

Panel Session:

Collaboration in Health/Welfare Services for Children/Youths Needing Support, and Capacity Development for Human Resources in Regional Societies

Support for Youths in Yokohama City



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Overview of Yokohama City



Yokohama is the Prefectural Capital of Kanagawa, located in the eastern part of Kanagawa Prefecture, within a radius of about 30 – 40 km from the heart of Tokyo, which is the capital of Japan. Yokohama City is a city designated by government ordinance, and has 18 administrative wards. As of October 1, 2018, its total population is 3,740,182, the highest among all the cities, towns and villages of Japan.

The population for each administrative ward ranges from about 100,000 – 350,000 people.

Policies related to children and youths come under the jurisdiction of the Child and Youth Bureau

Has one Regional Support Center for Hikikomori

Has one Mental Health and Welfare Center

3 – 6 social workers in charge of mental health and welfare are assigned to each administrative ward

Implements the Independence Consultation Support Project for the Poor and Needy in 18 administrative ward

Hikikomori

In Japan, "hikikomori" is defined as a concept related to the phenomenon of avoiding social participation (attending school including compulsory education, employment including part-time work, companionship outside of the home, etc.) as a result of various factors, and of continuing to stay mostly at home for more than six months in principle (including going out without interacting with others).

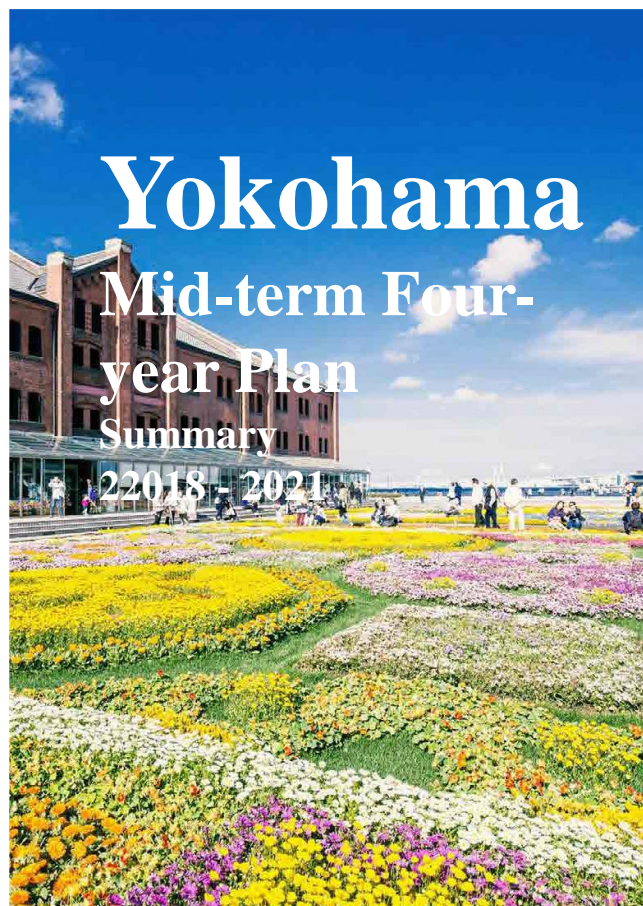
It is said that the increase in the number of domestic issues due to the growth of nuclear families, the concept of dominance over the family from the influence of Confucian culture, and cultural factors such as social views that place an emphasis on homogeneity, influence people to become hikikomori. Due to such reasons, the problem of hikikomori is debated as a mental health issue known as culture-bound syndrome in Japan.

It is also argued that the fact that the link between the educational system and employment is no longer guaranteed has become one of the factors leading to the hikikomori problem.

According to surveys conducted by the Cabinet Office, the number of hikikomori youths in Japan is estimated at 540,000 (2015 survey).

In Yokohama City, according to surveys conducted in FY2017 on the Actual Situation of Children and Youths in Yokohama City as well as on the living situation of citizens, the number of hikikomori from 15 to 39 years old is estimated to be 15,000, while the number of hikikomori from 40 to 64 years old is estimated to be 12,000.

Yokohama Mid-Term Four-Year Plan (2018 – 2021)



Strategy 5 Development of diverse human resources who can create the future

Policy 29 A city where children and youths are nurtured by the society as a whole

★Goals and direction of policy

To realize the independence of youths facing difficulties such as hikikomori, in addition to promoting initiatives for the early detection and early support of problems, support will be provided in phases corresponding to the condition of the person in question.

★Current status and challenges

Amidst the increasing trend in the number of youths suffering from hikikomori, it is important to put in place efforts that contribute to the early detection of youths facing difficulties and to the provision of appropriate support for them, as well as initiatives to prevent them from developing such difficulties to begin with.

★Primary measure 2 Support for youths facing difficulties

Efforts will be made to provide support in phases corresponding to the condition of the person in question, such as by providing personal consultation services and a place of belonging to support the independence of youths facing difficulties such as unemployment and hikikomori, and the implementation of social experiences and job training at Youth Consultation Centers, Regional Youth Plazas, Youth Support Stations, Yokohama Self-reliance School for Young People. Furthermore, visiting consultations to nearby regions, etc. will also be promoted to prompt independence-support organizations, etc. to provide support to youths facing difficulties in the early stages.

◆ Yokohama Child / Childrearing Support Services Plan (2015 - 2019)



Area of measures 1

Basic measure (4) Enhancing support for helping young people become independent

Goals / direction of policy

1. Provide sufficient support for consultations through facilities which help young people become independent.
2. Initiate support of a kind that enables young people experiencing difficulties to take their first steps towards independence in coordination with a range of social resources.
3. Put in place environments in which each and every child, irrespective of their family circumstances, can approach their learning with enthusiasm and develop at their own pace, with the eventual aim of becoming independent individuals.
4. Undertake to make early detection and swift support in society as a whole in regards to issues surrounding children and young people.

◆ Yokohama City Plan for Measures Against Child Poverty (2016 – 2020)



Measure 4 Empowering young people who live under difficult financial circumstances

- Consultation and support projects at Youth Consultation Centers
- Regional Youth Plaza projects
- Youth Support Station projects
- Support through the Yokohama Self-reliance School for Young People
- Development and dispatch of support partners
- Yokohama City Child and Youth Support Council

Yokohama City Youth Consultation Center

– Fulfilling the Core Functions of Three Organizations

< Objectives >

While collaborating with organizations, etc. that aim to realize the sound development of youths, it aims to provide comprehensive consultation for youths as well as support for their independence and social participation.

●Targets

Young people between 15 – 39 years old in general, and their families

Offers primary consultation on hikikomori regardless of age

●Date of establishment

August 1963

●Consultation/Support methods

Phone consultation, in-person consultation at the Center, outreach

●Support activities

Group activities, stay-over experience, family seminars, family psychological education, psychological tests, visits by youth supporters, etc.

Exterior



Consultation room



Regional Youth Plaza

– Functions as a Branch Office of the Youth Consultation Center while Building Regional Networks

< Objectives >

In addition to providing primary general consultation for puberty and adolescent problems, and operation as a place of belonging for youths in the recovery phase from hikikomori, it also aims to collaborate with organizations such as NPOs and ward governments to implement support activities for youths in the region, and engage in activities that are rooted in the region.

<Targets>

Young people between 15 – 39 years old residing in Yokohama City, and their families

West Youth Plaza

October 2007

(Hodogaya-ku)

South Youth Plaza

November 2008

(Isogo-ku)

North Youth Plaza

March 2010

(Tsuzuki-ku)

East Youth Plaza

March 2013

(Tsurumi-ku)

<Project contents>

- Primary general consultation (phone consultation, in-person consultation at the Plaza, etc.)
- Expert consultation for youths facing difficulties, such as hikikomori, in the administrative wards
- Operation as a place of belonging for youths in the recovery phase from hikikomori
- Implementation of social experiences and job experience programs
- Collaboration with regional support organizations and ward governments, and creation of community networks
- Development and dispatch of support partners
- Implementation of youth support seminars and consultation sessions for hikikomori, etc.
- Other support projects for youth independence as deemed necessary by the mayor of Yokohama City

Place of belonging



Regional Youth Support Station

– Employment Support Organization

< Objectives >

It aims to realize social independence and occupational independence for youths through the building of networks with the region, corporations, and NPOs, etc., as well as the provision of comprehensive and continuous support toward the social participation and employment of unemployed youths and socially withdrawn youths.

< Targets >

Young people from 15 – 39 years old and their families

< Project contents >

- Consultation (with person in question and parents/guardian) aimed at realizing occupational independence
- Individual consultation provided by clinical psychologists, etc.
- Implementation of seminars (relearning, building physical strength, etc.), and experiential programs
- Promotion of collaboration with support stations and schools
- Promotion of the acquisition of job qualifications (financial support for acquiring qualifications, etc.)



Seminar

Yokohama Youth Support Station

Established: December 1, 2006

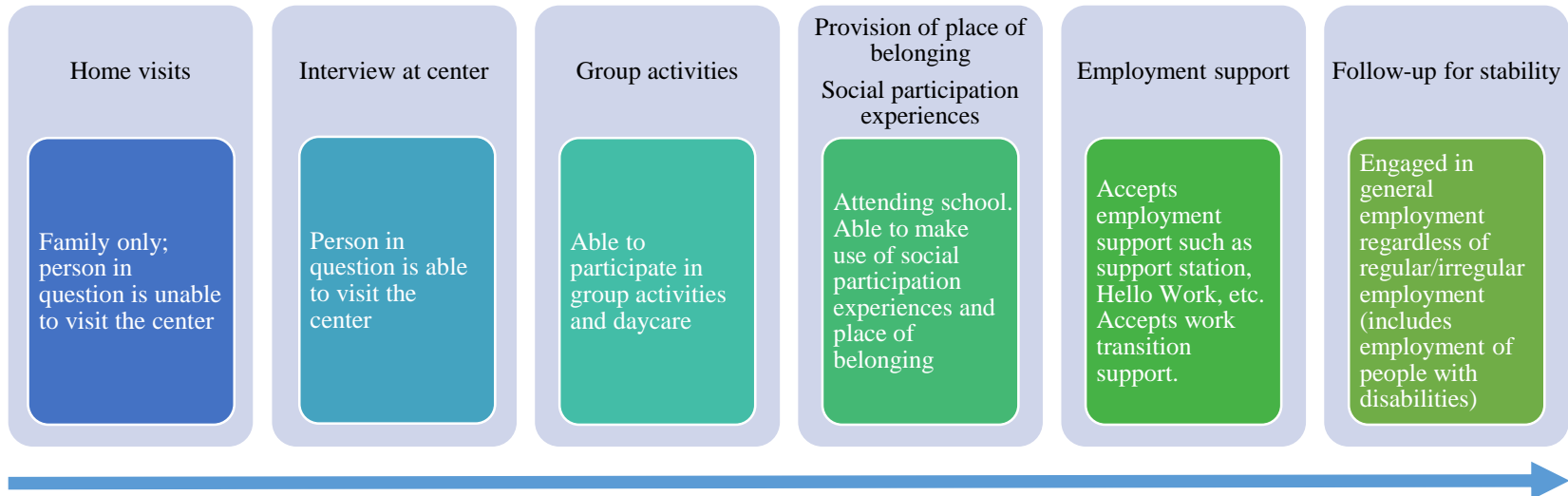
*Satellite (Kohoku-ku) opened in July 2018

Shonan Yokohama Youth Support Station

Established: June 28, 2010

Yokohama-style Youth Support System

– Providing Phased and Seamless Support Through Collaboration Between Three Organizations



Youth Consultation Center

Regional Youth Plaza

Youth Support Station

Staff exchange session



Revision and application of guidelines on evaluating and supporting hikikomori (various phases of hikikomori support)

Background of Yokohama City's Youth Support Measures

FY2006	Establishment of Child and Youth Bureau Opening of Yokohama Youth Support Station
FY2007	Opening of West Youth Plaza
FY2008	Start of Yokohama Self-reliance School for Young People Opening of South Youth Plaza
FY2009	Opening of North Youth Plaza
FY2010	Opening of Shonan Yokohama Youth Support Station Establishment of Yokohama City Child and Youth Support Council
FY2012	Implementation of First Survey on the Actual Situation of Children and Youths in Yokohama City Opening of East Youth Plaza
FY2015	Implementation of regional support model project for youths facing difficulties (four wards)
FY2016	Project for the development and dispatch of support partners
FY2017	Start of expert consultation in wards for youths facing difficulties such as hikikomori (18 wards) Implementation of Second Survey on the Actual Situation of Children and Youths in Yokohama City
FY2018	Implementation of youth support seminars and consultation sessions for hikikomori, etc. (18 wards)

Consultation Support Organizations Supporting Each Age Group

		Infancy	Schooling age Elementary school students	Puberty (Junior high – school students – About 18 years old)	Adolescence (About 18 – below 30 years old)	Post-adolescence (30 – below 40 years old)
General		Youth Consultation Center				
		Regional Youth Plaza				
		Child/Family support and consultation by the administrative ward				
Welfare		Independence Consultation Support Project for the Poor and Needy by the administrative ward				
		Child Consultation Office				
Health and medical care		Mental health and welfare consultation by the administrative ward, Mental Health and Welfare Center, medical institutions				
		Life Support Center				
		Youth Support Station				
Employment		Hello Work, facilities related to the promotion of the employment of people with disabilities				
		General Consultation Center for Education				
Education		Family associations (associations for parties concerned), NPOs, etc.				
Private sector						

Various Youth Support Services Implemented through Collaboration in the Region

Children/Youths

Child welfare, child and family consultations, youth consultations, etc.

Education

Schools, educational consultations, etc.

Social welfare

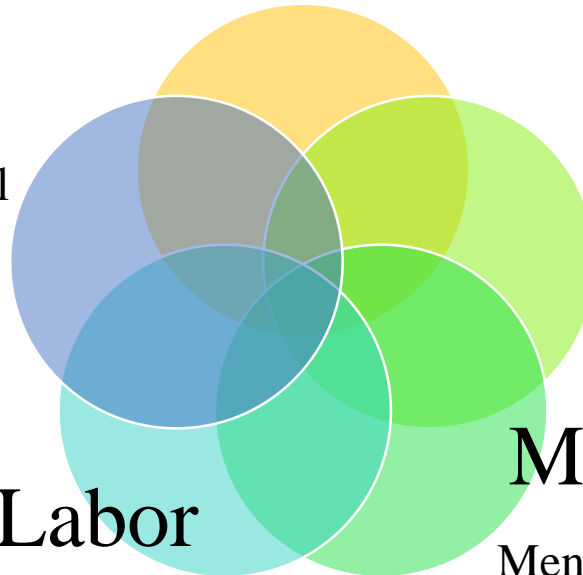
Livelihood protection, poverty, disability welfare, etc.

Employment/Labor

Hello Work, employment support, etc.

Mental health

Mental disability welfare, psychiatric treatment, etc.



Human Resource Development for Youths to Support Other Youths

Supporter training



Since FY2007, the Youth Consultation Center has been implementing the **Youth Support Home Visit Project**, ahead of other local governments in Japan. Through this project, university students and graduate school students, etc. of the same generation make home visits to hikikomori facing difficulties in leaving their homes.

From FY2007 to FY2017, 59 youth supporters have been registered, and have engaged in 763 activities to support 71 people.

Human Resource Development for City Residents to Support Youths in the Region

Illustration



Only some youths are linked to support organizations, while many youths who need support are not connected to the support they need. The regional support model project, which aims to watch over youths in the region and create an environment that enables support for social participation, is implemented, and **support partners** are developed through this program.

As of March 31, 2018, 128 people have been registered as support partners. In FY2017, a total of 1,144 activities have been implemented.

Skill Improvement Training for Supporter Development

Understanding and support for hikikomori

Youth support/employment support in the region

Utilization of welfare systems for hikikomori and the disabled

Systems to support the independence of the poor and needy

Youth delinquency and crime

Support for junior and senior high school students and children connected to other countries

Multifaceted support education

Understanding of family support and key points

Collaboration with the relevant organizations

Thinking about anxiety (exercising resilience)

Current situations of reliance, such as on the Internet, and the response measures

Anger management (responding to those who are unable to control their emotions)

Response when someone says they want to die (knowledge and approach to suicide)

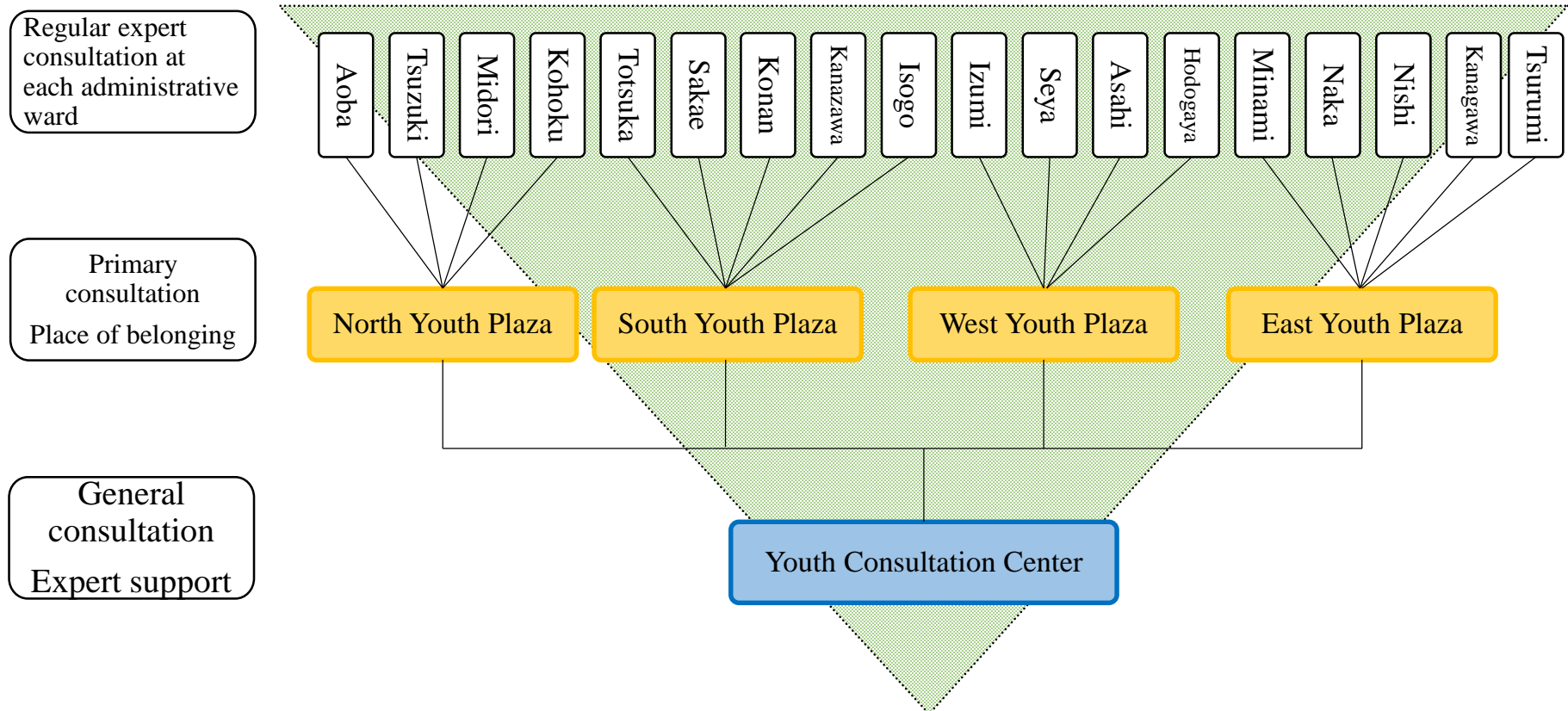
Acts of self-injury during puberty

Understanding and support of children with developmental disorders and schizophrenia

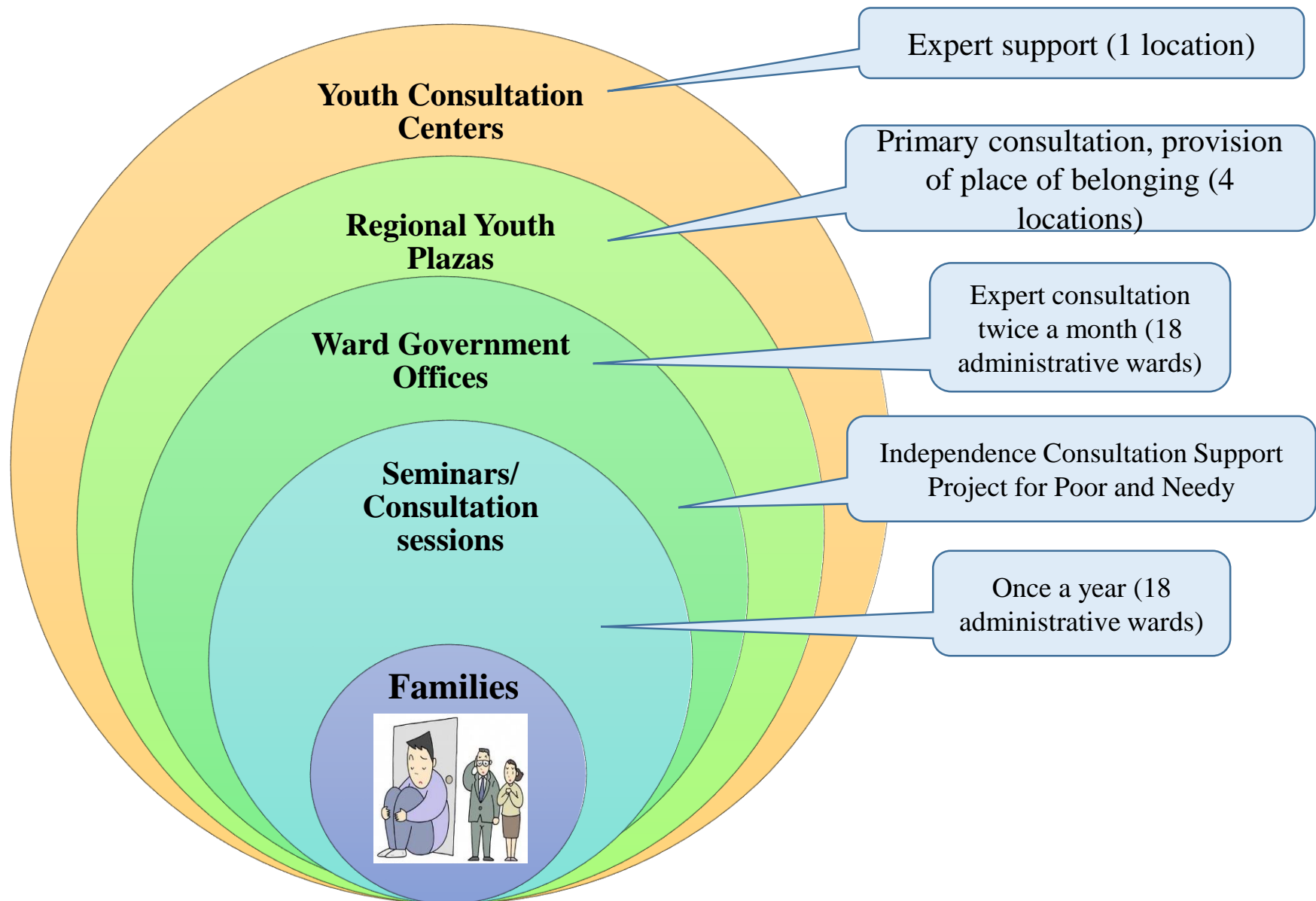
Support for children living with parents who have mental illness

Consultation Offices Nearby for Youths Needing Support and Their Families

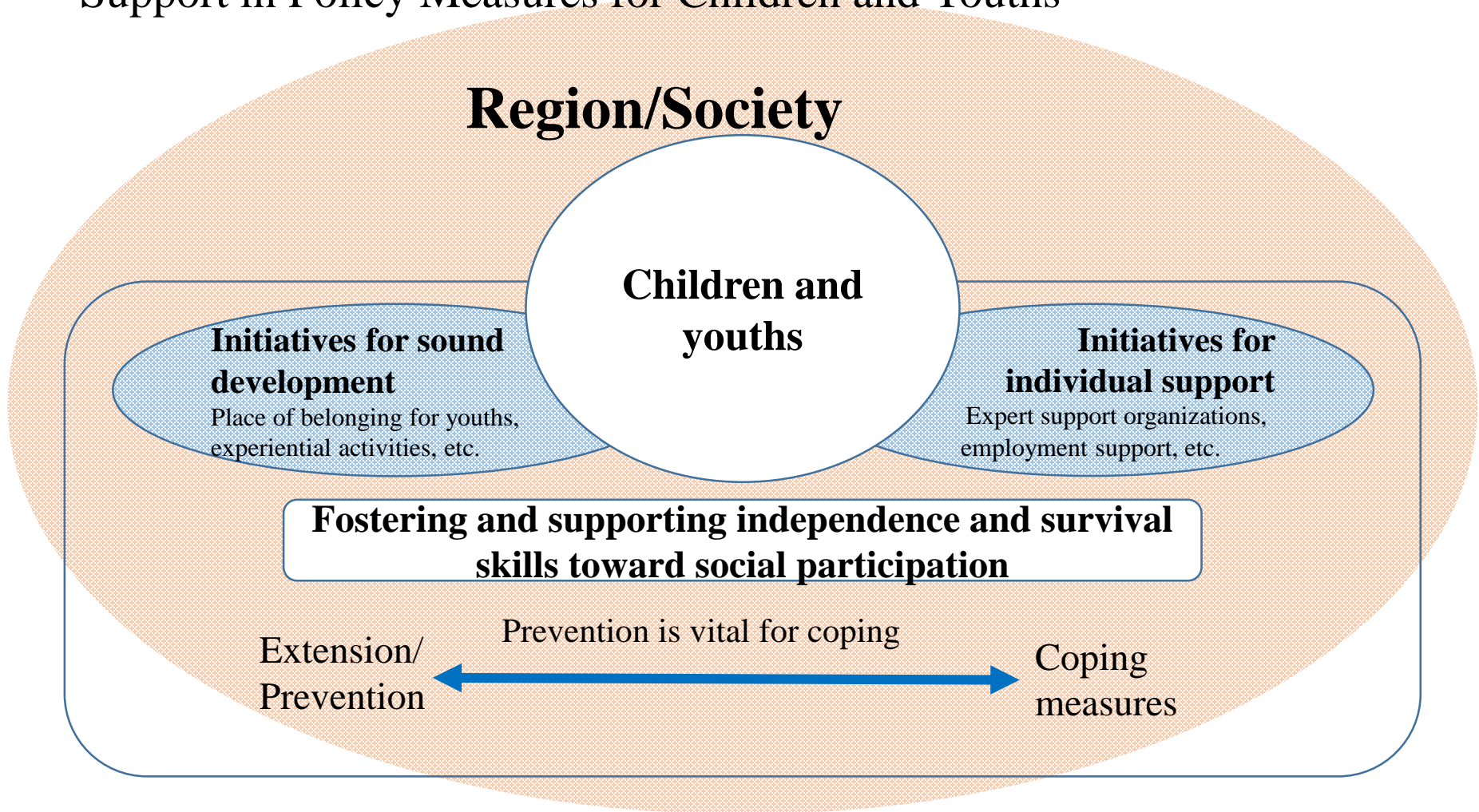
Isolated youths in the region and their families



Efforts to Provide Support at Places that are Even Closer to the Youths



Integrated and Collaborative Sound Development and Individual Support in Policy Measures for Children and Youths



- (1) Creating a foundation for the growth of children and youths toward promoting social participation
- (2) Creating an environment that supports the independence of children and youths facing difficulties
- (3) Creating a supportive regional society watching over the growth of all children and youths