32.2	64.9	25.6	5.1
Chile	16.5	79.1	34.3	63.8	30.9	5.2
Canada	13.0	96.0	32.3	88.9	32.6	5.3
Israel (c)	17.8	73.0	21.8	81.8	47.3	5.6
Mexico	16.0	52.6	34.3	55.4	26.1	9.6
Japan	14.9	47.4	56.0	51.8	13.2	11.4
Turkey	17.2	44.0	20.9	48.2	24.1	14.1
Korea	..	..	..	..	..	..
Switzerland	..	..	..	..	..	..



Japan: World highest rate (56.0%) re. single-parent families; working-poor

Statistics regarding children in poverty

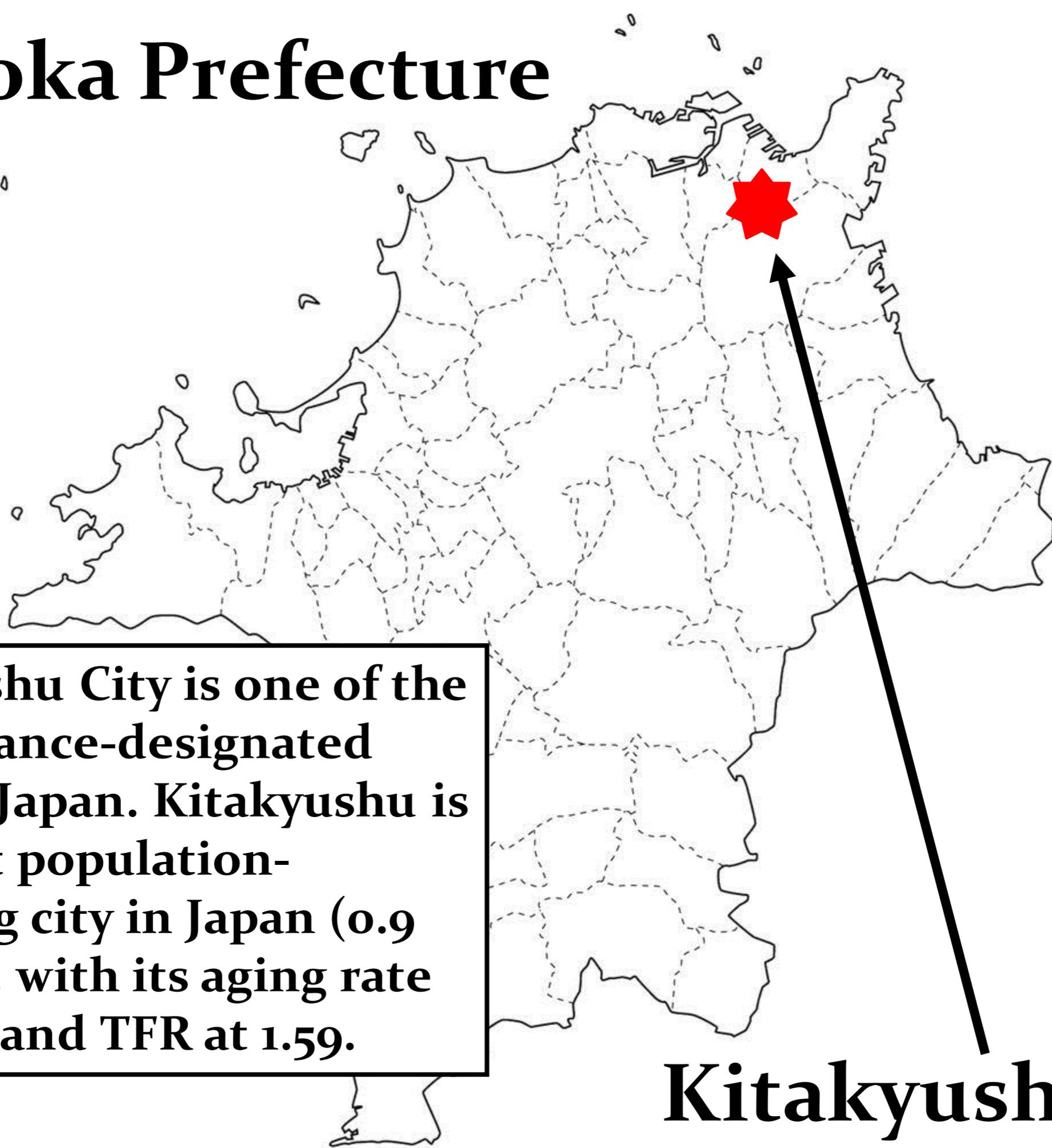
- 1. The number of single-parent families was 1.46 million in 2011, up from 1.02 million in 1988.**
- 2. About 85% of single-parent families were single-mother families (1.23 million).**
- 3. The number of families with children was 12.09 million in 2012, 7.6% of which were single-parent.**
- 4. Single-mother families: divorce (80.8%), unmarried (7.8%), and bereavement (7.5%).**
- 5. Average of annual income (2011) for single-mother families was 2.52 million JPY, compared with 6.58 million JPY for families with children.**
- 6. Poverty: 37.2% of single-mother families are living on income of under 2 million JPY a year.**

Community support for **children in poverty**

- 1. “Working-poor” families are socially invisible.**
- 2. In Bunkyo ward in Tokyo, a NPO deliver food to 1,000 families with children below the poverty level. Their objectives are to provide communication and social support and to prevent child abuse.**
- 3. Community-based “Cafeterias for Children” are becoming popular (more than 400 nationwide).**
- 4. The cafeterias provide not only meals for children but also study support (homework).**
- 5. The cafeterias welcome any child including those below the poverty level, with free-of-charge or cheap money, e.g. 100 JPY, food and drink.**

Cafeteria for Children in Kitakyushu City will be shown.

Fukuoka Prefecture



Kitakyushu City is one of the 20 ordinance-designated cities in Japan. Kitakyushu is the most population-declining city in Japan (0.9 million), with its aging rate at 29.6% and TFR at 1.59.

Kitakyushu City

Cafeteria for Children in Kitakyushu

- 1. There are 8 cafeterias in Kitakyushu; 2 of them are officially funded (2.5 mil. JPY for each) and 6 of them are community-run.**
- 2. The City of Kitakyushu has a specific section for cafeterias in its Child-Support Bureau, which set up a network of cafeterias.**
- 3. A food-bank NPO (“Life-Again”) plays a key role in collecting donating surplus food which is safe for consumption.**
- 4. The City of Kitakyushu and NPOs in cooperation with Fukuoka Prefecture are making an effort to collect food from more companies/stores.**

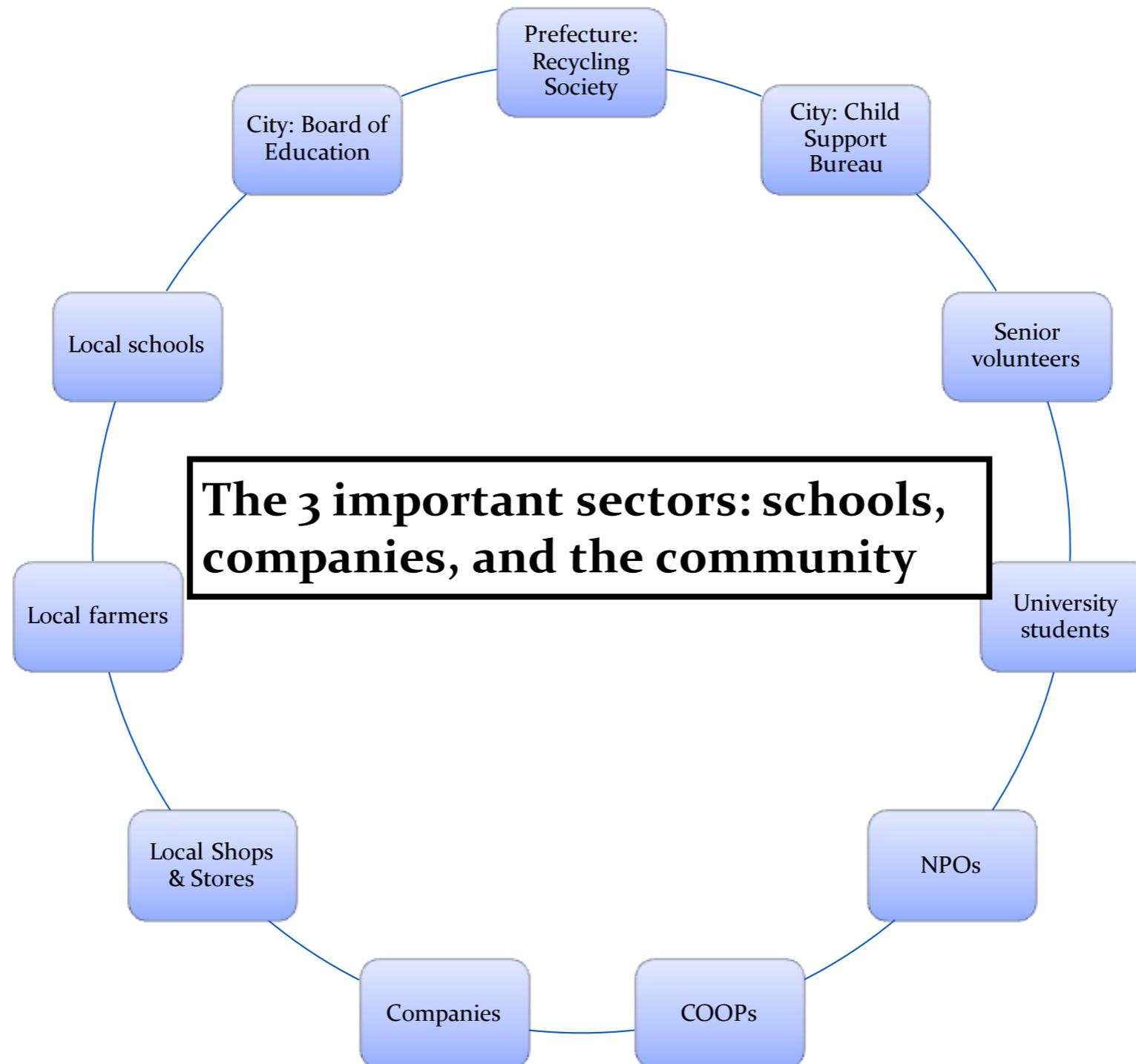
Division of Recycling Society of the Prefecture in charge of the mission.

Commitment to the community

- 1. Most of the cafeterias in Kitakyushu are open once a week at community centers (only one is run by a real café).**
- 2. At the community centers; senior volunteers are cooking meals under the supervision of the city.**
- 3. Some of the seniors are living alone and isolated from society, and so are making community ties.**
- 4. University student volunteers support children in their homework, forming thereby study-habits after school.**
- 5. The cafeterias play a role in the early detection of school absenteeism and child neglect.**

Hygiene management and the nutritional calculation of meals are the city's role.

Cafeteria for Children in Kitakyushu



Municipal administration (City of Kitakyushu) plays an invisible and important role; collecting food, keeping up the quality of the meals, explaining the service to schools, and detecting children in trouble.

Daily meals

Ogura community center



Hiagari community center



The meals are free of charge, because these two sites are public funded.

About 10 volunteers are committed to preparing the meals at each site.

Hygiene and nutritional aspects



The City of Kitakyushu sends professional staff members to these two sites every open-day for hygienic and nutritional management and advice.



Preparing meals by community volunteers



Everyone joins together at the dining table

At the cafeteria in Hiagari, not only the children but also the senior volunteers and university students sit at the table. The principal and the assistant principal of the local school often join them, thereby empowering their pupils.



After-meal activities

University student volunteers provide study support after meals. Hand-crafts and indoor sports are the other type of menu.



Lessons from Cafeteria for Children

Many community-based Cafeterias for Children have been closed in Japan, because of the difficulties in providing sustainable management.

On the other hand, Cafeterias for Children with the support of many sectors (official or private) are still viable and vigorous.

The most important role for the local administration is to join and connect as many sectors as are required, and at any level (official, community, and private levels).

This is the key factor in community-based activities for the development and empowerment of caring a society.

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Thank you for your kind attention.

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