

Section 4

Response to a Society with a Decreasing Birth Rate

~ Focusing on Childrearing Support Measures~

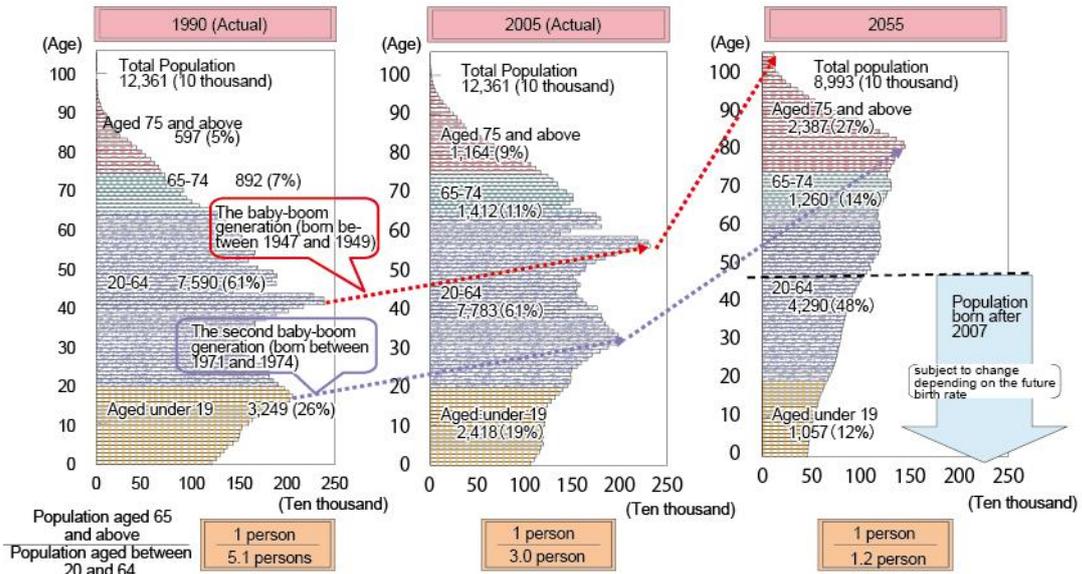
1 Current status of society with a decreasing birth rate

A society with a decreasing population has become a reality in Japan with the total fertility rate declined to a record low of 1.26 in 2005 and the overall population that has been on a downward trend since peaking in 2004. While the total fertility rate exceeded the previous year's level during 2006 and 2008, it remained flat in 2009 from the year earlier with 1.37 children per woman. The total fertility rate remains low, and the long-lasting trend of declining birth rate is continuing.

In addition, the "Population Projection for Japan (Projection in December 2006)" released by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research at the end of 2006 revealed the stern prediction that in 2055, 50 years later, the population in Japan will fall below 90 million if the current trends continues; the number of children born annually will drop below 0.5 million, less than half of that of today; and the aging rate will exceed 40 % of the total population.

Looking at the demographic change based on this assumption, the population structure in Japan is expected to transform from the current cavalryman-shaped one with one old-aged dependent for every three workers to the shape of piggy-back with one old-aged dependent for every one worker in 2055 with further declining birth rate and aging of the population (Chart 2-4-1).

Chart 2-4-1 Changes in the Population Pyramid (1990, 2025, 2055)

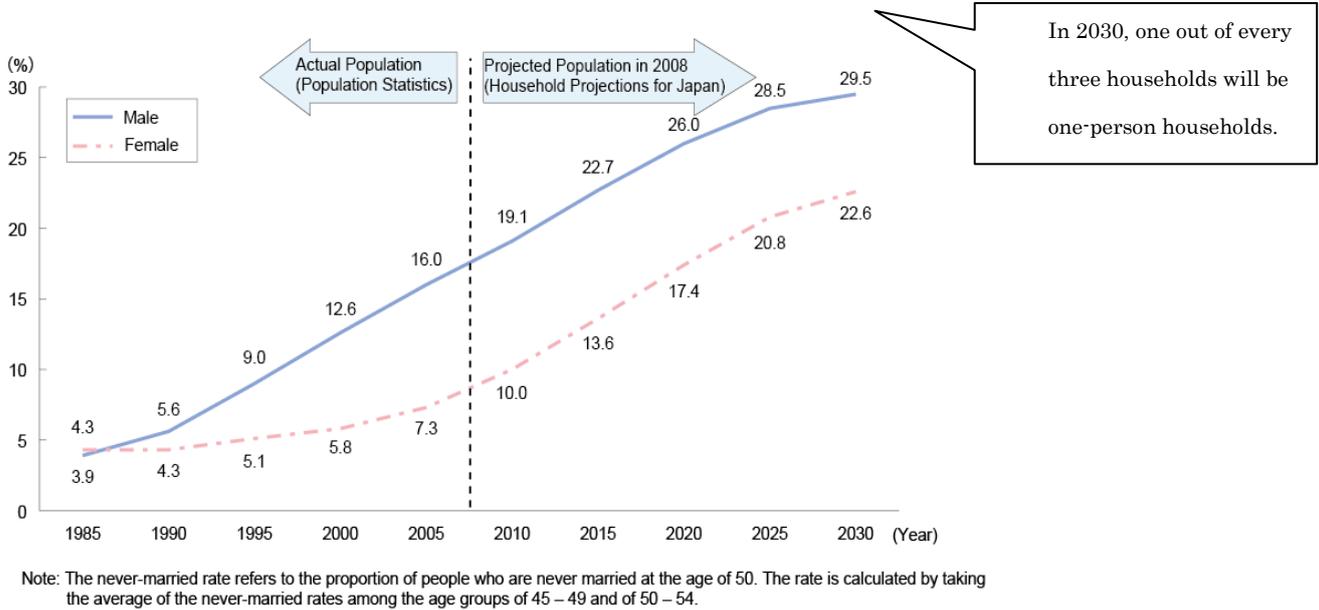


Note: Data for 1990 and 2005 are based on the results of the Population Census Report (with the population of "unknown" age adjusted by equally distributing over all age groups).

(Overall image of the old-age dependency ratio)

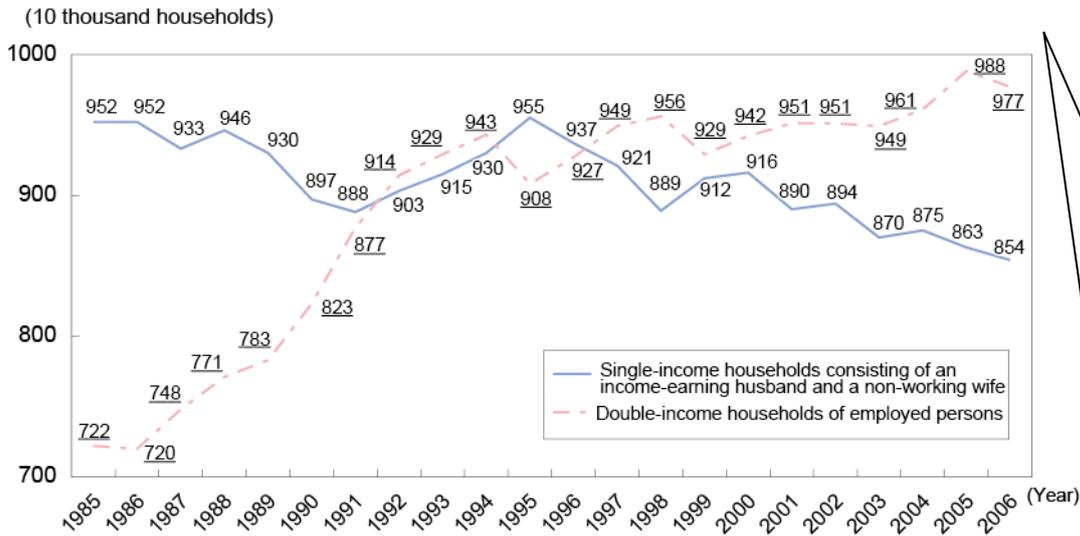


Chart 2-4-2 Trends in the Never-Married Rate



In 2030, one out of every three households will be one-person households.

Chart 2-4-3 Trends in the Double-Income Households



From the latter half of 1980s to the early 1990s, the number of double-income households surged; demonstrated an upward trend after 1995; and since 1997, has been exceeded by the number of single-income households that consist of an income-earning husband and a non-working wife.

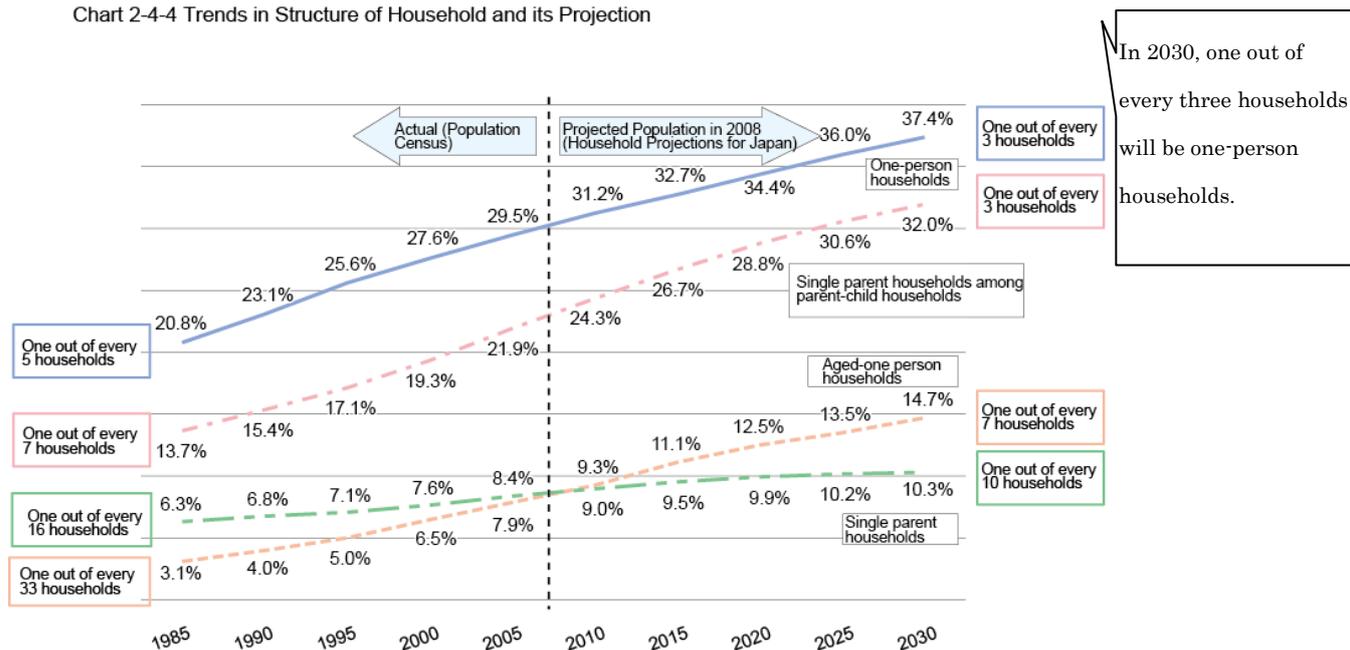
(Note)

- 1) Data from 1985 to 2001 are based on the results of the "Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey" released by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (in February each year). Data after 2002 is based on the "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)" (Yearly Average Results) released by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
- 2) "Single-income households consisting of an income-earning husband and a non-working wife" refers to the households with a husband engaged in the non-agricultural industries and an unemployed wife (Population not in labour force or unemployed person).
- 3) "Double-income households of employed persons" refers to the households with both a husband and a wife engaged in the non-agricultural industries.
- 4) Attention needs to be paid when performing a time-series comparison because the "Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey" and the "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)" use different survey methods and months respectively.

Moreover, lifestyle has become different from that it used to be. For instance, in 2030, the

never-married rate is projected to be about 30% among men and about 23% among women (Chart 2-4-2). Additionally, attention needs to be paid to the situation that the number of double-income households has exceeded that of single-income households (consisting of an income-earning husband and a non-working wife) since 1997 (Chart 2-4-3). Furthermore, one out of every three parent-child households is expected to be a single parent household (Chart 2-4-4).

Chart 2-4-4 Trends in Structure of Household and its Projection



(Source) "Population Census" Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau, "Household Projections for Japan (Projection as of March 2008)", National Institute of Population and Social Security Research
 (Note) "Single parent households among parent-child households" are calculated by dividing the number of single parent households by the total number of parents-child households and single parent households.

In 2030, one out of every three households will be one-person households.

In addition to these situations, many people who wish to get married, give birth and raise children and continue to work after marriage as well as having children *1 cannot fulfill those wishes, leading to the progress of declining birth rate. Hence, it is important to create an environment wherein people in Japan can get married and give childbirth as they wish.

2 Establishment of Child Allowance

Under such circumstances, it has become an urgent issue to develop an environment where people can have and raise child without anxiety in order to reverse the trend of the decrease in the number of children. In particular, because rearing and education for children cost a large amount of money, financial support is called for by childrearing households. According to the "Consciousness Survey of Childrearing Women on the

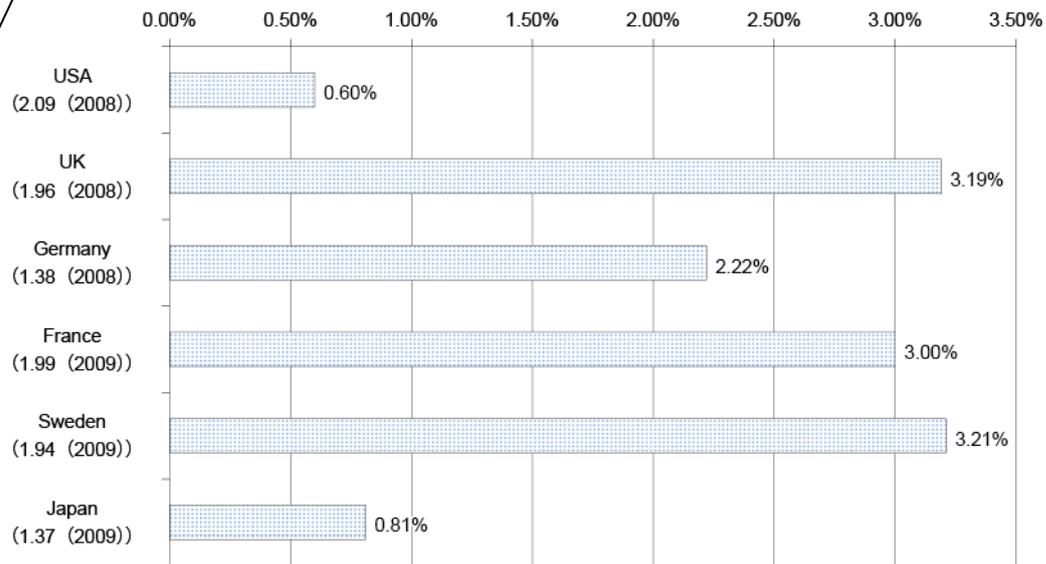
Measures for a Society with a Declining Birth Rate”, which was announced in March 2009, the top answer for the most important measure to reverse the birth rate decline was “financial support measure” as replied by 72.3% of the survey participants. Concerning the budget for childrearing, Japan was one of the countries with the smallest budget in relation to GDP among the developed countries (Chart 2-4-5).

In consideration to these circumstances, the “Draft Legislation to the Payment of Child Allowance in FY 2010” was presented at the 174th ordinary Diet session, passed the Diet in March 2010, and was enforced on April 1 in the same year.

Child Allowance is implemented from the viewpoint that rearing children for the next generation is not an issue of individuals but is an investment for future that should be supported by society as a whole. In FY 2010, ¥13,000 is to be paid to parents monthly per child no older than the third year of junior high school. As compared with Children's Allowance, the amount of benefit is larger and the coverage of recipients is wider in line with the concept as mentioned above. In addition, the allowance has no income limit. Regarding children without parent living in a children's nursing home, who were not covered by Children's Allowance, equivalent amount with Child Allowance in FY 2010 is paid as special support to the facilities, etc. by utilizing the Security for Children Foundation. The application of Child Allowance to these children will be considered in designing the system for Child Allowance after FY 2011.

*1 According to the 13th Japanese National Fertility Survey (on Single in 2005), approximately 90% of unmarried persons hope to be married, and both men and women want to have more than two children.

Chart 2-4-5 Family-related social expenditure in each country in relation to GDP (2005)



Japan's expenditure is the second lowest after USA.

* Figures under country name indicate the total fertility rate for each year.
 Source : Total Fertility rates are based on the National Vital Statistics Reports (USA) , Population Trends (UK) , Statistisches Bundesamt (Germany) , Bilan demographique (France) , Summary of Population Statistics (Sweden) and the Vital Statistics (Japan) .
 Family-related social expenditures in relation to GDP are based on the data obtained on February 8, 2010 from Social Expenditure Database (Version: November 2008) , etc.

3 Promotion of measures for community-based childrearing support

(1) Establishment of the “Vision for Children and Childcare” and creation of comprehensive and integrated system to support raising the next generation including unification of kindergarten and daycare center.

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been taking comprehensive measures to promote efforts of the government as a whole through review on self-sufficiency and work styles of young people and support for community-based childrearing in accordance with the “General Policy of Measures for a Society with a Decreasing Birth Rate”(adopted by the Cabinet in June 2004) , which was formulated in 2004 and the “Children and Childcare Support Plan”(decided at the Council on Measures for a Society with a Decreasing Birth Rate in December 2004) . The “General Policy of Measures for a Society with a Decreasing Birth Rate” and the “Children and Childcare Support Plan”, however, were revised recently, and the “Vision for Children and Childcare” was established as a new comprehensive measure for supporting children and childrearing(adopted by the Cabinet on January 29, 2010 : Chart 2-4-6) . Positioning children on the center stage (children first), the Vision for

Children and Childcare shifts the priority from the measures to reverse the birth rate decline to support for children and childrearing and aims to realize a society where the whole society supports children and childrearing by incorporating measures and the numerical targets to be attained for five years from FY 2010 to FY 2014(Chart 2-4-7). Further efforts will be made aiming at steady implementation of the Vision.

Regarding the “Emergency Economic Measures for Future Security and Growth”(adopted by the Cabinet in December 2009) and the “Vision for Children and Childcare”, necessary bills will be presented at the ordinary Diet session in FY 2011 concerning the establishment of new comprehensive and unified systems to support raising the next generation including unification of kindergarten and daycare center. Accordingly, the “Study Group on the New System for Children and Childcare”, comprising related Cabinet ministers, was held in January 29, and discussion was made on the new system for children and childrearing. In June 25, the “Outline of the Basic Plan Draft for the New System of Children and Childcare” was decided. Furthermore, in June 29, the Council on Measures for a Society with a Decreasing Birth Rate, consisting of all Cabinet ministers, approved the said guidelines.

Chart 2-4-6 Overview of the "Vision on Children and Childrearing"

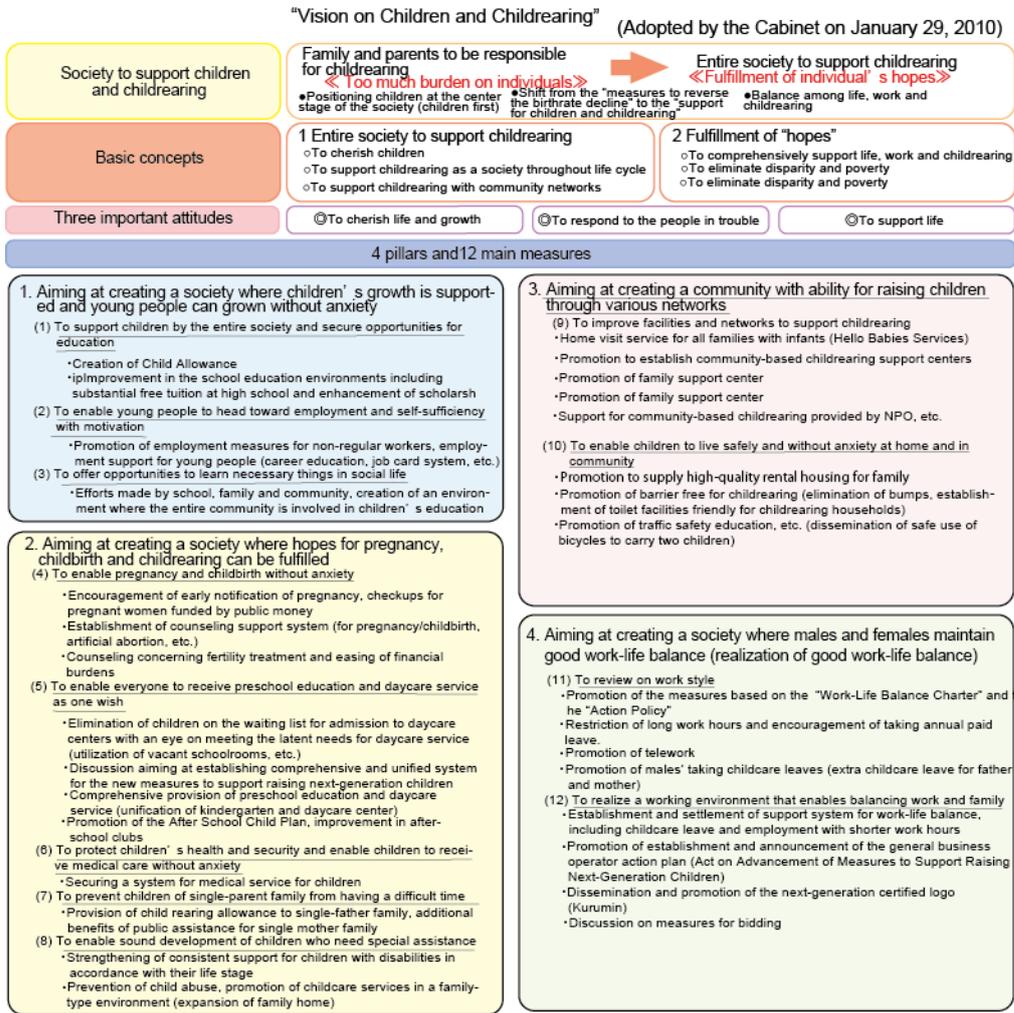
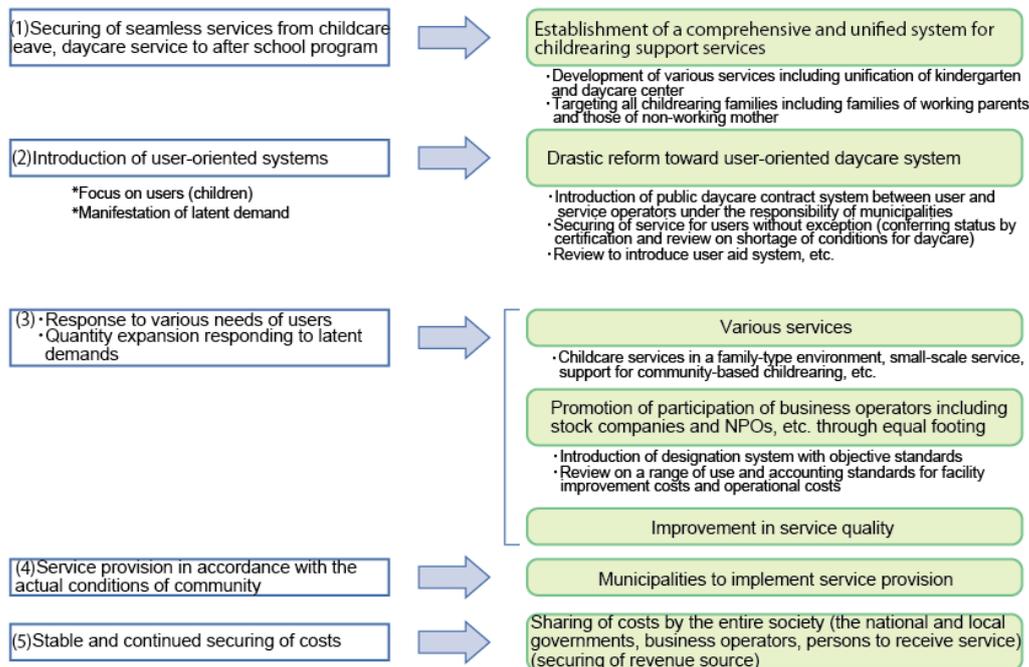


Chart 2-4-7 Major numerical targets, etc.

<p>Pregnancy and childbirth without anxiety</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">[Current status]</td> <td style="text-align: center;">[Numerical target for 2014]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Number of beds at Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) (per 10,000 births)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">21.2 beds</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ 25-30 beds</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Infertility counseling center</td> <td style="text-align: center;">55 prefectures and cities</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ All prefectures, designated cities, regional hub cities</td> </tr> </table>		[Current status]	[Numerical target for 2014]	○Number of beds at Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) (per 10,000 births)	21.2 beds	⇒ 25-30 beds	○Infertility counseling center	55 prefectures and cities	⇒ All prefectures, designated cities, regional hub cities	<p>Enhancement of the ability of community for childrearing</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">[Current status]</td> <td style="text-align: center;">[Numerical target for 2014]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Project for Community-based Childrearing Support Centers</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7,100 locations (including facilities independently run by municipalities)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ 10,000 locations</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Project for Family Support Centers</td> <td style="text-align: center;">570 municipalities</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ 950 municipalities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Temporary daycare service (total number of days)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.48 million days</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ 39.52 million days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>○Childrearing support utilizing vacant shops at shopping street</td> <td style="text-align: center;">49 locations</td> <td style="text-align: center;">⇒ 100 locations</td> </tr> </table>		[Current status]	[Numerical target for 2014]	○Project for Community-based Childrearing Support Centers	7,100 locations (including facilities independently run by municipalities)	⇒ 10,000 locations	○Project for Family Support Centers	570 municipalities	⇒ 950 municipalities	○Temporary daycare service (total number of days)	3.48 million days	⇒ 39.52 million days	○Childrearing support utilizing vacant shops at shopping street	49 locations	⇒ 100 locations						
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Chart 2-4-8 Discussion aiming at establishing comprehensive and unified system for the new measures to support raising next-generation children (Reference materials for the "Vision on Children and Childrearing")



(2) Improvement of daycare service to eliminate the number of waitlisted children and promotion of comprehensive measures for after-school children

Aiming at eliminating the number of children waiting for the admission to daycare centers, the government has been making efforts, for example through increasing the capacity of daycare centers, based on the strategies including the "Strategy for No Waitlisted Children for Daycare Centers", which has been implemented since FY 2002.

Nevertheless, there are still many "waitlisted children" who cannot enter a daycare center due to lack of vacancy, especially in urban areas. The number of such children has increased for two consecutive years, totaling about 25,000 as of April 2009 despite the expansion of accommodating capacity of daycare centers.

In consideration of these circumstances, the "Security for Children Foundation", which was set up in each prefecture by the FY2008 second supplementary budget, increased budget of the Fund in the FY 2009 first and second supplementary budgets for the purpose of promoting the establishment of daycare centers. With this "Security for Children Foundation", efforts are being made to improve and expand child care services, to promote the establishment of branches of authorized daycare centers by using the vacant spaces in community (schools, public housing, community centers, etc.) to expand child care services in a family-type environment and to improve high quality child care service for young children (from newborn to 2-year children) who constitute a majority of waitlisted

children. Further efforts will be promoted to eliminate the number of waitlisted children for example by achieving the target (to increase the capacity of child care facilities from 2.15 million in FY 2009 to 2.41 million in FY2014) *2 set by the “Vision for Children and Childcare.”

After-school clubs provide school-age children, whose parents are working and do not stay at home during daytime, with a space for playing properly and life after-school by using the vacant rooms at school, etc. in order to serve them for their sound development. As of May 1, 2009, there are 18,479 after-school clubs nationwide, and 807,857 children are registered. In addition, the “After School Child Plan”, which was established in FY 2007 and is implemented together or in cooperation with the project to promote after-school classroom carried out by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, has been promoted so that the plan will be implemented basically at every school district of elementary school. Further efforts will be made with the aim of achieving the numerical targets set by the “Vision for Children and Childcare”(to increase the number of children who use after-school club from 810,000 in FY 2009 to 1,110,000 children in FY2014 *3).

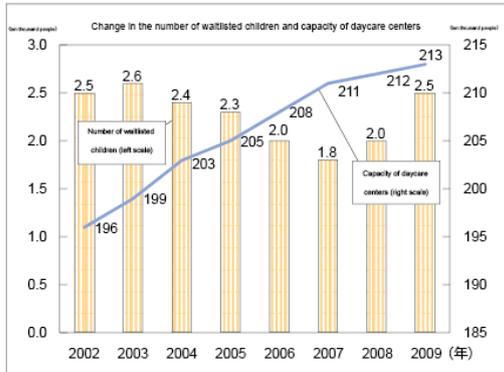


Mr. Akira Nagatsuma, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, having school lunch together with children (at the authorized daycare center in Tokyo)

Chart 2-4-9 Current status of children waiting for the admission to daycare centers (as of April 1, 2009)

- As of April 1, 2009, 25,384 children are on the waiting list for admission to day care centers. (Increase for two consecutive years)
- The regions with many waitlisted children have been fixed.
 - The waitlisted children in the specific cities (101 municipalities) with 50 or more waitlisted children account for about 80% of the total.
- Young children (aged 0-2) hold about 82% of the total.

【Change in the number of waitlisted children and capacity of daycare centers】



【Breakdown of 25,000 waitlisted children】



- *The number of waitlisted children in the specific municipalities account for about 80% of the total.
- *Young children (aged 0-2) hold about 82% of the total.

*2 The “Vision for Children and Childcare” addresses the issue to eliminate the number of waitlisted children responding to the latent demand by providing daycare service to 35% of children (younger than 3 years old) by FY 2014 taking into account the females’ growing employment rate for the purpose of meeting the potential demand of child care for children under 3 years, which is expected to reach 44% in FY 2017

*3 Responding to the latent demand for those who wish to work, the “Vision for Children and Childcare” aims to increase the number of children accepted to after school clubs in order to offer service for the children who want to use the club. Among target children (in Grade 1-3 of elementary school), the share of children using after school clubs is expected to reach 40% including the latent demand. In the mean time, the Vision aims to offer the service to 32% of target children by FY 2014.

(3) Support for all families raising children

As the social environment is changing due to the progress of birth rate decline, the orientation toward nuclear families and weak community functions, the burden of childrearing is increasing with a feeling of being isolated with no advisers in local communities present. Especially among females with children aged 3 or younger, 80% of such children are being cared for at home, resulting in many having feelings of being isolated and alienated.

Accordingly, since FY 2007, the “Project for Community-based Childrearing Support Centers” to serve childrearing parents and children to easily get together and exchange information in their neighborhood, has been launched and promoting the basic projects

including: 1) to offer places for and promoting exchange among childrearing parents and their children; 2) to implement counseling and assistance concerning childrearing; 3) to provide information on childrearing in community; and 4) to conduct seminars relating to childrearing and support for childrearing.

Specifically, the services under this project can be classified into three categories including: “Square-type” service offered at a vacant space at public facility or vacant shops at shopping street, etc.; “Center-type” service provided at daycare centers, etc.; and “Child center-type” service carried at child centers. Each type of service is offered taking advantage of its own features. “Square-type” service, particularly, has expanded its functions since FY 2009 for the purpose of promoting the network of related organizations centered on the square-type facilities through implementing the service integrated with various childrearing support activities such as temporary childcare service and after-school club.

In addition to quantitative improvements, expanding grassroots childrearing support activities is also important to develop mutual support and learn childrearing at childrearing support bases in such communities. Based on such an understanding, the “National Federation of Get Together Squares” was established to conduct various seminars and training programs aiming at enhancing the abilities of childrearing supporters.

Community-based childrearing support functions are being improved through such service programs as family support centers that engage in mutual assistance activities such as childcare for those who want to provide and those who want to receive the said assistance with the membership of childrearing workers and housewives with infants, small children or elementary school students; short-term childrearing support services to look after children in such cases as overtime work, business trips, or sickness of their parents; and a home visitation program to support childrearing by visiting pregnant women and families with children to provide consultation, guidance, and support on childrearing.

In addition, since FY 2007, the following projects have been implemented: temporary daycare service program for preschool children at daycare centers or at a convenient place, for example in front of a station, etc., for the purpose of alleviating mental and physical burdens on guardians associated with their outpatient treatments, social participation activities or childrearing; and “home visit services for all families with infants within 4 months after childbirth (Hello Babies Services)” to provide information on childrearing support, to identify appropriate rearing environment and to provide consultation services.

In order to further promote these projects, “Project for Community-based Childrearing Support Centers”, “Temporary Daycare Service Program”, “Home Visit Services for All Families with Infants” and “Home Visitation Program to Support Childrearing” have been positioned as the projects under the Child Welfare Act in accordance with the “Draft Legislation to Amend the Child Welfare Act”, which was approved in November 2008. In addition, municipalities have been obligated to make efforts to carry out these projects since April 2009.

Column

Support for childcare and contesting between municipalities ~Hokuto-city, Yamanashi prefecture and Saitama prefecture~

It is in 1990 that decline of birthrate was taken up as a social problem which is known as 1.57 Shock. It has been nearly 20 years and kind/number of measures to cope with declining birthrate/support for childcare has been spreading.

Mainly, municipalities are in charge of those measures and efforts of each municipality are really varied. For example, efforts in regions where there are few couples which is fundamental to give birth. In such a region, there are cases that municipalities offer opportunity for people to meet each other. This is trend support known as “marriage hunting”.

Or, from the beginning, there are cases wrestling with prompt measure for immigration in regions where a number of young generations is insignificant. The effort is to call people in and to increase population by wrestling with community development mainly focusing on supports for childcare and making those regions attractive to young generation. In this case, supports for childcare are not just welfare measure but it is tied with various measures.

In Hokuto-city Yamanashi prefecture, it develops business connecting with tourism business. Hokuto-city has uniquely been striving to enrich supports for childcare mainly focusing on welfare field such as eliminating childcare fee of nursery schools after the second child, paying benefits for motherless families, establishing the Website for PC/mobile specializing in supports for childcare and establishment of kids’ space in city halls. In addition to those efforts, it has been promoting effort of “Baby’s Vacation” to maintain/enrich attractive sightseeing spots to household with childcare in order to call tourists with children in. In the city where declining population and aging society are progressing dramatically, on the basis of an idea that thoughtful city for tourists with children is also thoughtful for a generation with childcare who live there, the city is in effort

to bring incensement of immigration into its view and to call people in the city through creating maps and logo mark to introduce facilities where people with children can enjoy.

Efforts of Hokuto-city cover employment, residence, traffic and food industry. It advances invitation of companies to visit neighborhoods because people cannot be settled without employment, and it has been striving to change from Public Employment Development Facilities to city-provided housing by buying Public Employment Development Facilities since childcare would be so hard without residence. It also wrestles with support businesses for childcare that if securing/improving traffic system for children is not enough and if users reserve in advance where/when they get on the bus by phone, "Demand Bus" can be available for passengers to their destinations since areas has got bigger thanks to merger. Moreover, since bounteous eating habit is one of lures, it has plan to make a system that products like organic vegetables cultivated in that local are consumed in local schools and for school lunch in nursing school while developing "locally produced and consumed", and also has plan to enrich educational farm where primary schoolers and nursing school toddlers can experience thoroughly such as preparing soil, planting, management, harvesting and even cooking.

From sightseeing to employment/residence, traffic and food. Hokuto-city plans measures which cover as wide field as people don't even imagine by just hearing "measure for declining birthrate and supports for childcare" and aims for "City with Voices of Children" through supporting childcare by a whole city.

However, even if a region has enough people and young couples, various policies are underway.

Some examples are as followings.

Economic support (all kinds of stipend and elimination of medical cost)

Enrichment of nursing care (securing nursing school and After -School Day Care Club)

Proportion of work-life balance (implementation of proportion lectures for companies)

Support to grow parents (distribution of paternity notebook)

Business visiting households with a baby and connecting it to required support (Hello Baby Business)

Business offering gathering place for families (Base Business to Support for Regional Childcare)

Besides, there are many efforts cooperating with private sectors such as efforts to increase spaces in cities to feed their baby and change a diaper (Akachan Station), efforts to offer discount service for household with childcare by collecting support business for childcare (passport business) and efforts to grow citizens supporting for nursing care (childcare meister and lecture to learn childcare caring management).

“New public”, idea that people in a region cooperate with administrations to offer public service, is not something brand-new in a term of support for childcare.

For instance, Saitama prefecture considers about projects proposal of local specified non-profit organizations and implements efforts. “Yakiimo time of dad” is one of them that fathers and their children get sweet potatoes from Co-op and they cook Yakiimo (baked sweet potato) together in 100 places in Saitama-prefecture cooperating with childcare circle, nursing school, kindergarten and public halls. This is father-oriented business and it helps fathers know other fathers.

Besides, in “Child Dream Feature Festival”, over 100 specified non-profit organizations, childcare circles and companies in the prefecture gathered together, and how important to do “Childcare all together” in regions and society is spread over through announcement of their achievements and events that can be enjoyed with family.

Also, pediatric emergency medical seminar and test-ride events of bicycles on which people can ride with two children held by bicycle makers are taken place and they are opportunities for mother/father to learn on security/safety of childcare. Those events in 2009 are arranged with noticeable posters in order to get younger families to come voluntarily.

In Saitama prefecture, efforts cooperating with private sectors are active and co-sponsors (Dad and Mom Support Shops) are over 10000 shops, which is the No.1 in a whole country, in support businesses for childcare with companies. It plans to establish “Akachan Station”, in private facilities and public facilities at 3000 places in 2010. Saitama prefecture aims to raise a movement to support for families with childcare in various places of regional society including private sectors, non-profit organizations and parents themselves with childcare in addition to administrative institutions.

In Japan, although a new attempt “child allowance” has been launched, all attempts like this go through municipalities to citizens. In order to form friendly society with childcare, ideas of each municipality has been necessary, also it *will* be. We would like to expect a future like that competition of support measures for childcare in municipalities are going to be more active and locals are going to be lively and, thanks to this, Japan itself is going to be lively too.



4 Support for abused children

(1) Promotion efforts to prevent child abuse

1) Situation of child abuse

With regard to measures to prevent child abuse, the “Act for Prevention of Child Abuse” (hereinafter referred to as the “Child Abuse Prevention Act”), which came into effect in November 2000, was revised in FY 2004 and FY 2007 to improve the system. Serious child abuse cases, however, show no sign of decline, and the number of consultations on child abuse at child guidance centers across the nation has been continuously on the increase. In FY 2008, the number of consultation reached 42,664 cases, and hence, child abuse is still an important issue to be worked immediately on by our entire society.

2) State of Measures to Prevent Child Abuse

Child abuse seriously effects children’s mental and physical development as well as personality formulation. Therefore, a seamless and comprehensive support system to prevent child abuse should be established and improved, which covers 1) “prevention” of abuse, 2) “early detection/response” of abuse, and 3) “protection/self-sufficiency support” for abused children.

Accordingly,

The following measures have been implemented to address this issue:

1) Measures for prevention that includes promotion of the previously stated “home visit services for all families with infants within 4 months after childbirth ((Hello Babies Services))”, the “home visitation program to support rearing” and the “community-based childrearing support centers”;

2) Measures for early detection/response to strengthen the function of the “municipal

networks for protecting children (Council of Prevention Measures for Child Abuse)”in municipalities, to secure child welfare officers in order to enhance the system of child guidance centers and to promote support for parents for reunification of families and restoring/improving families’ childrearing functions; and

3) Measures for “protection/self-sufficiency support”, including expansion of foster parent system to promote childrearing in a family-type environment, promotion of small-size care such as children’s nursing homes, expansion of child and family support centers and promotion of protecting rights of children at a facility such as preventing abuse within the facility.

In March 2010, to strengthen cooperation with educational institutions, the guidelines for information provision on a regular basis from schools to municipalities or a child guidance centers about school attendance of children who are suspected to be abused, were established jointly with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The guidelines were informed to prefectures.

3) Revision of the Child Welfare Act

In April 2009, as mentioned before, the Act for Partial Revision of the Act on the Child Welfare Act, etc. was put into effect excluding some part of the Law. The major contents concerning child abuse are: a) Making childrearing support services statutory such as “ home visit services for all families with infants within 4 months after childbirth (Hello Babies Services)”, “home visitation program to support rearing ”, and “community-based childrearing support center services”; b) Expanding functions of municipal networks for protecting children (the Council of Prevention Measures for Child Abuse); and c) Revision of the foster parent system and prevention of abuse within facilities.

4) Public enlightenment efforts to prevent child abuse

Since 2004, every November has been designated as “child abuse prevention promotion month” to raise public interest in the child abuse problem. During this period, public enlightenment activities are implemented in cooperation with related ministries and agencies as well as local governments and related organizations. In FY 2009, public enlightenments activities included inviting public contributions of a monthly slogan and its selection; holding nationwide forums (in Myoko City in Niigata Prefecture); creating and distributing advertising posters and fliers; and utilizing government publicity through various media such as televisions, news papers, and magazines. In addition, support is being provided for the “orange ribbon campaign” led by the private organization, and the

MHLW officials displayed a giant orange ribbon at the Ministry's building by hand.

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(2) Promoting prevention of spousal violence and protection of victims

1) Current situation with spousal violence

Spousal violence is a serious infringement of human rights and also a grave social problem. In FY 2008, 79,594 women (77,441 women in FY 2007) visited women's consulting offices and female consultants across the nation, of which 24,879 women (23,758 women in FY 2007) reported spousal violence. Spousal violence accounts for 31.3% (30.7% in FY 2007) of the reasons they sought consultations. As the number of victims of spousal violence is increasing, the government needs to accelerate measures to address the issue (Chart 2-4-10) .

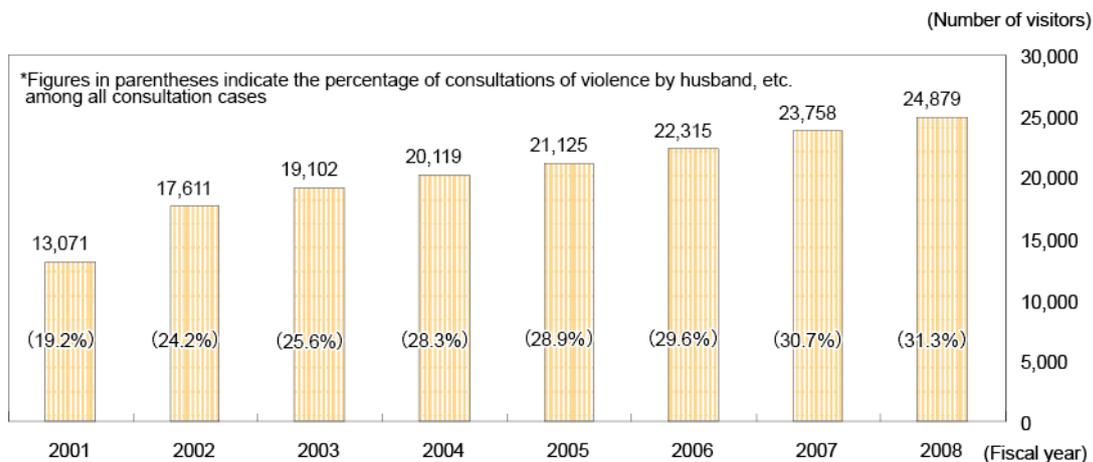
2) State of Measures against Spousal Violence

Various measures are being taken concerning consultations and protection for victims of spousal violence, which include:

- a) Implementation of temporary protection for the victims of spousal violence and outsourcing of temporary protection to the facilities that meet required standards such as private shelters and the facilities to support the lives of mothers and children;
- b) Provision of specialized training for consulting staff at women's consulting offices;
- c) Provision of a telephone consultation service on holidays and during night time at women's consulting offices and establishing networks among related organizations;
- d) Placing of specialized psychotherapy staff and instructors to provide care for accompanying children at women's consulting offices and women's protection facilities;
- e) Strengthening of the night security system at women's consulting offices and women's protection facilities;
- f) Expansion of the function for legislative action program; and
- g) Implementation of the research projects to develop specialized interpreters.

In FY 2009, efforts were made to improve care for accompanying children for instance by placing the instructors at women's protection facilities.

Chart 2-4-10 Proportion of the number of consultations of violence by husband, etc. among all consultation cases (consultation by visit)



Source: Family Welfare Division, Equal Employment, Children and Families Bureau, MHLW

3) Protection for the victims of trafficking in persons

Protection for the victims of trafficking in persons has been properly implemented to 275 women (from April, 2001 to the end of March 2010), who visited women's consulting offices calling for protection.

Over the past five years since the "Action Plan of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons" was formulated (in December 2004), the tactics used for trafficking in persons have become ingenious and latescent. In consideration of such situation in Japan and the comments at home and abroad concerning a high global interest in the measures against trafficking in persons in Japan, the "Action Plan of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2009" was decided at the Ministerial Meeting on Crime Prevention (on December 22).

5 Self-sufficiency support of single parent families

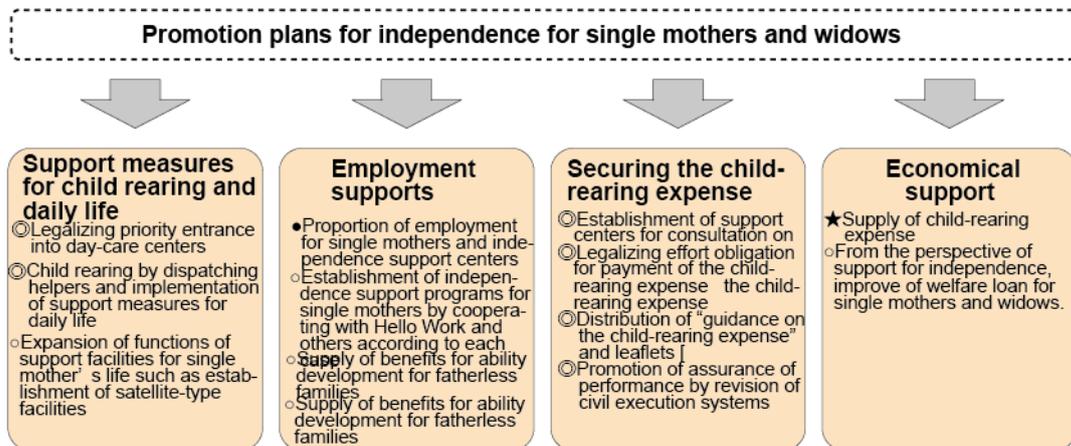
Based on the "Act for the Welfare of Mothers with Dependents and Widows", which was amended in 2002, comprehensive measures for self-sufficiency support have been implemented for single mothers, etc., including: a) measures for childrearing and daily life support such as preferential admission to daycare center; b) employment support measures such as Financial Support for Single-Mother Families) measures to secure childrearing expenses that include the establishment of the Child Support Consultation Center; and d) financial support measures including payment of child rearing allowance.

Since the employment support is important especially for self-sufficient living, following projects were continuously carried out in FY 2009:

- ① “Employment and Supporting Self-Sufficient Living Center for Fatherless Families” to provide employment consultation, training programs and information concerning employment;
- ② “Employment Support Project for Public Assistance Recipients” to select and implement employment support program in accordance with the individual situation of public assistance recipients based on an interview conducted by a team consisting of the officials from Hello Work and welfare office for the purpose of correctly understanding the situation and needs of individual public assistance recipients;
- ③ “Occupational Training with Preparatory Lecture” to offer life-conscious lectures as a preparatory step for employment for the purpose of promoting vocational self-sufficiency for single mothers, etc. without sufficient work experience; and
- ④ The programs utilizing the Security for Children Foundation established in prefectures, including:
 - “Higher Technique Promotion Expenses Project” that provides single mothers who take programs at training institutions to acquire qualifications such as nurse with the higher technique promotion expenses for a certain period of time to reduce their burden of living expenses (Since FY 2009, the payment amount was raised from 103,000 yen to 141,000 yen per month for nontaxable households of municipal inhabitant’s tax (and half the amount of increase for taxable households) and the benefit period was expanded from a latter half of schooling period (upper limit 18 months) to the entire period.); and
 - Subsidy, established in the FY 2009 first supplementary budget, for local public organizations that actively support working at home for single parent families.

Chart 2-4-11 Overview of measures of independent supports for fatherless families

- Single Mother and Widow Welfare Law and Child Rearing Allowance Law were revised in 2003, and “supports for mainly child rearing allowance” was just changed to “general supports toward employment and independence”
- To be specific, policies are promoting by the four pillars such as “support measures for child rearing and daily life,” “employment support measures,” “measures for securing the child-rearing expense” and “economical support measures.”



*Motherless families are also eligible for the plans with ◎ in the supports of “Support measures for child rearing and daily life” and “Securing the child-rearing expense” in the above

*Motherless families are also eligible for part of the plan with ● in the support of “Employment supports” in the above (since FY2009).

*For the plan with ★ in the support of “Economical support” in the above, motherless families are also objects (since August 2010).

With regard to financial support,

- ① Loans for living costs and children’s schooling expenses are provided through the Loans to Mothers and Widows with Dependent Children (Since FY 2009, the zero-interest rate loan has been provided to the recipients with cosigner, and the loan with interest rate of 1.5 percent became available for the recipients even without cosigner.); and
- ② For the purpose of expanding support for self-sufficiency of single parent families, the “Draft Legislation to Amend the Act on Child Rearing Allowance”, which aims to supply child rearing allowance also to single father families, was presented at the 174th ordinary Diet session, passed the Diet in May 2010 and was decided to put into effect in August 1, 2010.

6 Measures for Maternal and Child Health

(1) Promotion of “Healthy Parents and Children 21”

With regard to the “Healthy Parents and Children 21 (Sukoyaka Oyako 21)”, the committee for “Healthy Parents and Children 21” conducted the second interim evaluations in FY 2009 and indicated the future direction of implementing priority measures by taking into consideration the achievements over the past 4 years.

(2) Support for children’s mental health

With the aim of addressing various issues related to children’s mental health, child abuse,

and developmental disorders, 3-year pilot projects have been implemented since FY 2008 in order to establish a support system that puts core hospitals in prefectures at the center and maintains collaboration with each medical institution and health and welfare institution.

(3) Reducing economic burdens of health checkups for pregnant women and child delivery expenses

With an increasing number of women bearing children at later age in recent years, the pregnant women in higher need of health management have been growing. At the same time, some pregnant women do not receive health checkups due to the economic reasons.

Accordingly, in the FY 2008 second supplementary budget, measures were taken to improve health care of pregnant women and to reduce their economic burden by covering 9 checkups, which had not been supported by local finance, with public funds until FY 2010 to ensure that pregnant women receive all necessary checkups (about 14 times). (National average of the number of times of checkups covered by public funds was over 14 times as of April 2010.)

In addition, promotional efforts are being made through government publicity and leaflets to facilitate pregnant women properly receiving health checkups and early registration (hence the early issue of a maternal and child health handbook).

Furthermore, as a temporary measure through FY 2010 to ease economic burden associated with delivery, the amount of the Lump-sum Allowance for Childbirth and Nursing, provided by the health care insurers, was basically raised to 420,000 yen, an increase of 40,000 yen. Additionally, the system was introduced, which the healthcare insurers pay the Lump-sum Allowance for Childbirth and Nursing directly to the hospitals in accordance with the request by pregnant women to eliminate their need to prepare a large sum of money.

(4) Support for married couples that suffer from infertility

1) Infertility counseling center

Under the “Infertility counseling center project”, specialized doctors ① offer medical consultation on infertility; and ② share advice about anxieties associated with infertility at regional core institutions for health and medical care to strengthen the system of providing information and counseling about infertility examination and treatment. (In FY 2009, there were 60 centers nationwide.)

2) Reducing financial burden of infertility treatment

As external fertilization and micro insemination impose a substantial financial burden, efforts have been made to reduce that financial burden through subsidizing part of the expenses required for infertility treatment among spouses as part of support for development of the next-generation since FY 2004.

Since FY 2007, the amount of benefit has been increased (maximum amount of 100,000 yen per treatment, no more than twice a year) and the limit on income was relaxed (to total couple income of 7.3 million yen) . Additionally, since FY 2009, the amount of benefit has been expanded up to 150,000 yen per treatment. (In FY 2008, the benefit was paid to 72,029 cases.)

Column

Efforts of municipalities on Maternity Mark

As for Maternity Mark, in order to raise people's interest in thoughtful environment for pregnant women widely like carefulness for pregnant, the ideas were gathered from people in "Healthy Parents and Children 21" (national campaign plan in the field of maternal and child health in the 21th century) promotion conference and it was publicized in 2006. Municipalities ask facilities for transportation facilities, working places and restaurants for cooperation so as to promote dissemination while familiarizing widely through various opportunities like homepage.

As a result of the investigation into efforts of municipalities on Maternity Mark which the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare publicized (as of August 2009), municipalities which distributed goods with maternity mark for pregnant women in FY 2009 (hereafter "the goods with the mark") increased to 1,372 municipalities out of 1,799 municipalities (76.3%). By the way, the result of the previous investigation (as of the end of August 2008) was 1,184 municipalities (65.4%).

Moreover, municipalities which consider the produce/purchase of them are 85 municipalities (4.7%) in FY 2010, and 16 municipalities (0.9%) out of municipalities which have not distributed them said this is because they have "already thoughtful environment for pregnant women without the goods with the mark".

The goods with the mark are varied such as key rings, straps, badges and seals, and many municipalities distribute them as they give maternal and child health handbook out.

Other than this, various kinds of effort are going on toward organizing thoughtful environment for pregnant women in municipalities and prefectures such as establishing spaces on which pregnant women can preferentially park her car at the park of administrative offices with the marks, announcing for people to give their sheets to pregnant women on public transportation facilities and explaining the substance of the mark in puberty lectures for students.



7 Support for those who work and raise children at the same time

(1) Current situation

Childrearing support measures should properly offer ① cash benefit; ② allowance in kind including the establishment of daycare centers; and ③ support measures for work-life balance. In particular, it is difficult to work while raising children. Accordingly, the measures need to be promoted focusing on support for those who work and raise children at the same time so that these people are not forced to choose between work and family life.

Therefore, it is important that companies establish the system to support childrearing workers such as the systems for child care/family care leaves and work for shorter hours, and at the same time to create a working environment which both male and female workers can use without any concerns. The Equal Employment office of the Prefectural Labour Bureau responds to consultation for workers and offer guidance to diffuse and firmly establish the systems.

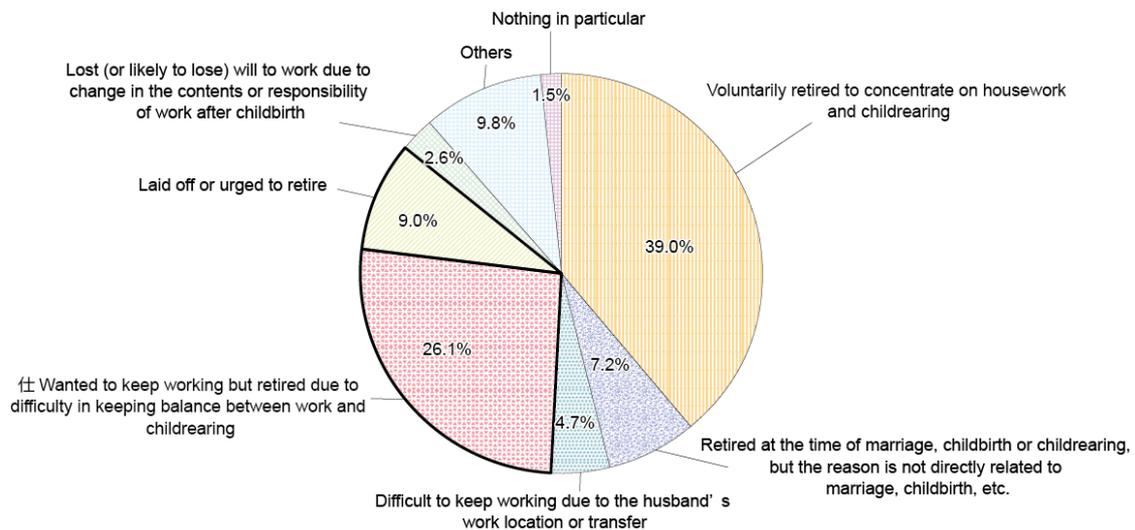
Thanks to these efforts, the ratio of women who take child care leave shows a steady increase reaching 86%, but the women who continue to work after having first child stood at a mere 38% (in FY 2005).

Concerning the reasons that women quit their jobs before and after pregnancy/delivery, about 35% replied that “difficulty in working and raising a child at the same time” or “fired or urged to retire” is the major reason, which suggests that work style after returning to work after child care leave is a challenge for these women. In addition, as a preferable work style for mothers with children, there are high demands on “work with shorter hours” and “work style without overtime work” for mothers with preschool children

(Chart 2-4-12, 2-4-13).

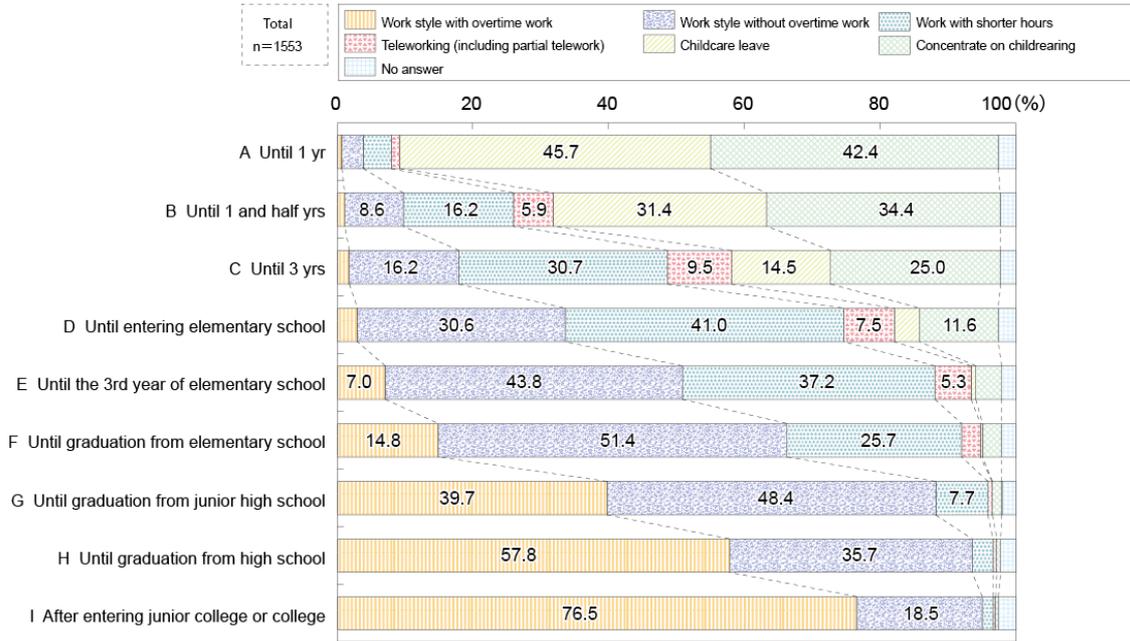
On the other hand, about 30% of male workers want to take a child care leave, but those who actually took the leave stood at a mere 1.72 %. Furthermore, the time that males spend on child rearing and housework is at the lowest level among developed countries, which implies that too much burden of housework and childrearing is imposed on women. These situations make it difficult for women to continue to work, leading to the birth rate decline. In fact, the longer husband spends time for housework and child rearing on a holiday, the higher the rate of a married couple having their second child becomes(Chart 2-4-14 , Chart 2-4-15).

Chart 2-4-12 Reasons for resigning from job before and after pregnancy/ childbirth
(Female employees who resigned from their jobs before and after pregnancy and childbirth as part of the "retirement experience")



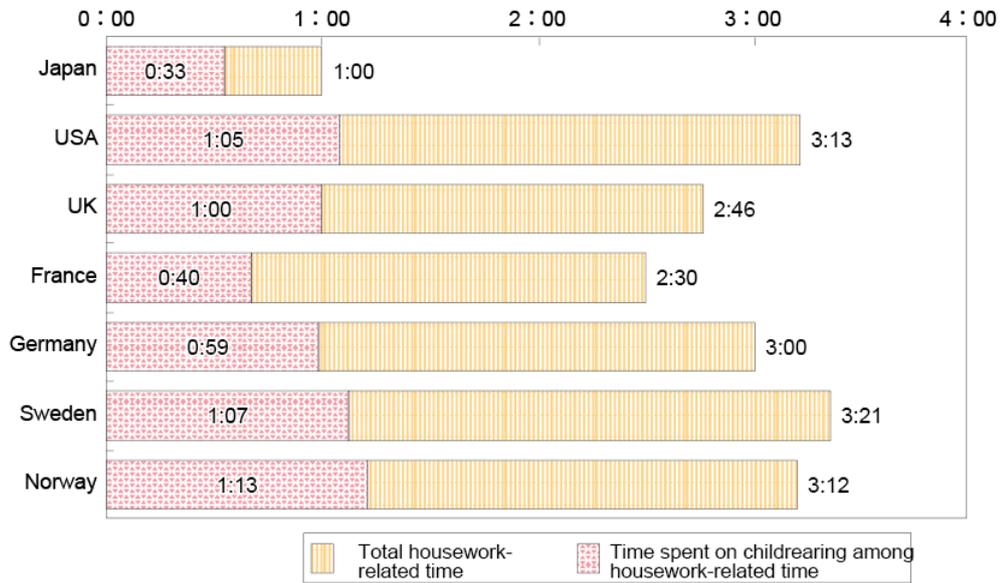
Source: "Comprehensive Research on Various Issues concerning Support Measures for Balancing Work and Family" (2008) Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting

Chart 2-4-13 Preferable work style for mothers with children



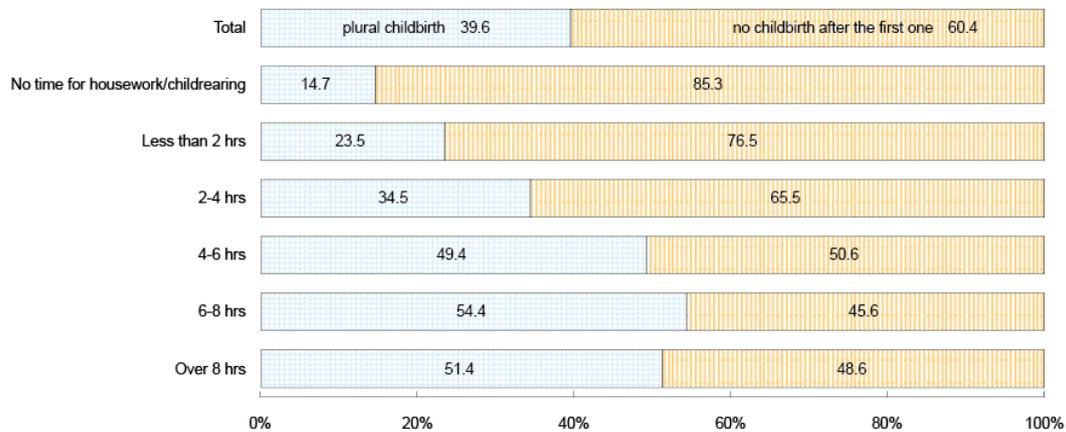
Note: Percentages below 5.0% are not indicated to make it easier to see the chart.
 Source: "Survey on Support for Balance between Future Work and Family" (2008) NLI Research Institute

Chart 2-4-14 Length of time spent on housework and childrearing per day by males with children younger than 6 years old



Source: "How Europeans Spend Their Time Everyday Life of Women and Men" (2004) Eurostat, "America Time-Use Survey Summary" (2006) Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S., "Survey on time use and leisure activities" Ministry of Internal Affairs and

Chart 2-4-15 Situation for plural childbirth by length time spent on housework and childrearing by husband on weekends



Note: 1) The target of this survey are the couples that both husband and wife live together and fall under either of the following category ① or ②, but excludes the couples whose wives' "data before childbirth" are not obtained.

① Couples that both husband and wife replied to the surveys from the 1st to the 7th.

② The father and the mother were not married at the time of the 1st survey, married by the time when the 6th survey was conducted and both of them responded to the survey that took place after their marriage to the 7th survey.

2) Time spent on housework/childrearing by the husband of the couple with "plural childbirth" indicates the one collected for the survey conducted before the birth, and that "no childbirth after the first one" shows the situation when the 6th survey took place.

3) Regarding the couples that had more than two childbirths during the past 6 years, the figures indicate the situation before the youngest child was born.

4) The total includes the reply "time spent on housework and childrearing is not known."

Source: "Longitudinal Survey of Adults in 21st Century, Statistics and Information Department, Minister's Secretariat, MHLW"

(2) Amendment of part of the Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave

Aiming at creating an environment where both men and women can continue to work while raising children, part of the Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children was amended on June 24, 2009 to take into account the present status and to promote the measures for balancing work and child rearing, which has been an urgent issue. The main contents of amendment are shown in Chart 2-4-16 and Chart 2-4-17.

Chart 2-4-16 Overview of the Act on partial revision of the Act on the Welfare for Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave and the Employment Insurance Act

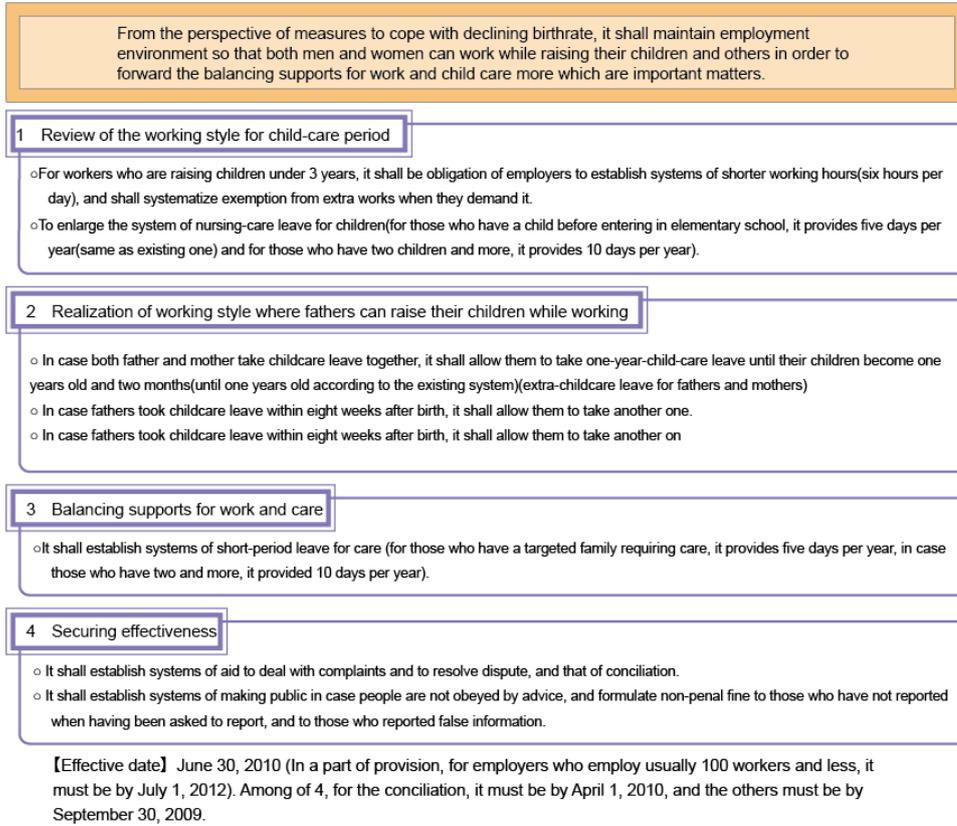
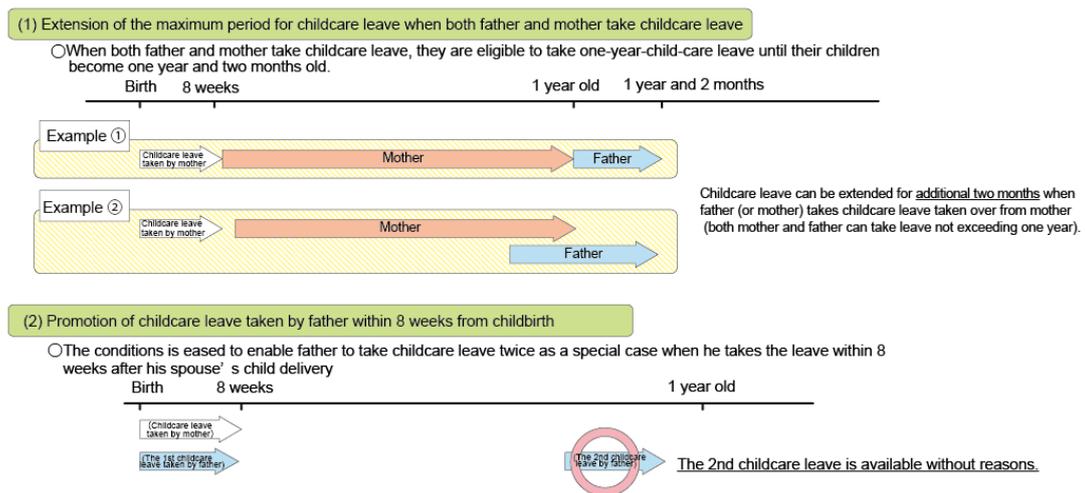


Chart 2-4-17 Measures to promote childcare leave taken by father



(3) Promotion of the “Ikumen Project”

Timed with the enforcement of the revised Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care

of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave on June 30, the “Ikumen (men who are active in child rearing) Project was launched on June 17 for the purpose of encouraging men to actively take care of their children. This project aims to create a society where men can enjoy child rearing more actively and take child care leave more easily.

育てる男が、家族を変える。社会が動く。

育てる男が、家族を変える。社会が動く。

育 MEN
イクメンプロジェクト

イクメンプロジェクトについて

- イクメンプロジェクトとは
- プロジェクト運営
- 大使あいさつ
- ロゴ、ポスターについて
- 推進チームメンバーの紹介

イクメン宣言を見る

★今月の「イクメンの星」紹介★

イクメンサポーター宣言を見る

個人、企業・団体別のサポーター宣言を公開中です。

イクメン発!
プロジェクトの今を語ろう

推進チームメンバーのインタビューなど、プロジェクトの今が見えるトークセッションの模様を随時お届けします。

イクメンサポーター宣言をしよう (個人の方)

イクメンサポーター宣言をしよう (個人、企業・団体の方)

イクメンプロジェクト公式ツイッター ikumen_project

育てる男が、家族を変える。社会が動く。

イクメンプロジェクト

イクメンプロジェクトについて

(cf.) Website of the “Ikumen Project” <http://www.ikumen-project.jp>

On the official website of the project, “Ikumen Declaration” can be made to declare himself as an Ikumen. In addition, “Ikumen Supporter Declaration” can also be made to declare that a person other than Ikumen (such as wife, local residents, experts, celebrities) or an organization (companies, labour unions, NPOs, local governments, etc.) is an Ikumen Supporter who backs up Ikumen. “Ikumen Declaration” and “Ikumen Supporter Declaration” are open to the public on the website.

(Comments from Ikumen on the “Ikumen Declaration” site)

○ Now is the only time that I can spend enough time with my daughter! I meet face to face with my daughter, laugh with her and create happy time. I can do as well as Mommy!
(Father of one child in his 30's)

- ▪ As a father who has taken child care leave, I would like to share the “pleasure” and “importance” of life on child care leave and promote fathering at companies and in local communities. ▪ Without sacrificing my family, I would like to pursue and put into practice an efficient work style to balance family and work. ▪ I would like to keep a sense of gratitude to my wife in mind and express it through my words as well as deeds. Respecting my children’s personalities, I make it a rule to take a deep breath before scolding them without being emotional.(Father of two children in his 30’s)
- The final goal of my life it “to be the best father in the world!” (Father of one child in his 30’s)
- I cook for my family to satisfy their appetite (Daily home-style cooking by father) rather than preparing what I want to eat (not like “Men’s cooking as a hobby”). Although my kids are not good at cooking yet, I enjoy cooking together with them who assist me well. As a father who is a cooking specialist, I will carry out activities to create a society where all fathers cook for their families with their kids! (Father of two children in his 40’s)
- “Ikumen does what he can do in his own way.” “Feeling that I want to do something for my family” is important. It would be great if there were a social system to encourage family with father with such feeling and a work environment that accepts the system.(Father of one child in his 30’s)



The member of the “Ikumen Project Promotion Team” and Mr. Akira Nagatsuma, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare
 (At the inauguration ceremony of the “Ikumen Project” (on June 17)

Column

Change the society with the first step of dad ~father, invest your time strategically! ~

The thought that father is indispensable for childcare is almost completely established in nowadays. But there are a lot of dads who can't take a step forward.

So we heard about something encouragement to fathers from Tetsuya Ando who is representative of specified non-profit organizations "Fathering Japan" which strives to change the society by increasing "fathers with smile" through showing "how to enjoy being father" and serves as a chairman of promotion team "IKUMEN Project".

(1) What is exactly meaning of enjoyment for being father?

Mr. Ando says that "enjoyment for being father" means not just "enjoyment for childcare".

Mr. Ando says

The future of being Citizen and growing as a human is waiting beyond "being father". Childcare runs regions through activities like parent-teacher meetings of nursery school and PTA in elementary schools. If we get interested in their own regions, feeling that we want to make it better sprouts, then we will go to election properly, which means we are going to be a sensible citizen. That's why the stage of a member of society can get to higher.

This is not something about "society" but how to link to childcare affects the future greatly in private such as marital relationship. For father who has helped childcare and made a great family, great time with mom will be waiting after retirement. On the other hand, if we have not helped childcare and we has just worked without spending time with our family, what would be waiting for us?" Mr. Ando asks.

(2) Time is resource. Invest your time strategically.

Time is something each of us wants. Please think when you would like to invest your limited time into what. Mr. Ando says. Actually period that we are struggled with childcare is not so long. Which one is a good idea? Investing those periods into your family or into your work? Ever-increasing growth has already come to end. We cannot get back the period that our company took care of us this and that to us. Do think about something which will be got back to us for sure.

For example, when our kids are little, we invest our time into our family, and then when they got bigger, we invest it into our work by controlling our time ourselves. I wish that a number of dads like this could increase. Mr. Ando says.

Father who thinks like "if you say so, I'm really busy working and my boss and CEO doesn't

care about it so it is impossible.” Listen to me. I’m sure we may have been limited but this is not like we cannot do anything! Overwork really required? Can’t you go back home earlier at least today? Let’s ask yourself again. If you stand up and go back home earlier, it may be a step which changes environment of your work. There may be cases you cannot have time anyway. But you can care about your wife and talk to her even when you are in such busy time. Even if you are so tired that you dozed off while you are listening to her, her feeling is much different by showing your will.

Please do something if you have time to excuse yourself. Mr. Ando says. There is something which is going to be changed by doing it.

(3) Make companies happy with childcare

Mr. Ando also asks executive officers in companies if it is possible that the company which binds employees to the office with long working hours and which make employees exhausted bears fruit. What is required in this age is an ability to judge what is required according to a situation. There is no way for a company to be survived if a company is not an organization where individual can work independently. They must support for employees to help childcare. We learn a lot of things through childcare. We have to manage our time ourselves if we do childcare. As a result of this, we are going to be better at managing and productivity is going to be up thanks to it. With having realization of our live, new ideas may come up to us, and with meeting people and contacting to them, our imagination is getting rich so it must connect with creative works with our brain connecting to our hearts. Motivation and ability of employees will increase so cost for overwork will decrease. Mr. Ando indicates that support for childcare also makes companies happier.

(4) “Thank You Papa Project”

“Fathering Japan” is starting “Thank You Papa Project” to move dad and companies forward. It is a social reform project aiming to urge people to advance effort of work-life balance and that of next-generation growth, while naming special leave as “Papa Thank You (means “leave for childbirth for dad”) ” which allows dad to take leave for eight weeks after childbirth by “Revised Act on the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave” and urging fathers to be a part of childcare through increasing fathers who take childcare leave during this duration (Thank You Papa) and by this securing a balance of a couple during childcare and a bond of families. To be specific, it supports fathers for childcare with a word “Change the society with “Papa Thank You” with efforts such as building of network between fathers, educational campaign for generation of grandpa/grandma, report of developed efforts of

companies, urge for companies. This is the project to support fathers who want to help childcare but cannot take a step into it.

(5) Conclusion

Lastly, he also gave a message for mothers. He said please be patient and grow father. Mr. Ando himself could realize how enjoyable being father is because Mrs. Ando has not dumped and given up, and has grown him with warm heart.

You have become father anyway so please cherish this lucky and enjoy being father and having a family, and then connect to the society.

‘Cause it must be really fun!

Those are touching messages from Mr. Ando who is also fond of rock music.



Mr. Tetsuya Ando and the Former Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Mr. Nagatsuma (inauguration ceremony of “IKUMEN Project” on June 17”)