

White Paper on Youth

1 Background

The White Paper on Youth reports the present state of youths in Japan and relevant measures so that the general public may obtain an understanding of national youth administration. It has been published since 1956 with its 51th edition issued this year.

2 Report structure

The White Paper on Youth 2008 is organized into three parts: Part 1, "Present State of Youths in Japan", Topical news, "Subsequent state' of upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students and regional support"; Part 2, "Administrative Policies on Youths" and "References."

(1) Part 1 Present State of Youths in Japan

Describes the present state of young people in Japan with reference to the latest statistics on youths.

- 1. Youth Development Environment
- 2. Social Independence Youths
- 3. Youth Safety and Behavioral Problems

(2) A topical news "Subsequent state' of upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students and regional support"

It is said that there are various causes of neets. A special indication is that stumbling at the stage of school such as truancies or being upper secondary school dropouts causes them to become neets.

This topical news reveals the results of an urgent survey on upper secondary school dropouts performed by the Cabinet Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, introduces advanced efforts toward assisting young people with difficulties, and argues about the efforts necessary to support their present state and independence.

(3) Administrative Policies on Youths

Describes the various government policies on young people undertaken mainly in the fiscal year 2008.

- 1. Comprehensive and Systematic Promotion of Policies for Youth Development
- 2. Policies by Age Group
- 3. Measures for youth with difficulties
- 4. Measures for Improving the Enviroment for society-wide Support of the Healthy Development of Youth
- 5. Framework for Promoting the Measures

(4) References

Part 1 Present State of Youths in Japan

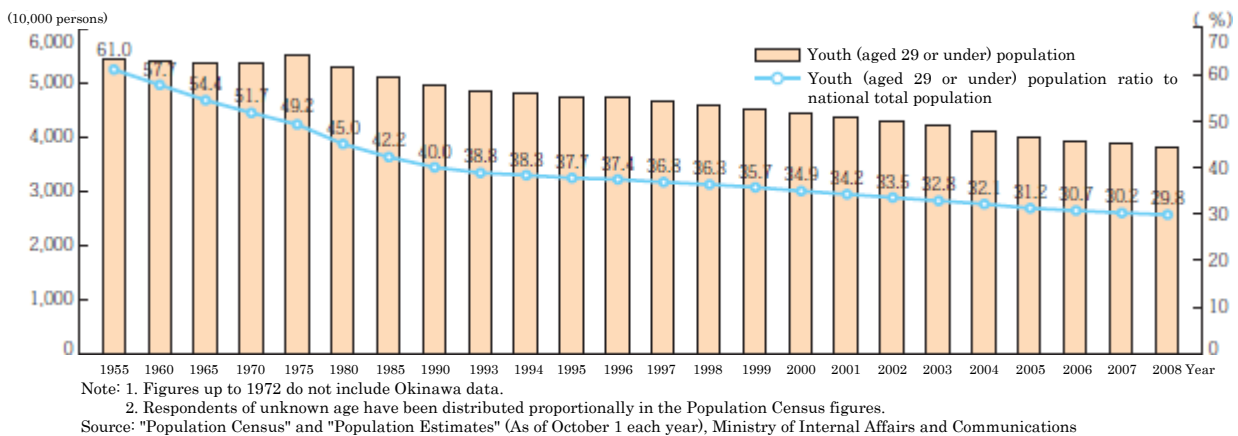
Chapter 1 Youth Development Environment

◆Section 1 Status of the Youth in Recent Years◆

(Youth Population)

As of October 1, 2008, the total population was 127,692,000, of which the youth population (aged 0 to 29) was 38,067,000, i.e., 29.8% of the total population. Since 1975, there has been a consistent decline in the youth population both in absolute numbers as well as in proportion to the total population, and the youth population has dropped to less than 30% for the first time. (Figure 1)

Figure1 Youth Population and Ratio to Total population

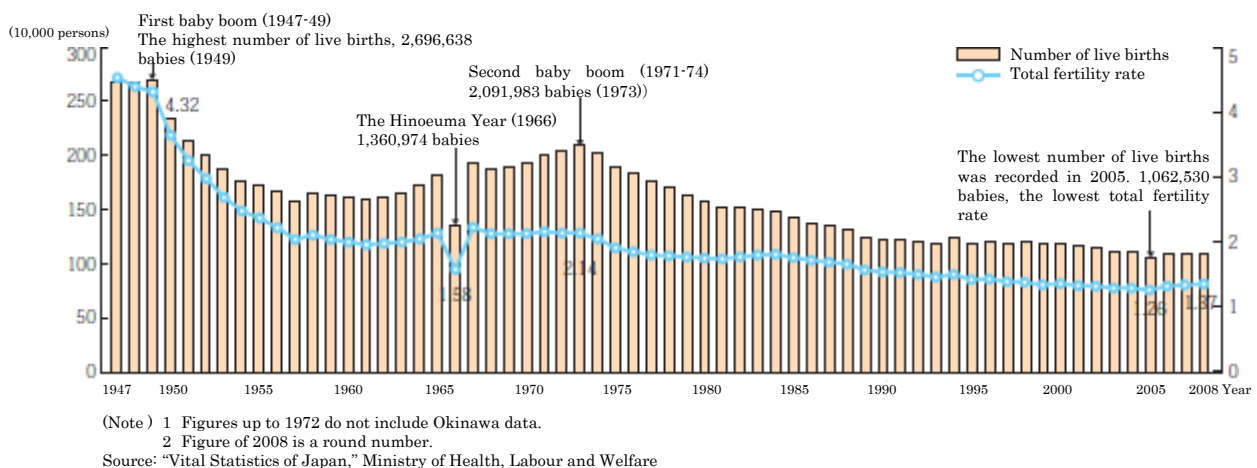


(Marriages and Births)

The period from 1992 on was marked by fluctuations in the number of births with a decline thereafter. In 2007 it began to decrease again, but reached 1,091,150 in 2008, an increase of 1,332 when compared to the previous year. Total fertility rates also have been on a downward trend except in the early 1980s, reaching 1.37 in 2008, a 0.03 points increase when compared to the previous year, which showed upward trend for three consecutive years. (Figure 2)

The average age for first marriages in Japan was 30.2 for males and 28.5 for females in 2008, and has been on an upward trend for both males and females, showing the tendency to marry later in life. The difference in such average age between males and females has been narrowing.

Figure 2 Annual changes in number of births and total fertility rate



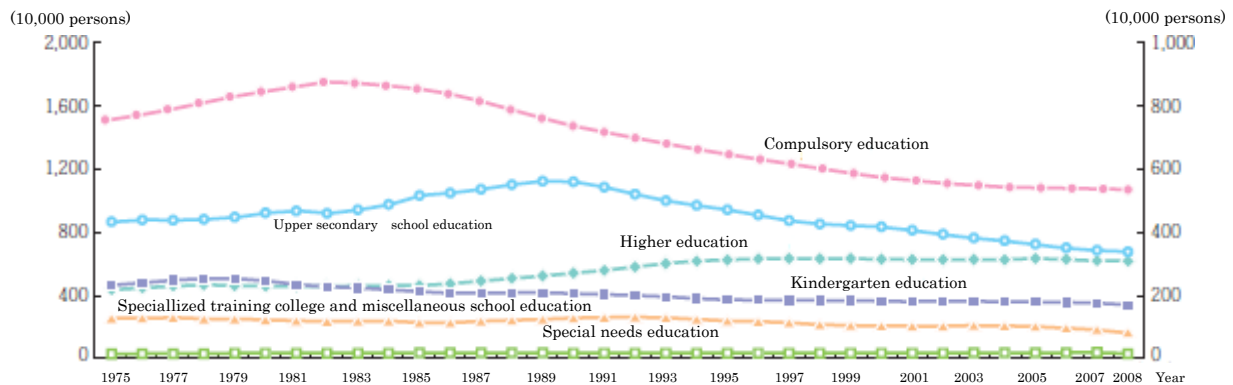
◆Section 2 School Education for Youths◆

(Number of Youths in School Education)

The number of youths in compulsory education was on peak in fiscal year 1982 but has shown a continuous drop thereafter and it is 10,725,000 in fiscal year 2008. The number of upper secondary school students became the highest ever in the first year of the Heisei era (1989), but continued to drop thereafter and attained the number 3,374,000 in fiscal year 2008.

However, in case of higher education (colleges of technology, universities and junior colleges), the number of students started growing continuously since fiscal year 1985 and commenced to decrease from fiscal year 1999 on, and amounted to 3,068,000 in fiscal year 2008 (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Changes in the Category-wise Number of Students Enrolled



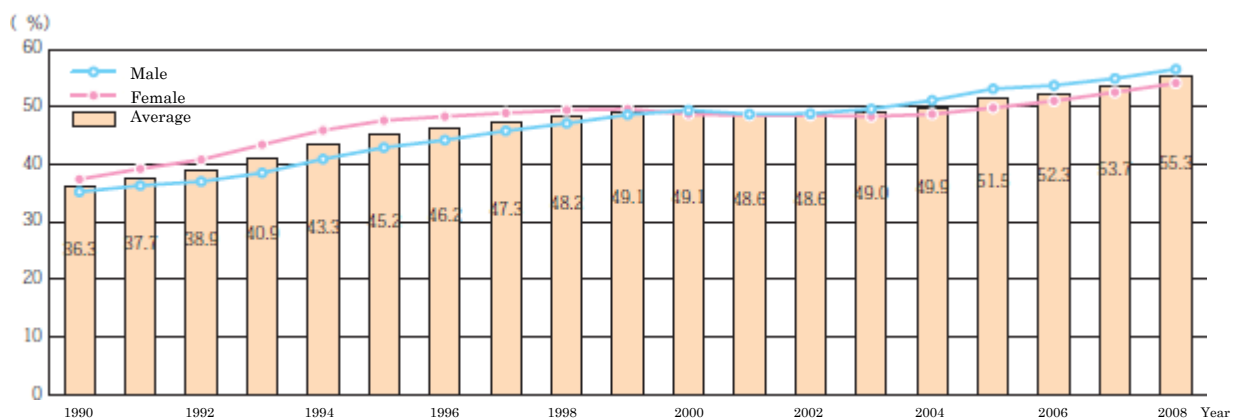
- (Note) 1. Kindergarten education (kindergartens), compulsory education (elementary schools and lower secondary schools), upper secondary school education (upper secondary schools), higher education (colleges of technology, universities and junior colleges), special needs education (schools for special needs education (A total of schools for the blind, for the deaf and for the other disabled before FY 2006)), and specialized training colleges and miscellaneous schools education (specialized training colleges and miscellaneous schools) are indicated.
2. The number of upper secondary school students includes general course, special studies, and special course students, the number of university students includes undergraduates, and general students, auditors and research students of graduate schools, special studies and special courses, and the number of junior college students includes general course students, as well as students and auditors of special studies and special courses.

Source: "School Basic Survey", Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(Advancement Rate)

The annual rate of advancement to universities and junior colleges exceeded 50% in fiscal year 2005, reaching 55.3% in fiscal year 2008. The gender-wise break-up of the advancement rate indicates that, previously, the female advancement rate exceeded the male advancement rate. However, there was a reversal of trend in fiscal year 2000 and, thereafter the advancement rate of males has overtaken that of females. (Figure 4)

Figure 4 Advancement Rate to Universities and Junior Colleges educations



Source: "School Basic Survey", Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(Special Needs Education)

In fiscal year 2008, the number of children with disabilities attending schools for special needs education is 112,000. In regular elementary and lower secondary schools, the number of children attending special classes is 124,000, and the number of children who receive special support services in resource rooms is 50,000. In total, the number of children who receive special needs education is 286,000, of which 234,000 children are in the stage of compulsory education. It accounts for 2.2% of the total juvenile population of the same age. (Table 1)

Table1. Number of Students Receiving Special Needs Education

(1) Schools for Special Needs Education (As of May 1, 2008)

Category	Number of enrolled students				
	Kindergarten department	Elementary school department	Lower secondary school department	Upper secondary school department	Total
Visual impairment	274	1,637	1,036	2,816	5,763
Hearing impairment	1,279	3,044	1,798	2,292	8,413
Intellectual disability	249	29,631	22,638	44,406	96,924
Physical disability	176	13,177	7,759	9,251	30,363
Health impairment and constitutional weakness	45	7,432	5,403	6,054	18,934
Grand total	1,663	34,258	26,044	50,369	112,334

(Note) Students with two or more disabilities are included in the respective category. Therefore, "Grand Total" does not match the sum of the total by category.

(2) Special Classes

Category	Number of enrolled students					
	Elementary school		Lower secondary school		Total	
	FY2007	FY 2008	FY2007	FY 2008	FY2007	FY 2008
Intellectual disability	44,228	47,062	22,483	24,202	66,711	71,264
Physical disability	3,015	3,163	976	1,038	3,991	4,201
Health impairment and constitutional weakness	1,346	1,492	480	520	1,826	2,012
Low vision	245	257	85	90	330	347
Hard of hearing	865	901	343	328	1,208	1,229
Speech impairment	1,223	1,324	87	87	1,310	1,411
Emotional disturbance	27,934	32,132	10,067	11,570	38,001	43,702
Grand total	78,856	86,331	34,521	37,835	113,377	124,166

(Note) 1 These are the figures as of May 1 in every fiscal year.

2 Regarding special classes for persons with emotional disturbance the name was changed into "Autism and Emotionally disturbance" by "About the name of special classes for 'persons with emotional disturbance'"(20 Notification No.1167 of Director-General, Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau, Ministry of

(3) Resource Rooms

Category	Number of students receiving special support services in resource rooms					
	Elementary school		Lower secondary school		Total	
	FY2007	FY 2008	FY2007	FY 2008	FY2007	FY 2008
Speech impairment	29,134 [67.6%]	29,635 [63.1%]	206 [9.5%]	225 [8.2%]	29,340 [64.9%]	29,860 [60.1%]
Autism	4,975 [11.5%]	6,301 [13.4%]	494 [22.8%]	746 [27.3%]	5,469 [12.1%]	7,047 [14.2%]
Emotional disturbance	2,628 [6.1%]	3,009 [6.4%]	569 [26.3%]	580 [21.3%]	3,197 [7.1%]	3,589 [7.2%]
Low vision	134 [0.3%]	137 [0.3%]	21 [1.0%]	16 [0.6%]	155 [0.3%]	153 [0.3%]
Hard of hearing	1,618 [3.8%]	1,616 [3.4%]	305 [14.1%]	299 [11.0%]	1,923 [4.3%]	1,915 [3.9%]
Learning Disabilities	2,156 [5.0%]	3,149 [6.7%]	329 [15.2%]	533 [19.5%]	2,485 [5.5%]	3,682 [7.4%]
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	2,406 [5.6%]	3,087 [6.6%]	230 [10.6%]	319 [11.7%]	2,636 [5.8%]	3,406 [6.9%]
Physical disability	11 [0.03%]	13 [0.03%]	0 [0%]	1 [0.04%]	11 [0.02%]	14 [0.03%]
Health impairment and constitutional weakness	16 [0.04%]	9 [0.02%]	8 [0.37%]	10 [0.37%]	24 [0.05%]	19 [0.04%]
Grand total	43,078 [100%]	46,956 [100%]	2,162 [100%]	2,729 [100%]	45,240 [100%]	49,685 [100%]

(Note) 1. The total of the ratio of each category does not necessarily become 100% because the ratio is rounded off.

2. This survey only covers the public elementary schools and the lower secondary schools.

3. These are the figures as of May 1 in each fiscal year.

Source: "Special Needs Education in Japan" Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

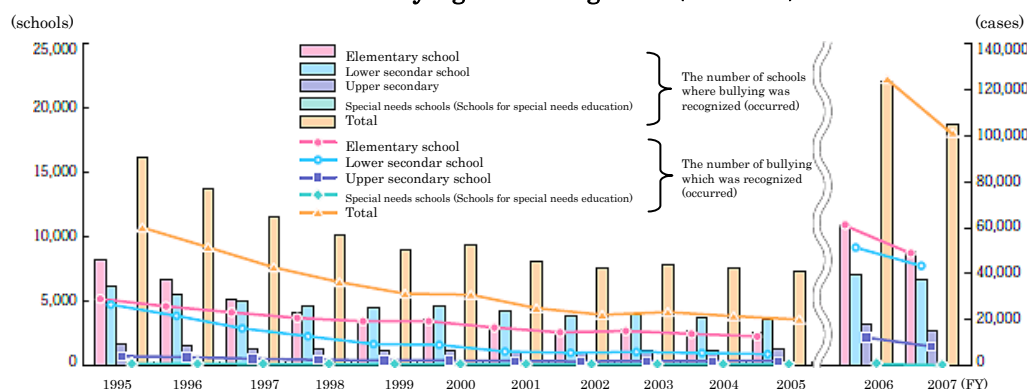
(Bullying in Schools)

Based upon the investigations carried out in the fiscal year 2006, in order to have better understanding of the circumstances, "bullying" was redefined as a situation in which the "victim of bullying suffers mental distress by being subject to psychological or physical harassment by another person who has a certain relationship with the victim. The place where it happens can be inside or outside of the school."

As a result of revision of the definition and the investigation method, the number of recognized incidences in the national, private, public lower and upper secondary schools during the fiscal year of 2007 turned to be 101,094 cases (48,896 in elementary schools, 43,505 in lower secondary schools, 8,355 in upper secondary schools and 341 in special needs schools). There were 18,759 schools (8,857 elementary schools, 7,036 lower secondary schools, 2,734 upper secondary schools and 132 special needs schools) where bullying was recognized. The percentage of schools, where bullying was recognized, was 39.0% in the elementary schools, 64.0 % in lower secondary schools, 51.2% in upper secondary schools and 13.0% in schools for special needs education. (Figure 5)

Moreover, most ways of bullying are 'teasing and bantering, bashing away or saying something uncomfortable or threatening' (The breakout rate is 65.7% in the elementary schools, 64.5% in the lower secondary schools, 55.4% in the upper secondary schools, and 56.9% in schools for special needs education). (Table 2)

Figure 5 Changes in the Number of Bullying Incidents and Schools (national, public, private schools) where Bullying was Recognized (occurred)



- (Note) 1. Public Schools were surveyed until FY 2006. In addition, the national and private schools have also been surveyed since FY 2005.
 2. The investigation method, etc. were reviewed in FY 2006.
 3. The number of incidents and number of schools, where bullying incidents occurred until FY 2005, and the number of incidents and number of schools, where bullying incidents were recognized from FY 2006
 4. From FY 2007 "Schools for special needs education" changed to "Special needs schools."

Source: The survey was conducted by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Table 2: Ways of Bullying (National, Public, Private Schools) (fiscal 2007)

Category	Elementary school		Lower secondary school		Upper secondary school		Special needs school		Total	
	No. of incidents	Percentage	No. of incidents	Percentage	No. of incidents	Percentage	No. of incidents	Percentage	No. of incidents	Percentage
Teasing, bantering, bashing away, or saying something threatening or uncomfortable	32,110	65.7	28,061	64.5	4,646	55.4	194	56.9	65,011	64.3
Being excluded or neglected by group	11,896	24.3	9,489	21.8	1,455	17.4	56	16.4	22,896	22.6
Slightly hitting, slapping, kicking with the pretense of playing	9,980	20.4	7,120	16.4	1,712	20.4	64	18.8	18,876	18.7
Hard hitting, slapping, kicking	2,317	4.7	2,525	5.8	737	8.8	27	7.9	5,606	5.5
Extorting money or goods	764	1.6	1,369	3.1	498	5.9	12	3.5	2,643	2.6
Hiding, stealing, destroying, discarding money or goods	3,254	6.7	3,448	7.9	671	8.0	32	9.4	7,405	7.3
Forcing to do something unwilling, embarrassing, or dangerous	2,854	5.8	2,636	6.1	795	9.5	30	8.8	6,315	6.2
Mentally abusing using personal computer, mobile phone etc	534	1.1	3,633	8.4	1,701	20.3	25	7.3	5,893	5.8
Others	1,980	4.0	1,317	3.0	388	4.6	19	5.6	3,704	3.7

(Note) 1. National, public and private schools have been surveyed since FY 2006.

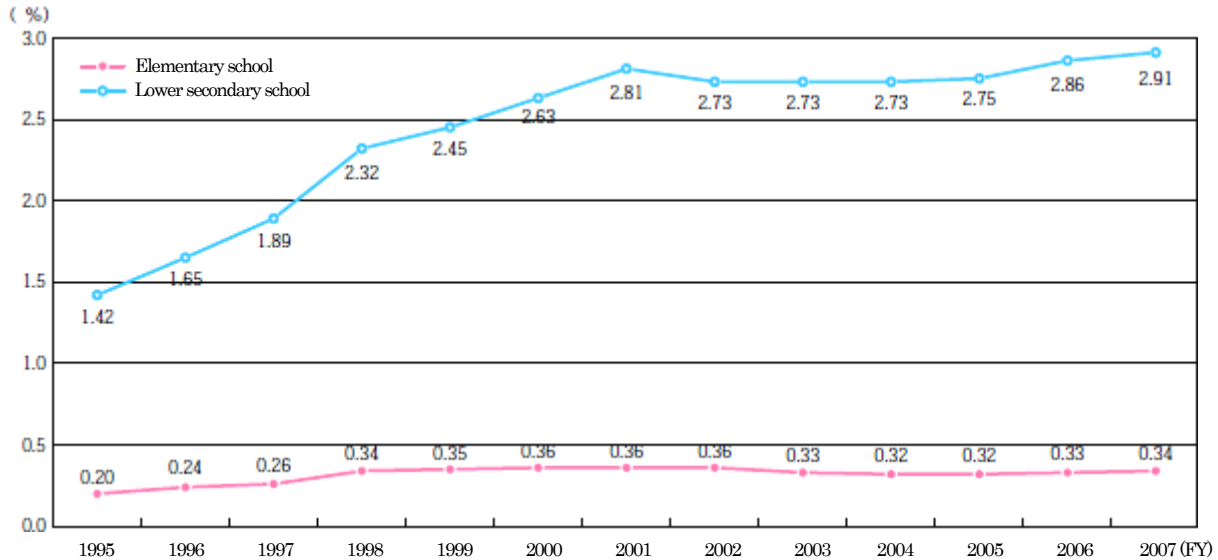
2. Two or more answers.

Source: The survey was conducted by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(Truancy)

The ratio of the children not attending schools against the total students by school type has been the same in the recent years in case of both elementary and lower secondary schools. However, in case of lower secondary schools, the ratio has reached 2.91 % in fiscal year 2007 and this is the highest ever since fiscal year 1995. (Figure 6)

Figure 6 Changes in the Ratio of Truant Students to Total Students by School Type

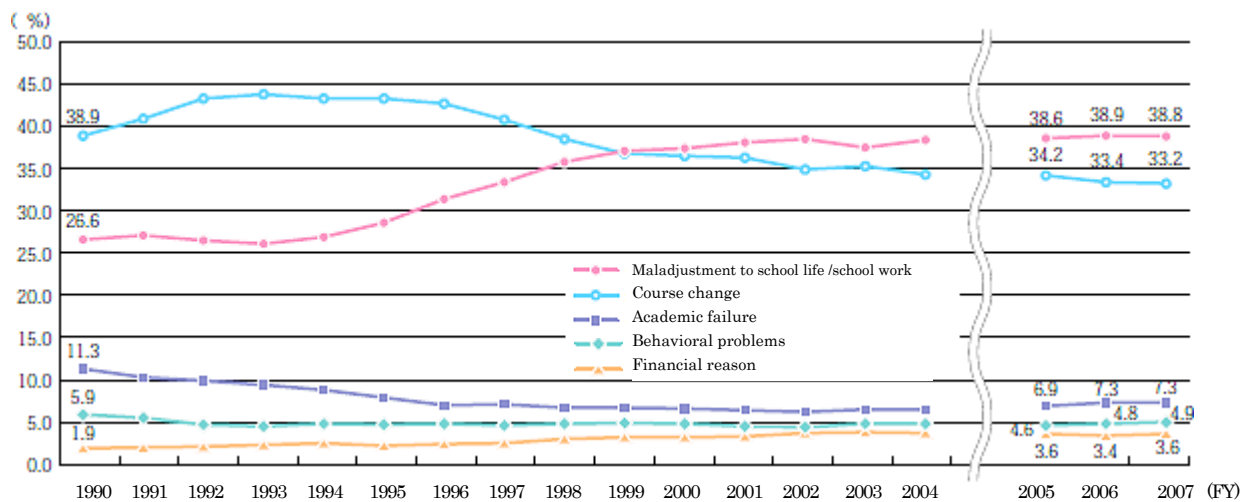


(Note) 1. From FY 2006 on, The first lower secondary education is included in the category of lower secondary schools.
 2. Truancy (up to FY 1998 called "school phobia") means that a student is absent from or unable to attend school due to some psychological, emotional, physical, or social cause or background (except when due to illness or financial reasons).
 Source: The survey was conducted by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(Upper Secondary School Dropouts)

The annual changes in the ratio of reason-wise upper secondary school dropout shows that the ratio of dropout due to course change was at its maximum until fiscal year 1998 and since fiscal year 1999, the ratio of dropout due to maladjustment to school life or school work is increasing. (Figure 7)

Figure 7 Changes in the Ratio of Reason-wise Upper Secondary School Dropout Students



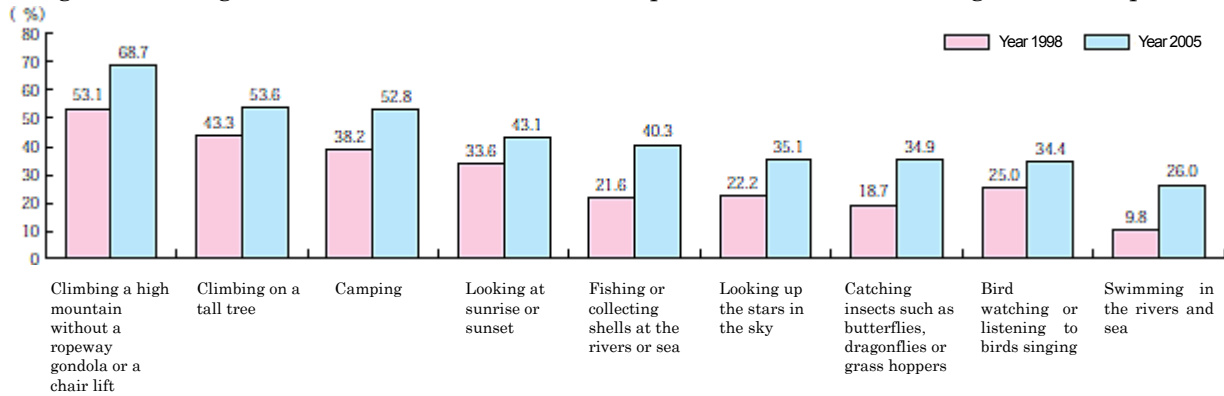
(Note) 1. Public and private upper secondary schools were surveyed until FY 2004, and since FY 2005 national upper secondary schools have also been surveyed.
 2. One main reason is selected per student who dropout school.
 3. This is a ratio of the number of dropouts according to each reason to the total number of dropouts.
 Source: The survey was conducted by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

◆Section 3 Experiential Activities for Youths◆

(Current State of Experiential Activities for Youths)

Regarding the individual experiential activities, the “Survey of youth activities for experience of nature” shows that there are hardly any young people, who have had an experience such as “Camping” or “Swimming in the sea or river.” This number has generally increased. (Figure 8)

Figure 8 Changes in the Ratio of “Almost No Experience” of the Following Nature Experiences



Source: Prepared by National Institution For Youth Education "Reality of youth activities for experience with nature - A Report (Annual report for fiscal 2005)"

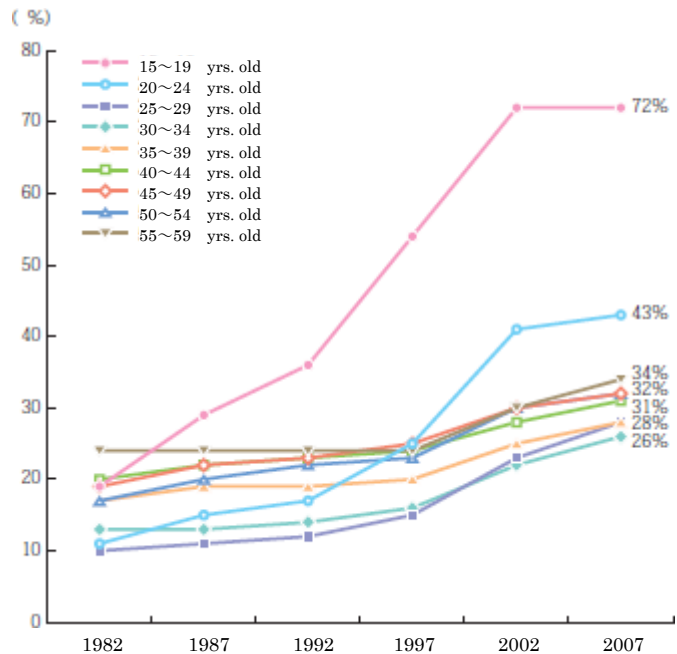
Chapter 2 Social Independence of Youths

◆Section 1 Youth Labour◆

(A Ratio of Employees (excluding executive of company or corporation) other than Regular staff)

The ratio of youth employees (excluding executive of company or corporation) other than Regular staff has increased rapidly since around 1992, and in the year 2007 the ratio was 71.8% for age group 15-19, 43.2% for age group 20-24 and it was at higher level compared with other age groups. (Figure 9)

Figure 9 Changes in the Ratio of Employees (excluding executive of company or corporation) Other Than Regular Staff



(Note) The ratio of employees except regular staff and employees (excluding executive of company or corporation)

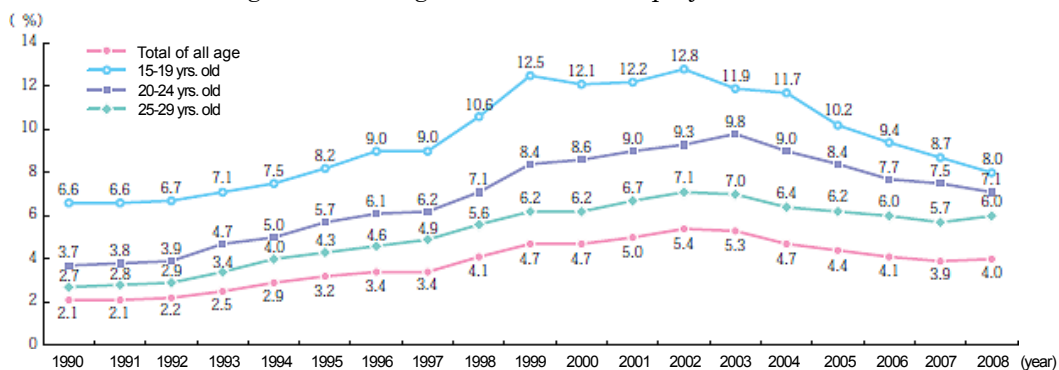
Source: "Employment Status Survey", Ministry of Internal affairs and Communications

◆Section 2 Youth Employment and Job Turnover as well as their Working Conditions◆

(Youth Unemployment)

Youth unemployment rate increased gradually after 1991. However, after a sharp rise in the years 1997 and 1998, it has dropped down since 2003. On the other hand, it has been always high in comparison with total of all age groups. (Figure 10)

Figure 10 Changes in Youth Unemployment Rate

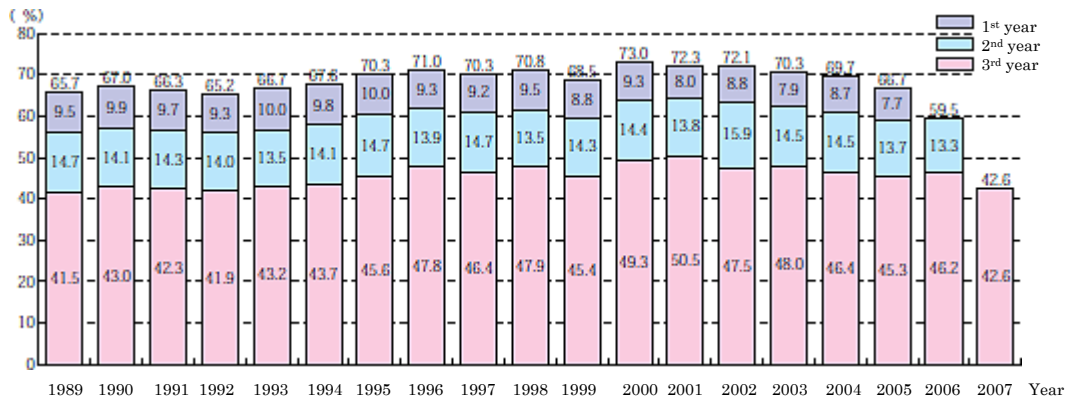


Source: "Labour Force Survey", Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(Job Turnover amongst School Graduates)

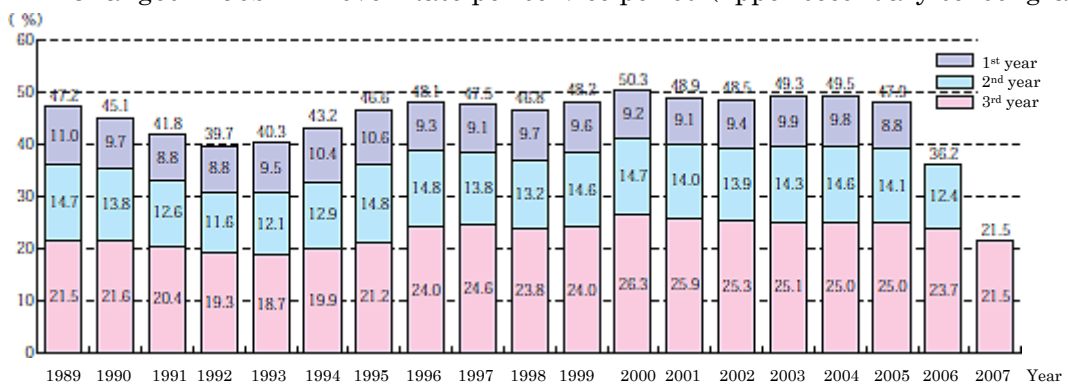
Regarding job turnover amongst those who graduated in March 2005 and left jobs within 3 years after getting employed, out of the total people who started jobs, 66.7% of the lower secondary school graduates left, 47.9 % of the upper secondary school graduates and 35.9 % of university graduates left (Figure 11). The percentage of the lower secondary school as well as upper secondary school graduates who left their jobs in the first year of employment is high, and especially in case of lower secondary school graduates it is almost 50%.

Figure 11-1 Changes in the Job Turnover Rate per service period (lower secondary school graduates)



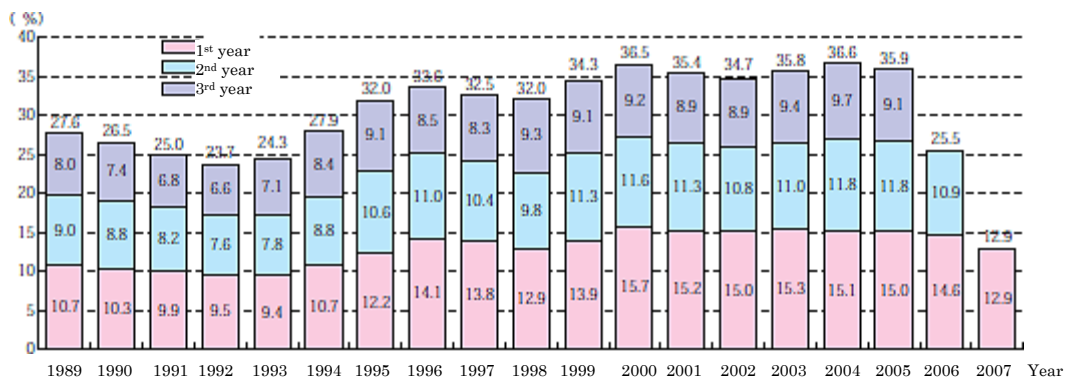
Source: "New Graduate Employment and Job Turnover Survey", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Figure 11-2 Changes in Job Turnover Rate per service period (upper secondary school graduates)



Source: "New Graduate Employment and Job Turnover Survey", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Figure 11-3 Changes in the Job Turnover Rate per service period (University graduates)

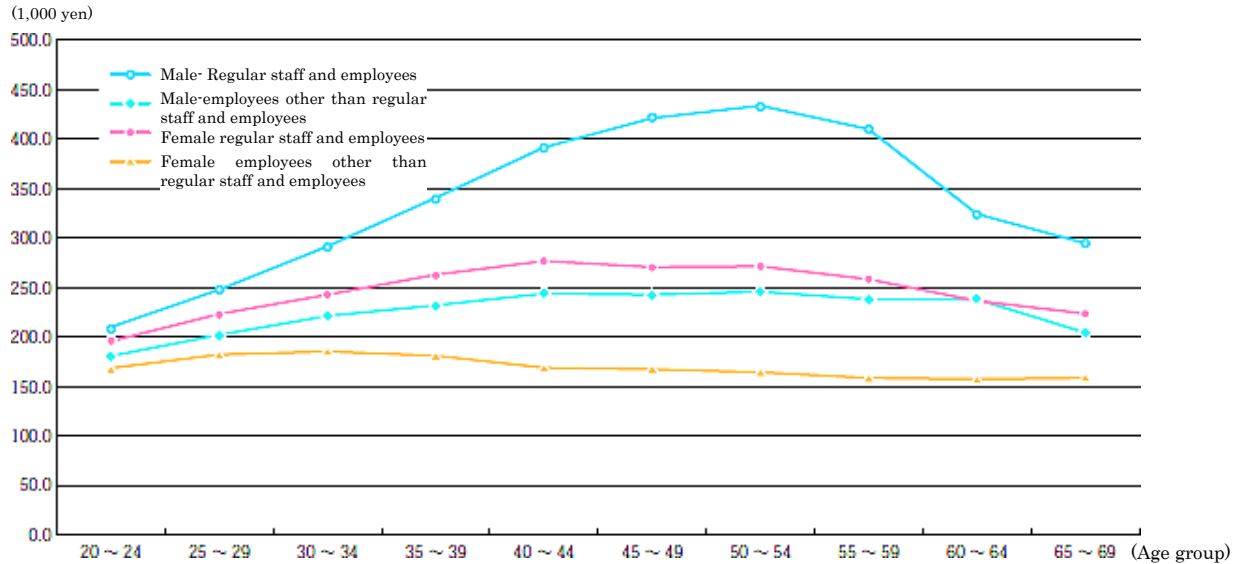


Source: "New Graduate Employment and Job Turnover Survey", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

(Wages)

Setting the wages of age group 20 - 24 years as a baseline, and compared with the highest wage of each employment type, it is found that in case of male workers, the highest wages for regular staff and employees of age group 50 - 54 are 2.1 times and the highest wages of the employees other than regular staff and employees are 1.4 times for the age group 50 - 54. The increment margin in case of employees other than regular staff and employees according to the age is less. On the other hand, in case of female workers, the highest wages of regular staff and employees of age group 40 - 44 are 1.4 times and for the employees other than regular staff and employees, the highest wages for age group 30 - 34 years, are 1.1 times. (Figure 12)

Figure 12 Employment Types and Average Wages According to Age Group (2008)



- (Note) 1. "Employees other than regular staff and employees are workers who do not correspond to "regular staff and employees," and they are referred to as "part timers," "non-regular employees," "junior employees" and others in their offices.
 2. It is amount of the fixed salary of June 2008 in business entity of 10 or more employees.
 3. The fixed salary is the amount of the cash salary (after tax) subtracting the amount of the overtime salary.

Source: "Basic Survey on Wage Structure," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

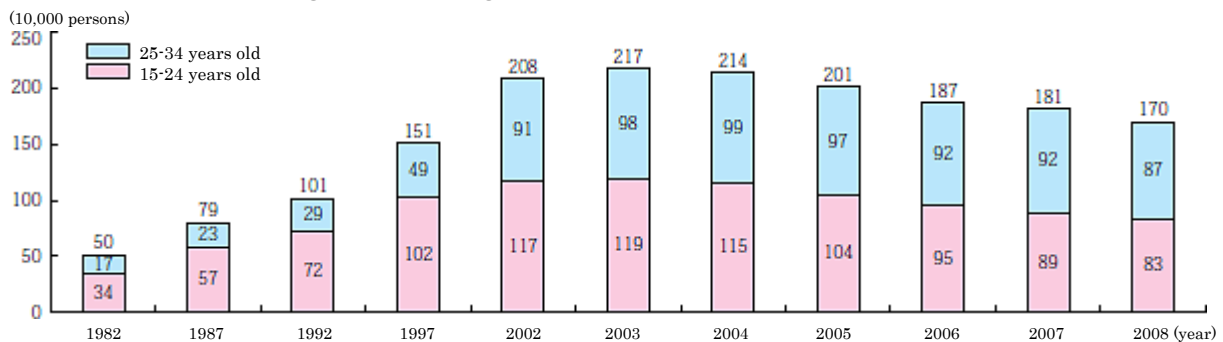
◆ Section 3 Status of the So-called NEETs and Part-time Workers ◆

(Conditions of the so-called NEETs and Part-Time Workers)

As of 2003, the number of job-hopping part-timers increased up to 2.17 million and it has dropped down continuously for the next 5 years that is 1.7 million in 2008. By age, the number of employees in the age group 15 - 24 decreased by 360,000 (30.3%), compared with the highest number in 2003, while the number of employees in the age group 25 - 34 decreased by only 110,000 (11.2%) and the tendency to stay on is seen in the senior part-timers. (Figure 13)

The number of unemployed youths, who are close to the concept of NEETs (currently Not in Education Employment or Training: economically inactive persons under the age group of 15 - 34, and who do not perform housework nor attend schools), reached up to 640,000 in 2008, an increase by 20,000 (3.2%) compared to the previous year. The number of unemployed youths aged 15 to 24 decreased by 30,000 (10.3%), compared with the peak number in 2002, while the number of unemployed youths aged 25 to 34 increased by 30,000 (8.6%). (Figure 14)

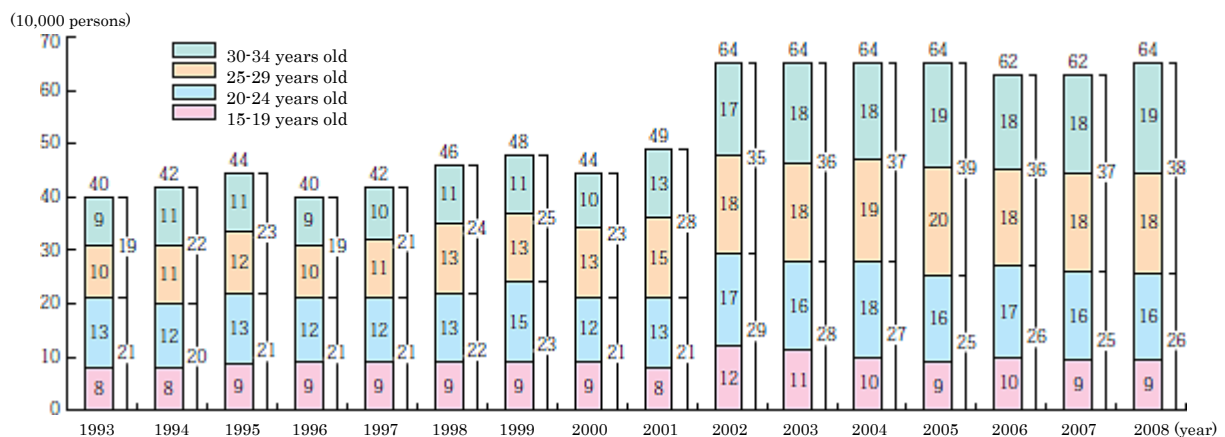
Figure 13 Changes in the Number of Part-Time Workers



- (Note) 1. Data was compiled according to the following definition: between 1982 and 1997, job-hopping part-timers were defined as aged 15 to 34 [1] and were those called "part-timers" at their offices. In case of males, the employment period was for more than one year and less than five years, and in case of females, they were single and they spent more time working than doing anything else. [2] Then unemployed people were defined as those who did not perform housework or attend classes, looking for part-time jobs.
2. From 2002: "males who graduated from school" or "females who graduated from school and never married" in 15 to 34 age group, excluding housewives and students, and meet the following: (1) "Part-time worker and Arbeit (temporary workers)" among employees (2) unemployed persons who are searching for "part-time jobs" (3) economically inactive persons who wish to obtain "part-time jobs" and at the same time not involved in housework nor attending school.
3. As mentioned above, attention needs to be paid to the time series comparison.

Source: "Analysis of Labour Economy 2006 version" for 1982 to 1997, a copy by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. After 2002, "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)," Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau.

Figure 14 Changes in the Number of Unemployed Youths



- (Note) 1 Data was compiled with unemployed youths defined as aged 15 to 34, those who are economically inactive and do not perform housework or attend classes.
- 2 The total of 15 - 34 years old is the total of "15 - 24 years old total" and "25 - 34 years old total." The break-up of "15~24 years old total" and "25 - 34 years old total" do not match because the number is rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source: "Labour Force Survey," Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau

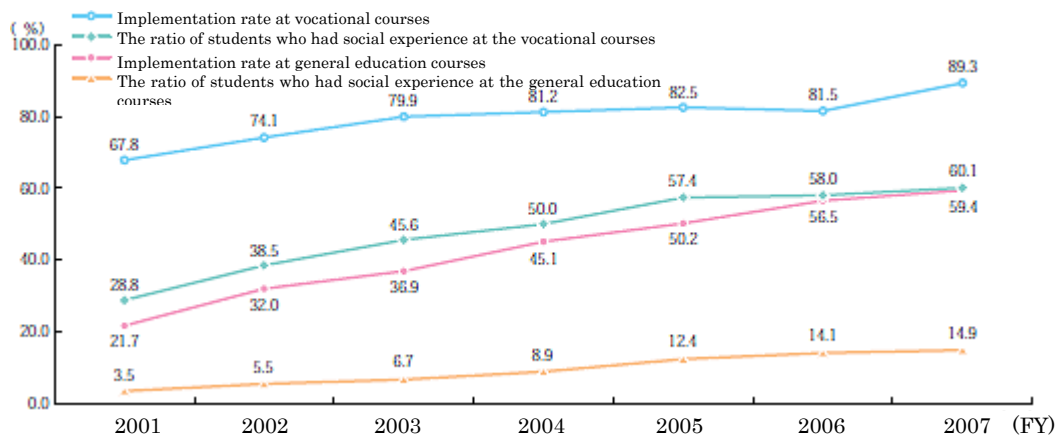
◆Section 4 Efforts towards Career Education◆

(Status of Social (Vocational) Experience)

As for the status of internship implementation at public upper secondary schools by course in fiscal year 2007, the implementation rate at general education courses was 59.4% while that of vocational courses was 89.3%.

On the other hand, the ratio of students who had social experience at the general education courses was 14.9 % and 60.1% at the vocational courses. Thus, both the implementation rate and the ratio of students who had on-the job experience are much lower at general education courses than those at vocational courses. (Figure 15)

Figure 15 Internship Implementation Status at Upper Secondary Schools (Public Schools and Full-time Schools)



(Note) The number of 3rd grade students, who had on-the-job experience at least once in the three years, is counted as the experienced people and the rate of those students is estimated against all the 3rd grade students.

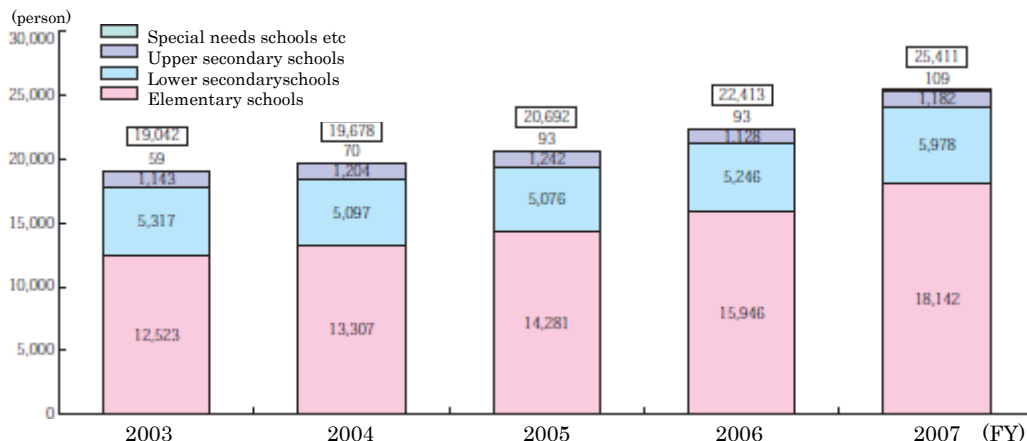
Source: Materials published by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (until 2004), and the National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2005 or later).

◆Section 5 Status of International Exchange◆

(Eligibility Status of Foreign Students in Need of Japanese Language Education)

There are 25,411 foreign students (as of September 1, 2007), who have enrolled in public elementary, lower or upper secondary schools in need of Japanese language education. The number has increased by 13.4%, compared with the last survey taken place in 2006 by 33.4% in the last five years. By school type, elementary schools and lower secondary schools account for 94.9%. By mother tongue, three languages, Portuguese, Chinese, and Spanish, account for 70% or more of the total. (Figure 16)

Figure 16 Changes in the Number of Foreign Children Enrolled in Public Schools (Elementary, Lower secondary and Upper secondary schools) in Need of Japanese Language Education



(Note) 1. Schools for special needs education etc. includes schools for special needs education and secondary education schools
2. Prior to FY 2006, schools for special needs education were known as schools for blind, deaf and physically challenged students.

Source: "Survey on eligibility status of foreign students in need of Japanese language education" (FY 2007), Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

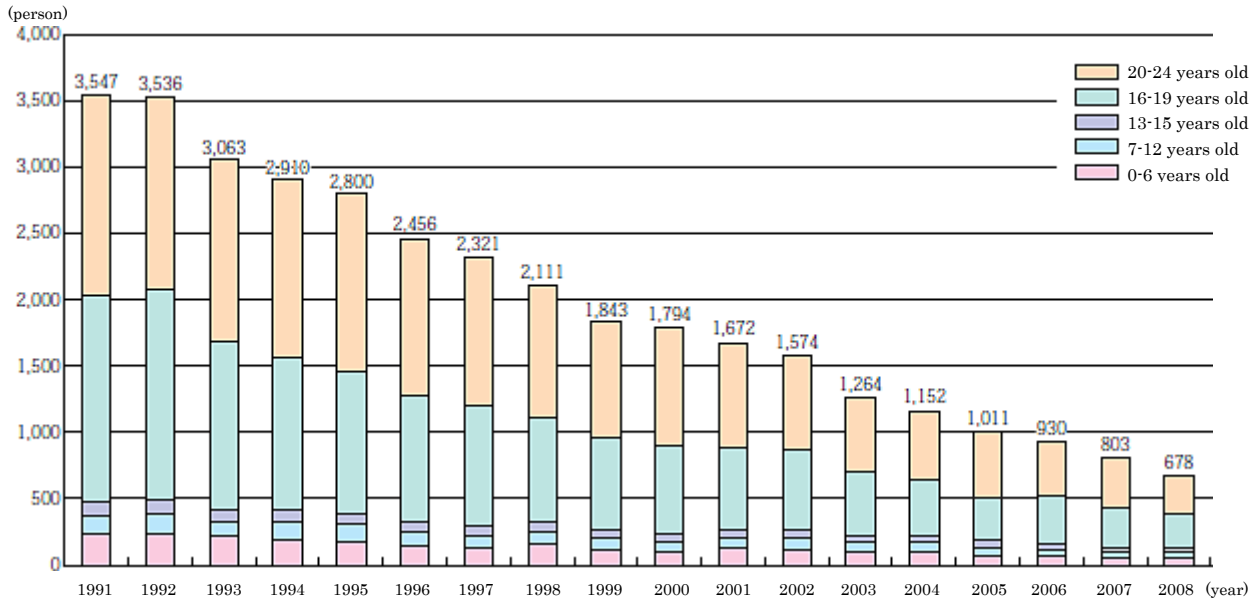
Chapter 3 Youth Safety and Behavioral Problems

◆ Section 1 Youth Safety ◆

(Traffic Accident)

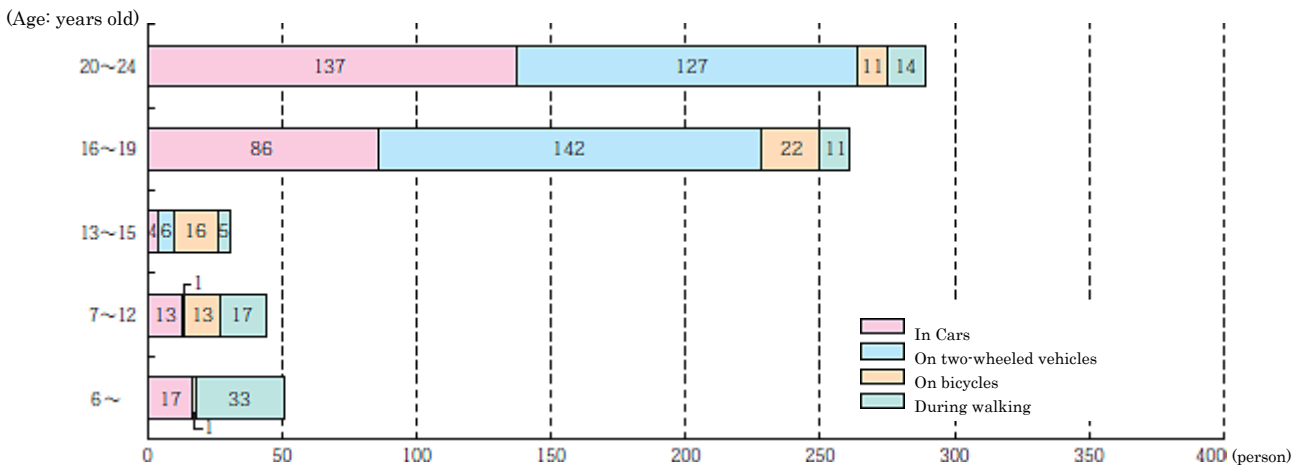
In 2008, the number of deaths of youth (in this section, referred as to those aged 25 or under) due to traffic accidents was 678, which is less as compared to the previous year by 125 persons (15.6%). (Figures 17 and 18)

Figure 17 Changes in the Number of Deaths by Age due to Traffic Accidents



Source: National Police Agency

Figure 18 The Number of Deaths by Age and Traffic Accident Situation (2008)



(Note) Two-wheeled vehicles include motorcycles and motorbikes.

Source: National Police Agency

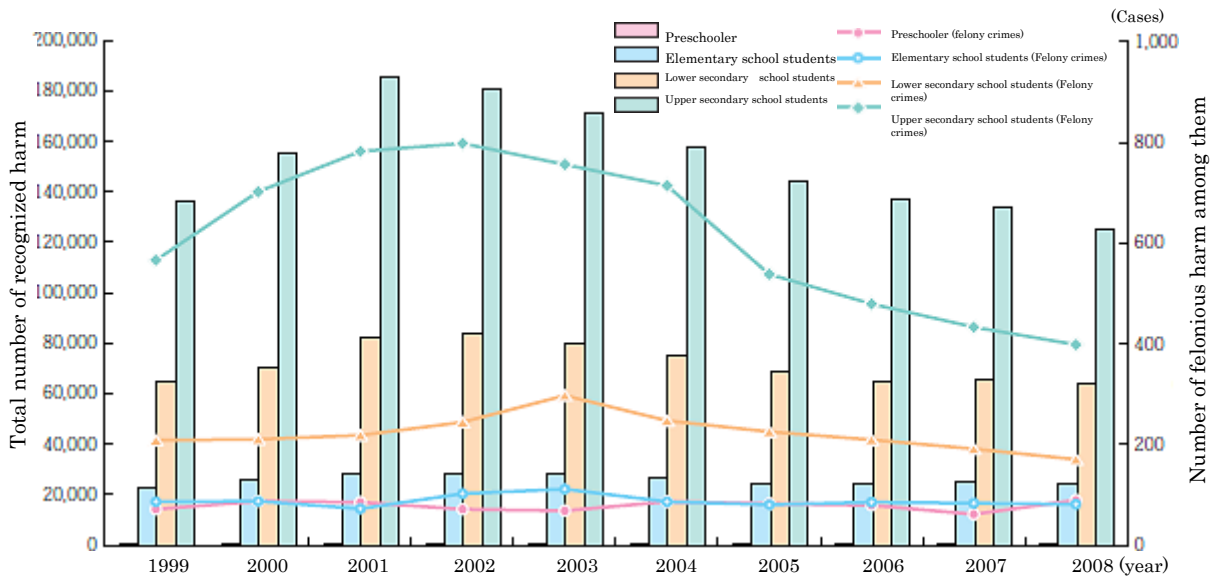
◆ Section 2 Crime and Abuse Victims ◆

(Crime Victims)

The number of penal code offenses known to police in which juveniles (under the age of 20) were victimized in 2008 was 289,035, and decreased by 15,650 cases (5.1%) as compared to the previous year. (Figure 19) By the type of offense, victims of felonious offenses numbered 1,231 and those of violent offenses numbered 14,443. When compared with the previous year, the number of felonious offenses and violent offenses decreased by 114 cases (8.5%) and 1,332 cases (8.4%) respectively.

The changes in the number of felonious offenses show that the victims who are in upper secondary schools decreased after it reached to peak in 2002. However, it remains the same level in the case of the lower secondary school students, elementary school students and pre-school students.

Figure 19 Trends in the Number of Penal Code Offenses known to police in which juveniles were victimized



Source: National Police Agency

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	313,985	352,753	410,507	406,519	385,762	356,426	326,042	309,104	304,685	289,035
Felonious crime	1,600	1,916	2,019	2,138	2,204	1,935	1,668	1,462	1,345	1,231

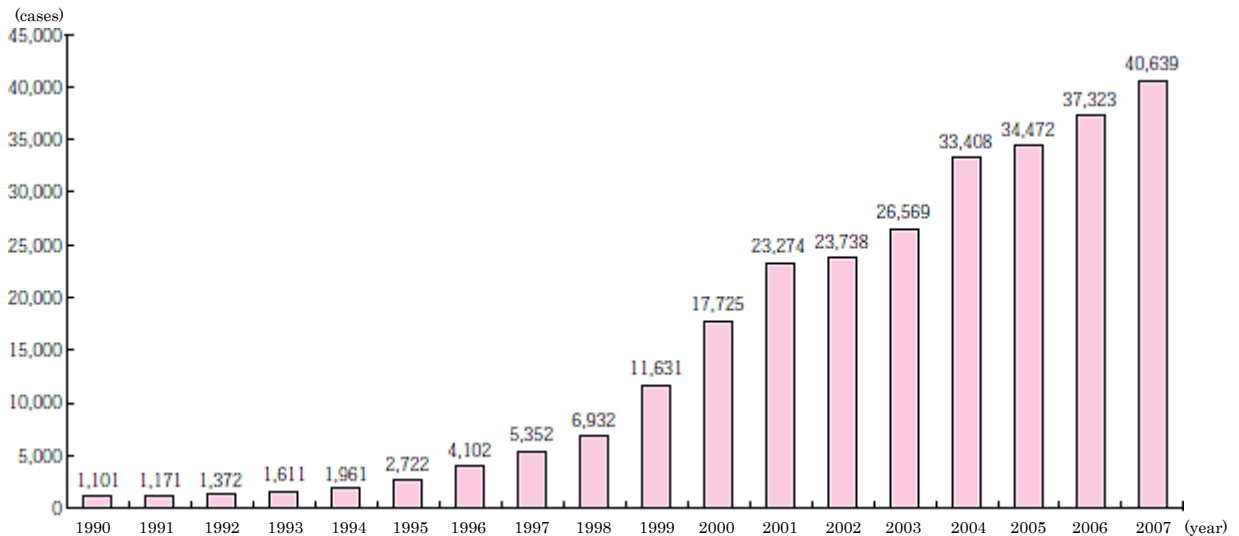
(Child Abuse)

The number of cases of consultation for child abuse received by Child Guidance Centers and the police has been increasing rapidly every year and the issue of child abuse is still a serious social concern that should be promptly solved by society as a whole (Figure 20).

More specifically, physical abuse had the largest share at 40.1% in the fiscal year 2007, followed by neglect at 38.0%, psychological abuse and sexual abuse.

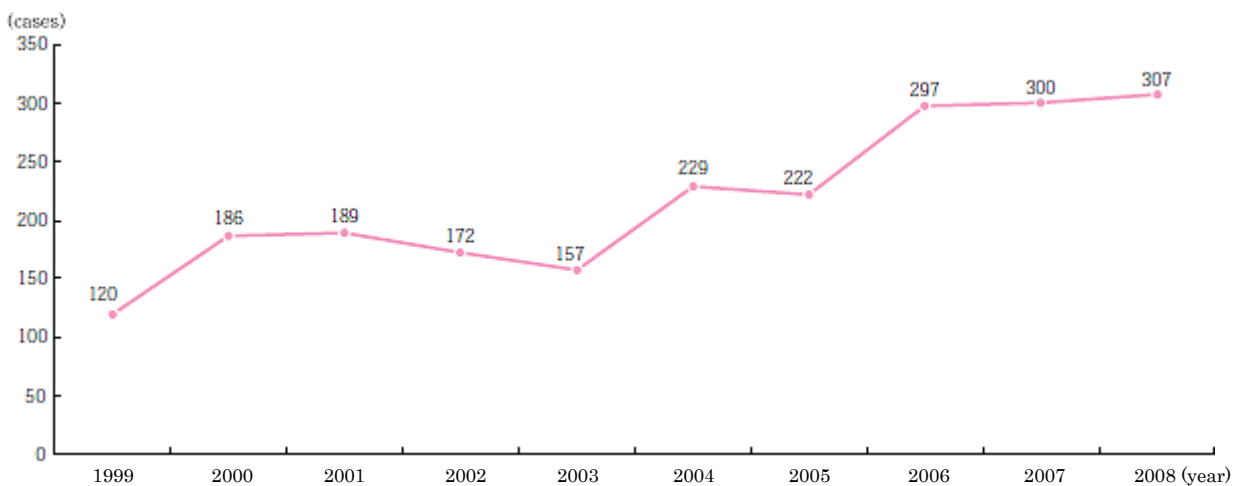
The number of child abuse cases cleared in 2008 was 307 and 319 persons were arrested. The number of victims was 319, of which 45 (14.1%) had died at the time of the arrests. The yearly changes show that the number of arrests is about 1.3 times as much as that of five years ago. (Figure 21)

Figure 20 Trends in the Number of Cases for Consultation for Child Abuse in Child Guidance Center



Source: "Report on Social Welfare Administration and Services", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Figure 21 Trends in the Number of Arrests for Child Abuse



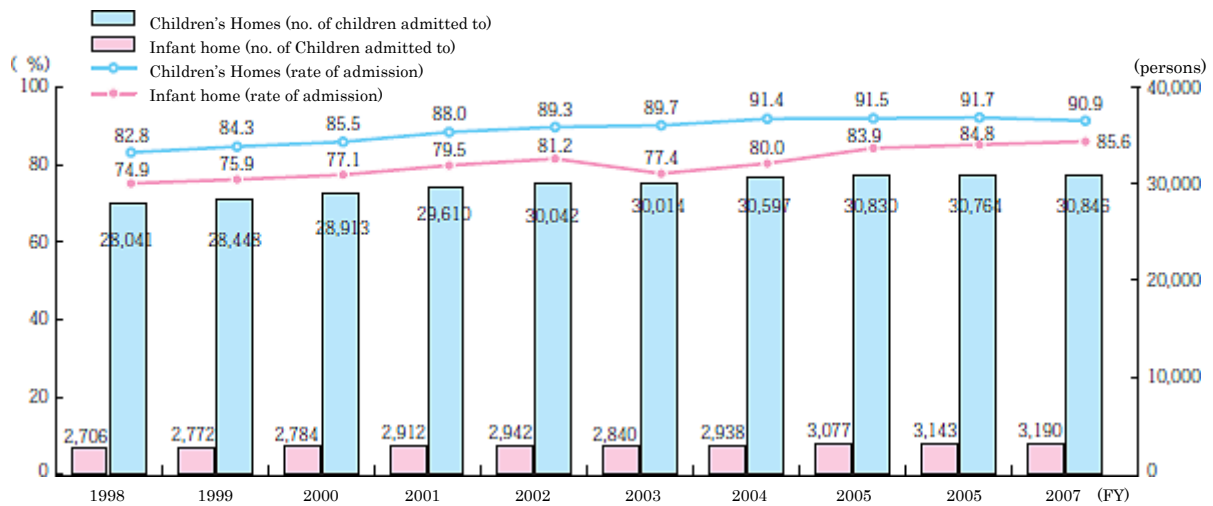
Source: National Police Agency

(Actions for Child in need of Protection)

In fiscal year 2007, the number of children admitted to infant homes and children's homes was 3,190 and 30,846 children respectively. The rate of admission to infant homes and children's homes was 85.6% and 90.9% respectively. As for the admission rate to orphanages, it has been more than 90% since fiscal year 2004. (Figure 22)

In fiscal year 2007, the number of foster parents was 2,582 and the number of foster children was 3,633. The number of foster children has increased rapidly since fiscal year 2001, and in fiscal year 2007 it is about 1.6 times as much as that of fiscal year 2001. (Figure 23)

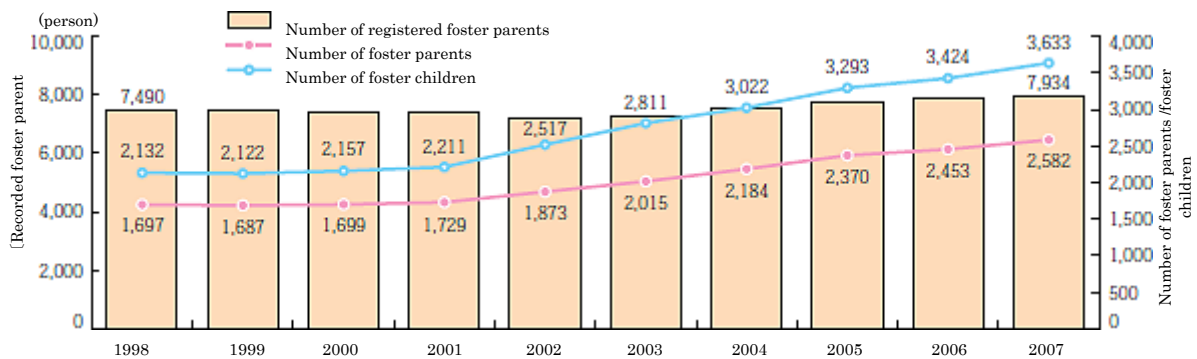
Figure 22 Changes in the Number of Children Admitted to Infant Homes and Children's Homes



(Note) The rate of admission is a proportion of the member of children to the admission capacity.

Source: "Report of Survey on Social Welfare Institution (As of October 1 every fiscal year)," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Figure 23 Changes in the Number of Foster Parents and Foster Children



Source: "Report on Social Welfare Admission and Services" (As of the end of each fiscal year), Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

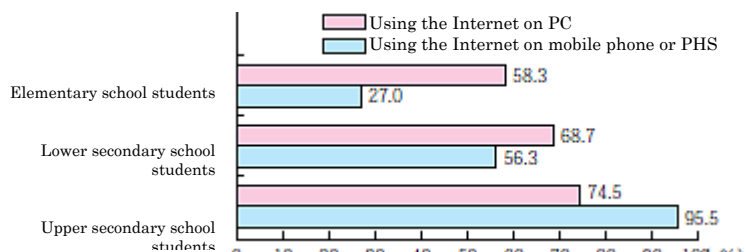
◆Section 3 Harmful Materials on the Internet◆

(Internet Use by Children)

As for Internet use amongst youths on personal computers (PC) or mobile phones (including PHSs, the same shall apply hereinafter) the usage rate of the Internet on a PC among elementary school, lower and upper secondary school students, is 58.3%, 68.7% and 74.5%, respectively. As for the Internet use on a mobile phone, the rate among elementary school, lower and upper secondary school students, is 27.0%, 56.3% and 95.5%, respectively. (Figure 24)

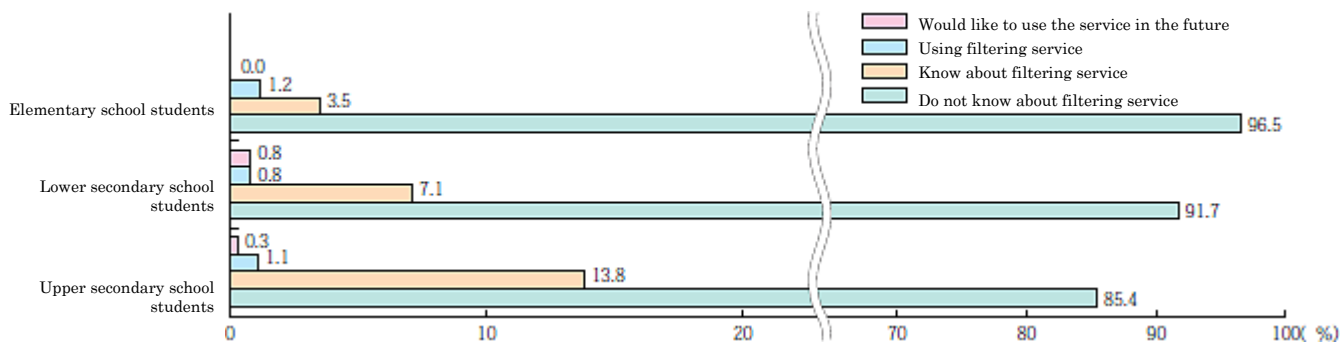
For the survey on the respondents who use the Internet on the mobile phones, 96.5% of elementary school students, 91.7% of lower secondary school students and 85.4% of upper secondary school students responded that they did not know about filtering service. (Figure 25)

Figure 24 State of Internet Use by Children



Source: "The Fifth Survey on Information Society and Japanese Youth," The Cabinet Office (As of March 2007)

Figure 25 About Mobile Phone and PHS Filtering Service



(Note): The respondents are only those who use the Internet on mobile phones or PHS.

Source: "The Fifth Survey on Information Society and Japanese Youth", Cabinet Office (As of March 2007)

(Child Victims of Online Dating Sites-related Crimes and Mobile Phone Use)

In 2008, the number of child crime victims by using "Online Dating Sites" was 724. By type of crime, the most victims are 387 (53.5%) of violation of Act on Punishment of Activities Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children followed by victims of violation of the ordinances on juvenile protection, 232 (32.0%).

Victims of felony crimes such as murder and rape are 20, indicating that the situation has been serious.

Moreover, out of 724 victims of use of "Online Dating Sites," 714 (98.6%) accessed these sites on a mobile phone.

(Unofficial School Website)

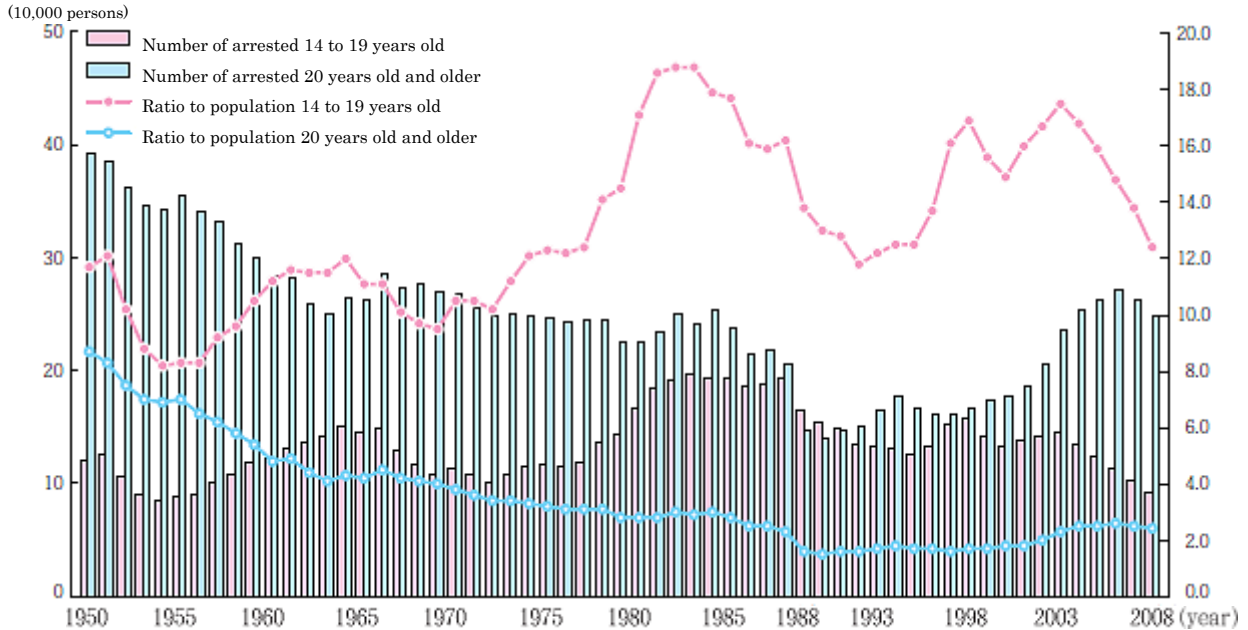
For the number of unofficial school websites that youths use (the portal sites of unofficial school sites which are used by lower , or upper secondary school students are counted), 38,260 threads were identified (as of January to March, 2008). The thread contents include mental abuse (32 words such as "creepy" (kimoi) and annoying (uzai)), which account for 50%, salacious abuse (12 words such as genital slang), 37% and words inducing violence (20 words such as "die," "disappear," and "kill"), 27%.

◆Section 4 Juvenile Penal Code Offenders◆

(Juvenile Penal Code Offenders)

The number of juveniles who committed penal code offenses in 2008 was 90,966 (decreased by 12,258(11.9%), compared with the previous year) and the ratio to the youth population (the number of juveniles arrested per 1,000 persons of the same age group) was 12.4 (decreased by 1.4%). The population ratio is 5.2 times as much as that of adults. (Figure 26)

Figure 26 Trends in the Number of Juveniles Arrested for Penal Code Offenses and Ratio to Youth Population



- (Note) 1. Number of juveniles arrested includes those who were arrested for penal code offenses other than professional negligence in traffic accidents (Figures up to 1965 exclude offences related to stolen property and breaking and entering)
 2. Ratio to Youth Population refers to the numbers of juveniles arrested for penal code offenses per 1,000 persons of youths aged 14 to 19 and those of youths aged 20 or older.
 3. The cleared include attempts and preliminaries.

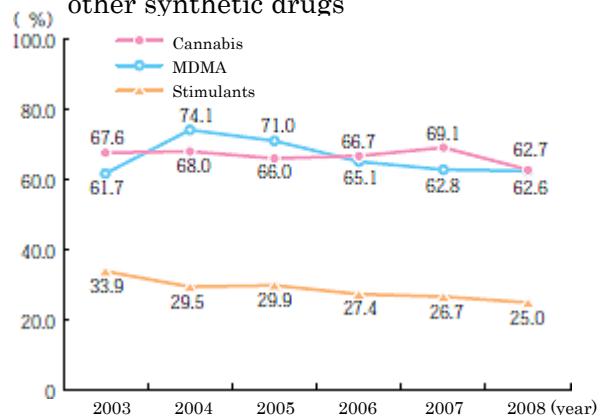
Source: National Police Agency

◆Section 5 Behavioral Problems (Drug Abuse, Delinquency , Bullying, Running Away from Home and Suicide, etc)◆

(Drug Abuse)

In 2008, 2,758 youths were cleared for stimulant drug-related offenses and 1,730 for cannabis-related offenses, decreasing by 451 (14.1%) and increasing by 160 (10.2%) from the previous year, respectively. The number of youths cleared for offenses related to MDMA and other synthetic drugs decreased by 10 (5.4%) from 176 of the previous year, which accounts for 62.6% over the total cleared for drug-related arrests, staying continuously high as well as cannabis-related offenses.(Figure 27)

Figure 27 Youths cleared for Drug Abuse such as Cannabis, Stimulant Drugs, and MDMA and other synthetic drugs

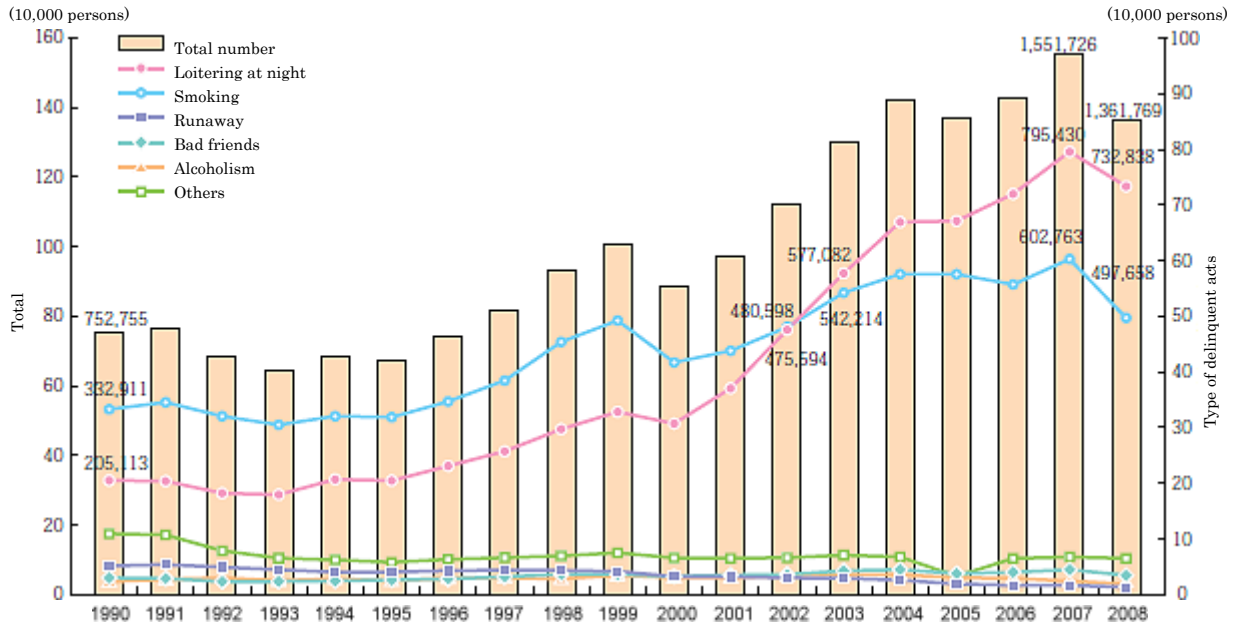


Source: Projections based on materials of the National Police Agency.

(Misbehavior)

In 2008, 1,361,769 juveniles received guidance by the police as a result of their misbehavior (those under 20 who were not juvenile delinquents but received guidance by the police for drinking, smoking or running away from home). By type of misbehavior, the number for loitering at night is 3.6 times compared with in 1990. (Figure 28)

Figure 28 Trends in the Number of Juveniles Received Guidance for Misbehavior



Source: National Police Agency

(Suicide)

The police announced that the number of youths who committed suicide in 2008 was 4,049. Classified by academic background, the majority was university students amongst students, and unemployed youths were the majority amongst the entire youths. (Table 3)

Table 3 Number of Youth Suicides by Academic Background (Fiscal 2008)

Division	Academic type Category	Total	Preschooler	Pupils / students						Unemployed	Employed	Anonymous
				Total	Elementary Student	Lower secondary school student	Upper secondary school student	University student	Other			
Total number		4,049	0	943	9	74	224	520	116	1,594	1,460	52
Girls		1,295	0	284	5	21	92	129	37	653	347	11
Proportion of girls in total number		32.0	0.0	30.1	55.6	28.4	41.1	24.8	31.9	41.0	23.8	21.2

Source: National Police Agency

Topical News: “Subsequent state” of upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students and regional support

1 Introduction

- In the new “National Youth Development Policy” formulated in December 2008 “efforts for supporting growth of youth with difficulties” are a priority issue. Among the “difficulties” youth have, the problem of youths with difficulty in being social independent such as “NEETs” is becoming more serious. The indication is that behind the scene of those independence-related problems there exist various other problems, such as truancies, upper secondary school dropouts, stumbling in the educational stage, all in an integrated manner. However, it is difficult to state that the actual status of youth with difficulties has been clarified to any degree. The policies therefore provide for the “continuous grasping of the situation of youth with difficulties” to be promoted. Moreover, “The Youth Comprehensive Measures Promotion Bill” presented in March 2009 also provides that as part of the work of related organizations engaged in office work in fields related to youth development the situations of youth with difficulties shall be grasped.
- In order to identify the course selection status of and necessary support for upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students, in the fiscal year 2008, the Cabinet Office performed an urgent investigation in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Regarding upper secondary school dropouts and so forth, the abovementioned investigation results are being used and progressive efforts for supporting the youth with difficulties introduced and the efforts necessary in supporting the present situation and independence developed.

2 Present conditions surrounding upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students

(1) Upper secondary school dropouts (Figure 7)

Since the fiscal year 1995 on the share of upper secondary school dropouts to total number of students has continued to change within the range of 2-3%. Since the fiscal year 2001 on, however, it has been on a slightly decreasing trend. Reviewing reasons for dropping out reveals that before the fiscal year 2008 the share of the persons who selected “course changes” as a main one was the highest but from then on persons who selected “School life and study maladjustments” was the highest.

(2) Lower secondary school truant students (Figure 6)

The share of lower secondary school truant students to total number of students has continued to be no less than 2.0% from the fiscal year 1998 on, while from the fiscal year 2004 on it has tended to be slightly increasing. In addition, the share in the fiscal year 2007 of 2.91% is the highest since the fiscal year 1995 on and has continued to be quite considerable.

3 Results of an urgent investigation on upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students

(1) Outline of the investigation

That investigation was conducted from February to March 2009 by sending and gathering questionnaires by mail. Of persons that dropped out of upper secondary schools in the entire country within the fiscal year 2004 questionnaires were sent to 1,595 of them and 168 responded. Questionnaires were sent to 480 3rd graders of lower secondary schools in the entire country who refused to go to school in the fiscal year 2004, and 109 responded.

(2) Main survey results

A. Urgent investigation on upper secondary school dropouts

(i) Regarding the present state the share of persons answering “Working”, about half (47.6%), was the largest. Then “Neither working nor going to school” about 20% (20.8%) (Figure 29). In addition, according to the Employment Status Survey by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (fiscal 2007), among the unemployed belonging to almost the same generation as the respondents in this investigation, the share of persons neither doing housework nor going to school was 5.9%.

In addition, of those answering “Going to school” and “Going to school while working” at present (total 43 persons) the share of persons answering “Correspondence upper secondary school” (41.9%) was the largest (Figure 30).

However, when persons answering “Working”, “Going to school while working”, and “Studying at a place other than school while working” (total 102) at present were asked about their work type revealed that the share of persons answering “Part-time work” (41.2%) was the largest. When combined with “Temporary staff or contract employee” (12.7%) more than half of the respondents answering “Working” were irregular employees. “Regular employees” was 36.3% (Figure 31).

In addition, according to the Employment Status Survey (fiscal 2007) the share of persons working as “Regular employee” 55.6% was the largest. The next was “Part-time work” (31.0%) and then “Temporary staff or contract employee” (9.3%).

(ii) Regarding the absence status during the lower secondary school period (throughout all grades), the total number of persons answering “Absent from about 1/3 of classes” (13.7%), “Absent from about 1/2 of classes” (3.6%), and “Absent from almost all classes” (7.1%) accounted for about 1/4 all respondents (Figure 32).

(iii) Regarding the reason for quitting upper secondary school about half all the respondents answered “Couldn’t adapt to upper secondary school life” (49.4%), “Couldn’t keep good relationship with others” (23.2%), and then “Didn’t like study at upper secondary school” (20.8%). The present situation can be viewed in that a sense of incongruity in upper secondary school life or an inability to cope with problems in human relationships or studies occurring after entrance causes upper secondary school dropouts to then leave the school.

Regarding the NEET group (Note), compared to all the respondents, the share of persons answering “Couldn’t maintain good relationships with others”, “Didn’t like study at upper secondary school”, and “Due to circumstances of family” was quite large (Figure 33). 20

Figure 29 Present situation (upper secondary school dropouts)

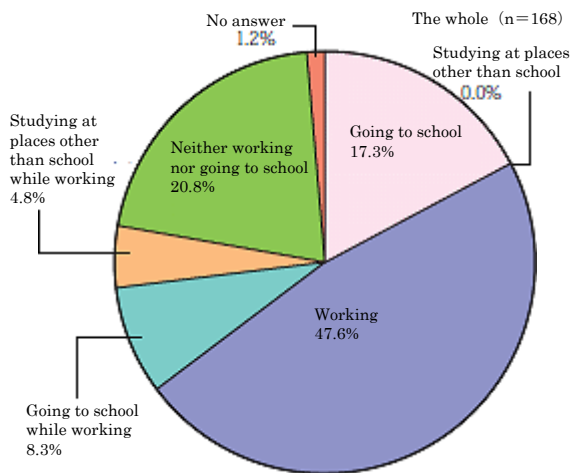


Figure 30 School type (upper secondary school dropouts)

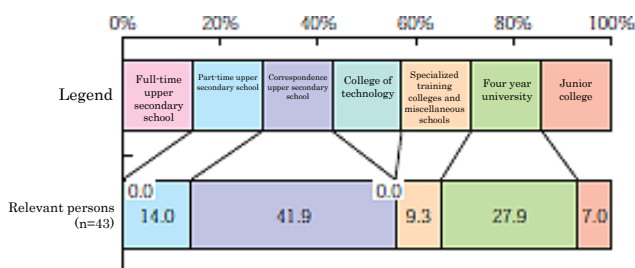


Figure 31 Work type (upper secondary school dropouts)

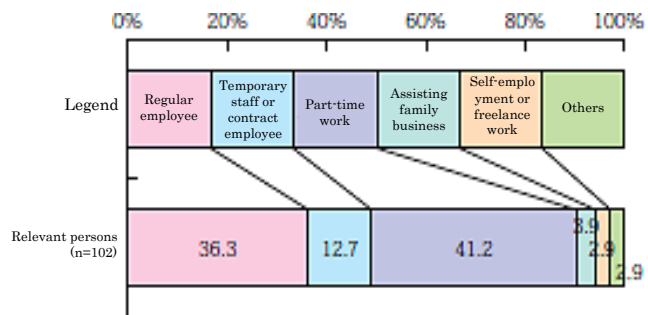
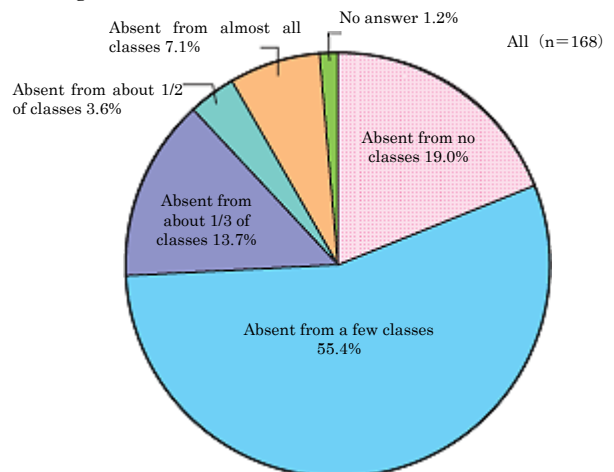


Figure 32 Absence status during lower secondary school period



(Note) In this survey, regarding “Present state” of (i), among the persons answering “Neither working nor going to school”, those from whom the persons answering “Living with husband or wife” were excluded and designated as a “NEET group”.

(iv) Regarding “What facilities and institutions have you used to date after leaving school?” about half the total (48.2%) had used “work support institutions such as Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work), Job cafés, and Local Young People’s Support Stations”, followed by “Hospitals and clinics” (23.8%), and then “I have not used any of them” at about 30% (35.1%).

The share of persons belonging to the NEET group and answering “Hospitals and clinics” (39.1%) was rather large (Figure 34).

(v) Regarding “What is important for you from now on?” the share of respondents was basically in the order of “To try to obtain an income by working for myself” (47.0%), “To have future hopes” (45.2%), “To do things around me by myself” and “To have self-confidence” (both 40.5%).

With regard to the NEET group, and compared to the total, the share of respondents answering “To try to obtain an income by working for myself” (69.6%) and “To have future hopes” (65.2%) were large, thus indicating that many of them hope to change their present state (Figure 35).

Figure 34 What facilities and institutions have you used to date after leaving upper secondary school? (Multiple answers)

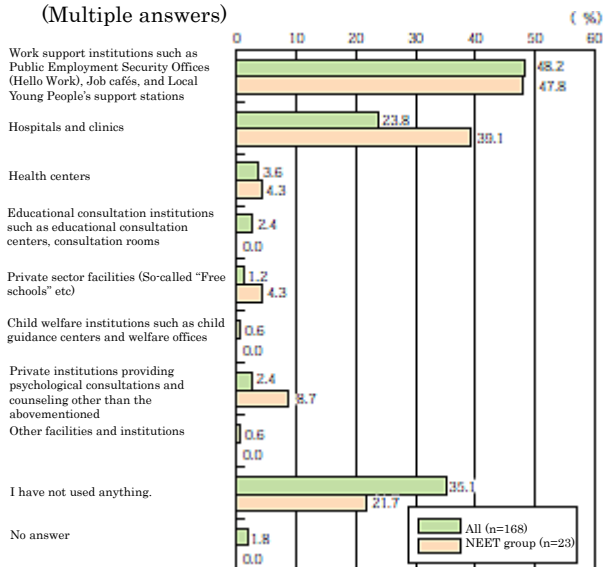


Figure 33 What was the reason for leaving upper secondary school? (Multiple answers)

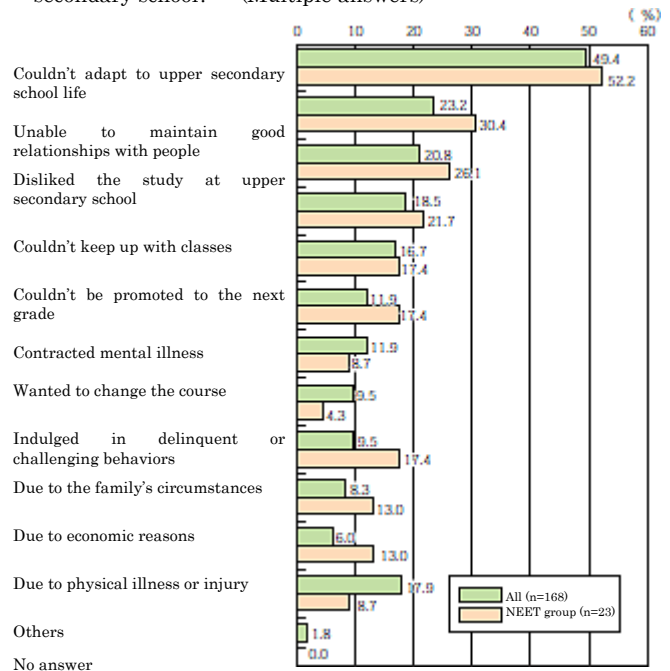
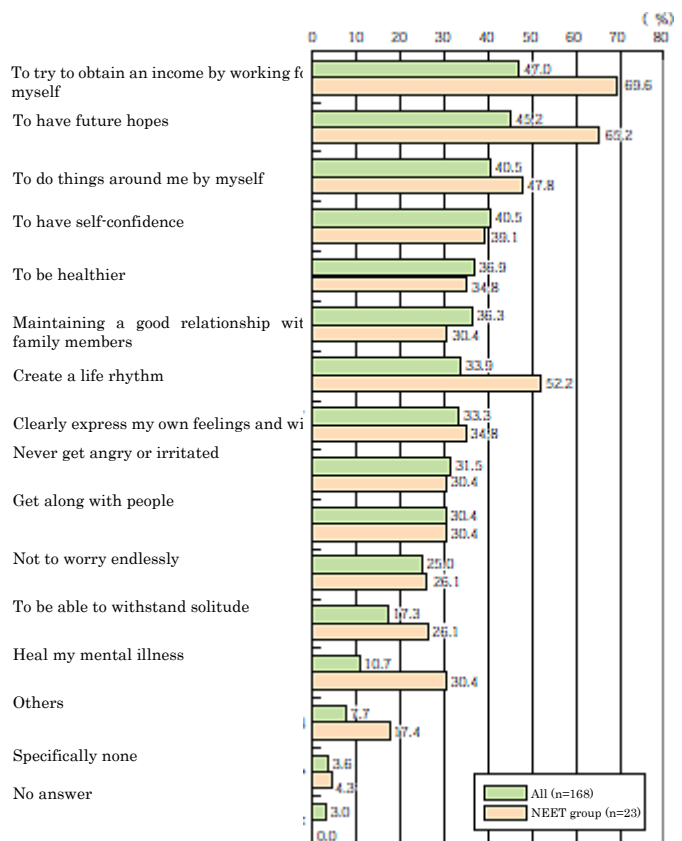


Figure 35 What is important for you from now on? (Upper secondary school dropouts) (Multiple answers)



(vi) Regarding the question “What do you think necessary in your future life design?” overall “Places that support the acquisition of skills and techniques” (39.3%) was the largest. Next was “Places for employment consultations” (36.3%). Assistance such as support in acquiring skills and employment consultations are therefore necessary, but regarding the question “What facilities and institutions have you used to date after leaving upper secondary school?” the share of persons answering “I have not used any of them.” was about 30%. Future problems lie in how information on available institutions can be securely provided to those requiring support and how meticulous support that satisfies the needs and individual status can then be implemented.

It can be viewed as that the NEET group needs a wider variety of assistance such as not only in employment support but also establishing good life rhythms. It will be necessary to improve support that is then capable of satisfying various needs (Figure 36).

B. Urgent investigation on lower secondary school truant students

(i) The share of persons answering “Going to school” at present was about 40% (39.4%), followed by “Working” (26.6%), and “Not working nor going to school” (16.5%) (Figure 37). In addition, in the Employment Status Survey (2007) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, among the unemployed of almost the same age as the respondents in this investigation the share of persons neither doing housework nor going to school was 2.3%. Moreover, the schools to which persons answering “Going to school” and “Going to school while working” at present (total of 51) go to were “Four year university” (29.4%) and then “Specialized training colleges and miscellaneous schools” (25.5%) (Figure 38).

The share of work types of persons answering “Working”, “Going to school while working”, and “Studying at a place other than schools while working” (total 38) was largest for “Part-time work” (57.9%).

Combined with “Temporary staff or contract employee” (5.3%) more than 60% of persons answering “Working” at present were non-regular employees. However, the share of “Regular employees” was 28.9%, which is close to the status of persons of the same generation in the abovementioned “Employment Status Survey” (Figure 39).

Figure 36 What do you think is necessary your future life design? (upper secondary school dropouts) (multiple answers)

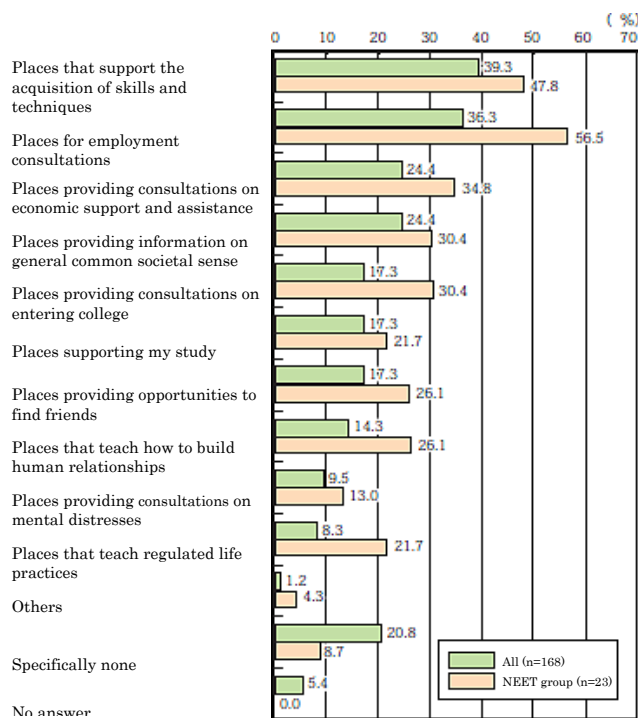


Figure 37 Present status (lower secondary school truant students)

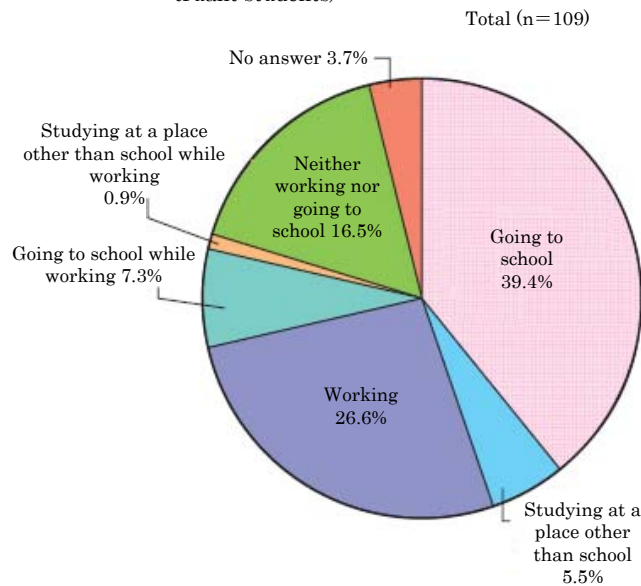


Figure 38 What school do you go to? (Lower secondary school truant students)

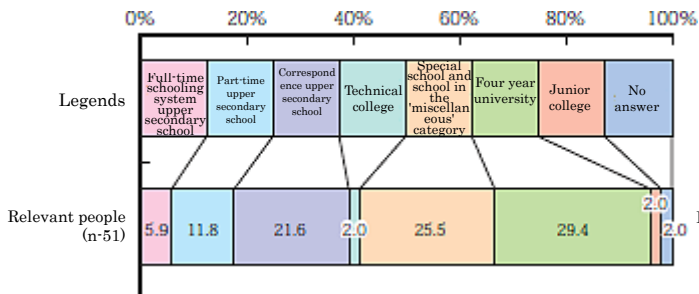
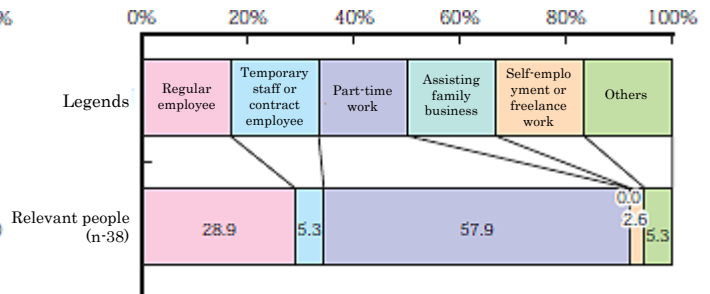


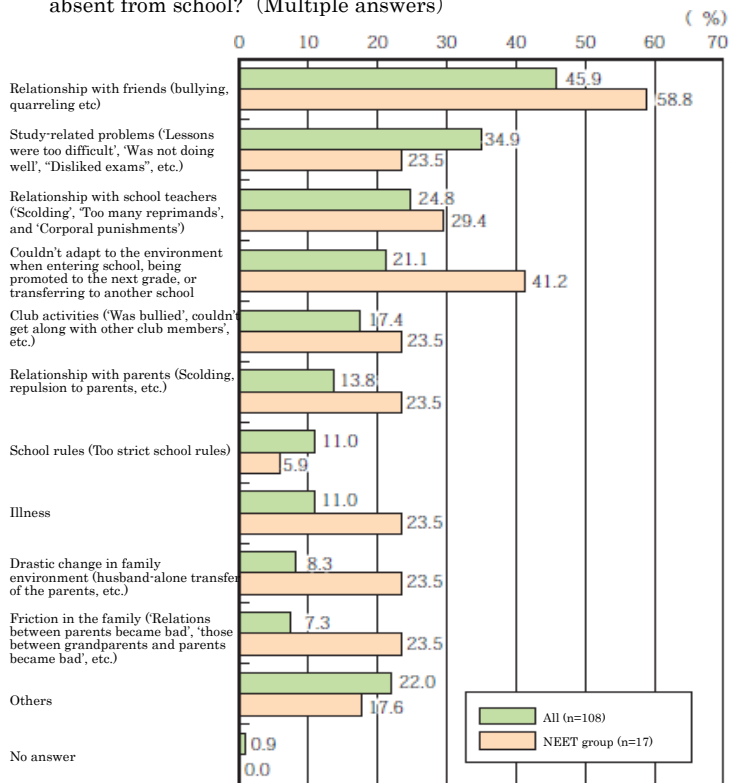
Figure 39 What type of work are you engaged in? (Lower secondary school truant students)



(ii) Regarding the question “What were the primary reasons causing you to be absent from school?” generally, the share of persons answering “Relationship with friends (bullying, quarreling etc)” (45.9%) was the largest, followed by “Study-related problems (Lessons were too difficult, ‘Was not doing well’, ‘Disliked exams’, etc.)” (34.9%)

Regarding the NEET group, the largest share was accounted for by “relationship with friends (bullying, quarreling etc)” (58.8%), and then “Couldn’t adapt to the environment when entering school, being promoted to the next grade, or transferring to another school” (41.2%), and “Relationship with school teachers (‘Scolding’, ‘Too many reprimands’, and ‘Corporal punishment’)” (29.4%). The share of persons demonstrating human relationships such as those with friends or teachers was large (Figure 40).

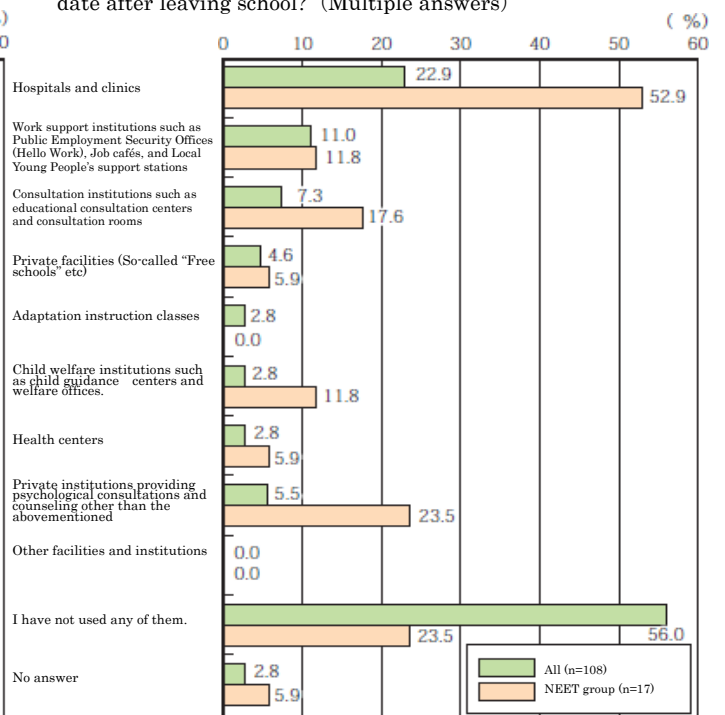
Figure 40 What were the primary reasons causing you to be absent from school? (Multiple answers)



(iii) Regarding the question “What facilities and institutions have you used to date after leaving school?” generally, the share of persons answering “Hospitals and clinics” (22.9%) was the largest, followed by “work support institutions such as Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work), Job cafés, and Local Young People’s Support Stations” (11.0%). However, more than half answered “I have not used any of them.” (56.0%)

Regarding the NEET group, the share of persons demonstrating “Hospitals and clinics” (52.9%) and “Private institutions providing psychological consultations and counseling other than the abovementioned” (23.5%) as the facilities or institutions used was large, thus revealing the share of persons with some physical or mental problems to be large. “I have not used any of them” was 23.5% (Figure 41).

Figure 41 What facilities and institutions have you used to date after leaving school? (Multiple answers)



(iv) Regarding the question “What do you think is important for yourself in the future?” generally, the share of persons answering “To get along with people” (62.4%) was the largest.

Regarding the NEET group, the share of “To try to obtain an income by working for myself” (88.2%) was the largest and then “To get along with people”, and “To make a good rhythm of life” (both were 76.5%) (Figure 42).

(v) Regarding the question “What do you think is good for your future life design?” generally, the share of persons answering “Places for employment consultations” (39.4%) was the largest and then “Places that support the acquisition of skills and techniques” (36.7%) (Figure 43).

As for the NEET group, the answer lined up in the same order as this but the share of individual answers was larger, thus indicating that the students in that group are seeking a wider range of support (Figure 43).

It is necessary to make information on available facilities and institutions more effective, and to grasp and develop indispensable support to them and their future vision.

Figure 42 What do you think is important for yourself in the future? (Lower secondary school truant students) (Multiple answers)

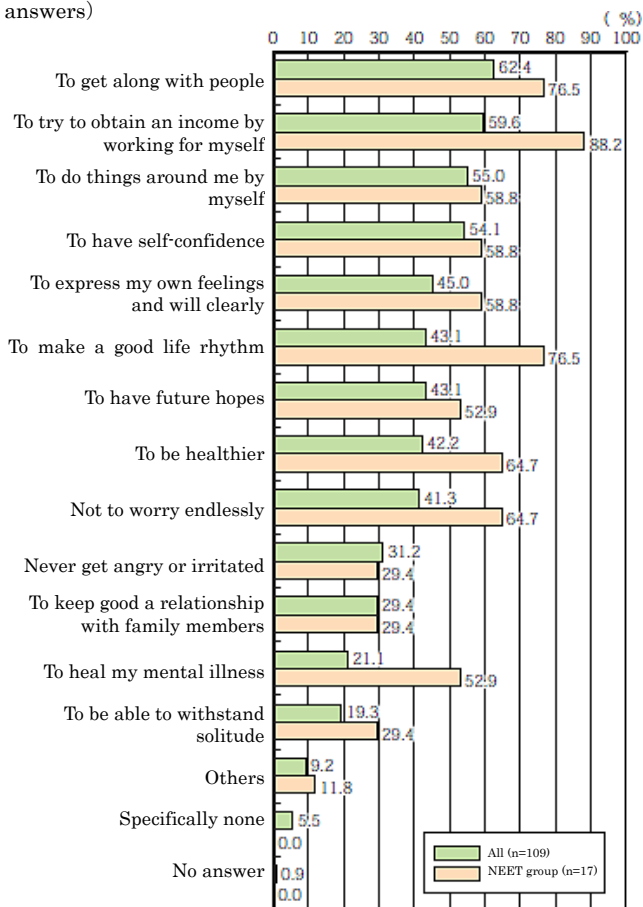
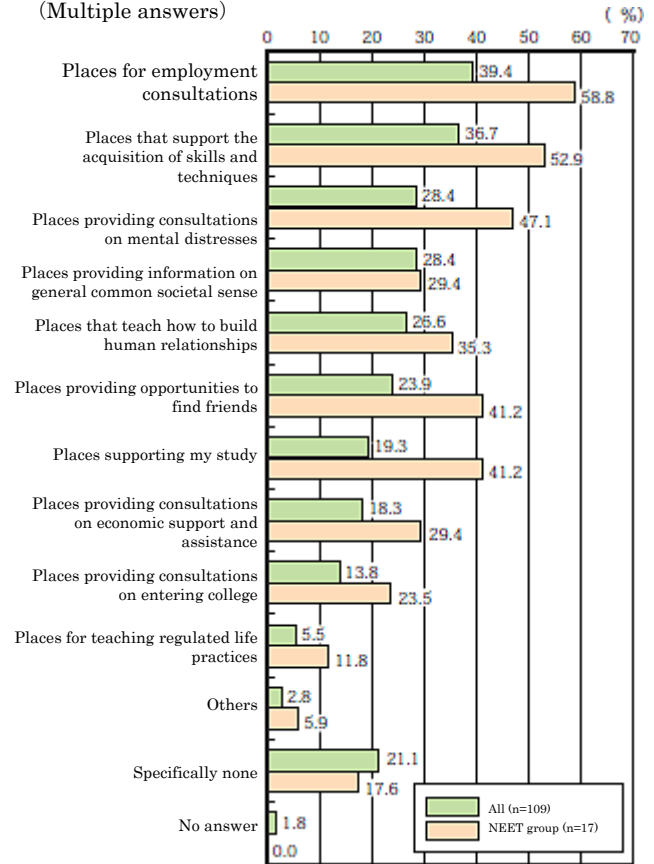


Figure 43 What do you think it is good to have for your future life design? (Lower secondary school truant students) (Multiple answers)



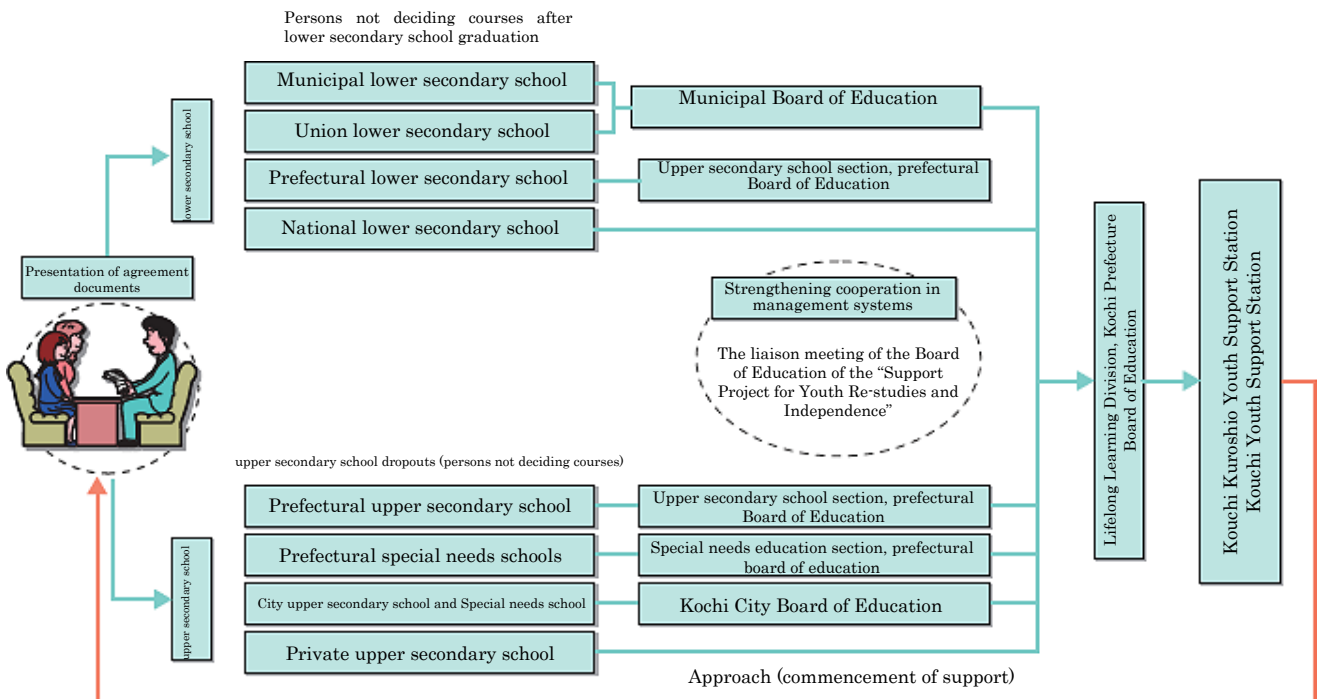
4 Efforts to support youths with difficulties

(1) Case in Kochi prefecture (efforts toward integrated support from school education system)

In order to provide support for the independence of NEETs and youths apt to withdraw from society prefectural boards of education unified personal information on topics obtained from schools and cities, towns and villages (“Wakamono Habatake Net (Fly, the Youth, Network)”) (Figure 44).

Based on the obtained information, and in cooperation with educational, welfare, medical care, and labor related institutions, activities inducting and supporting youth in re-studying and employment with the use of “Local Young People’s Support Stations” (a project entrusted by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) etc are being performed.

Figure 44 Mechanism of “Wakamono Habatake Net (Fly, the Youth, Network)” (Kochi prefecture)



(2) Cases in Hyogo prefecture (efforts to support truant students with the use of experience and stay type facilities)

A free school “Hyogo prefectural Kande-gakuen” with a system where all the students live in dormitories, which is the first public school in Japan for truant youths, was established, where support is being provided through experiences and community life.

In addition, while serving as an executive office of the “Hyogo Youth Care Network Promotion Conference” that is composed of 21 educational, health and medical, welfare, and research institutions etc a system has been developed for dealing with various mental problems of youths while cooperating with related institutions.

While attempting to strengthen efforts to provide information on youth problem inquiry counters the abovementioned conference is implementing projects for improving consultations on socially withdrawn youth problems and the harm caused by the internet.

(3) Cases in Sapporo city (support for school visits to “Local Young People’s Support Stations”)

At the city’s upper secondary schools career counselors from the “Local Young People’s Support Station” not only provide individual counseling related to career selections to undergraduates in career guidance rooms but also conduct consultations on various other problems. The staff of the abovementioned stations go to schools and actively participate in support in the employment of undergraduates, thus making efforts to prevent the occurrence of persons having yet to choose a future career who tend to become a NEET or socially withdrawn youth.

5 Conclusion

- This survey revealed that many upper secondary school dropouts and truant youths are currently involved in difficult situations and that a wide variety of support for their social independence is necessary, such as in employment, improvement of the ability to build human relationships, and health and medicine.
- The Fundamental Principles provide that in order to support the development of youths with difficulties, according to the type of individual difficulty etc, related institutions, while cooperating with each other, shall develop support measures after reviewing the following: prevention of occurrence, early detection and dealing with problems by providing the abovementioned youth with integrated support until they can overcome their issues, and by improving support networks of related public and private regional institutions and so forth.
- In the regions introduced in this topical news, related institutions, while cooperating with each other, have correctly grasped the objectives and necessary support, provided assistance according to the objective, and performed the necessary support and understanding of the situation through contact while having a relationship with them at school. In order to make the support more flexible and complete, it will be necessary to also review the future vision and content of assistance jointly provided by multiple institutions. The Cabinet Office, from the fiscal year 2008 on, and in order to regionally establish individual and continuous support systems based on cooperation among educational, health/medical, welfare related institutions, has been implementing “Model Projects to Improve Regional Youth Support Systems”. The government wishes to continue developing concrete support measures for youths with various difficulties.

Part 2 Administrative Policies on Youths

Chapter 1 Comprehensive and Systematic Promotion of Policies for Youth Development

◆ Section 1 Efforts of the Headquarters for Youth Development ◆

(Formulation of National Youth Development Policy) (Promotion of Related Policies after Formulation of the Policy)

The Headquarters for Youth Development department” was set up by the government within the Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, with all Cabinet ministers, as the constituent members. In December 2003, “National Youth Development Policy” (the previous Policy) was created, outlining basic principles and mid- and long-term direction of policies of the government of Japan on youth development. The youth development approach has since been promoted based on this Policy.

After creating the previous Policy, laws were reviewed and relevant policies were put together in the areas such as declining birthrate, initiatives to prevent children from crimes, measures against juvenile delinquency, promotion of shokuiku, supporting social independence of youths etc. (Figure 45)

In the fiscal year 2008 the final report of the National Council on Social Security (November 2008) stated that the declining birthrate problem was an “urgent” and top priority problem to be grappled with and that it will be indispensable for the government, while assuming responsibility for attempting to secure the necessary fiscal resources, to perform bold and efficient financial investments and create new systems in aiming to drastically improve the quality and quantity of the services.

The “Mid-term program” (in December 2008), which was also formulated based on the abovementioned final report, and with a view to creating a sustainable social security and securing stable fiscal resources, provides for attempts to be made to strengthen and improve the efficiency of functions such as the improving benefits and services related to child care, and that while securing the stable fiscal resources for the expenses necessary for its establishment and institutionalization, step-by-step efforts shall be made toward the embodiment of the content.

Based on the Revised Education Act of December 2006 the Basic Promotional Plan for Education was formulated in July 2008 that declared the goal of “developing bases for all children to be able to live independently in society by the time they have finished compulsory education” as a vision for the education to be aimed at in the next ten years.

Moreover, based on the “Act on Development of an Environment that Provides Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People” enacted in June 2008 (Act No. 79 of 2008, and hereinafter referred to as the “Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People”). From October the same year on the “Meeting for Reviewing Development of Internet Environment for Young People” has been held, efforts are therefore being made toward the “Basic Plan on Measures for Providing Safe and Secure Internet Use for Young People” to be established by the “Council for Promoting Measures Against Content Harmful to Young People on the Internet and Development of an Appropriate Environment” that is composed of related ministers.

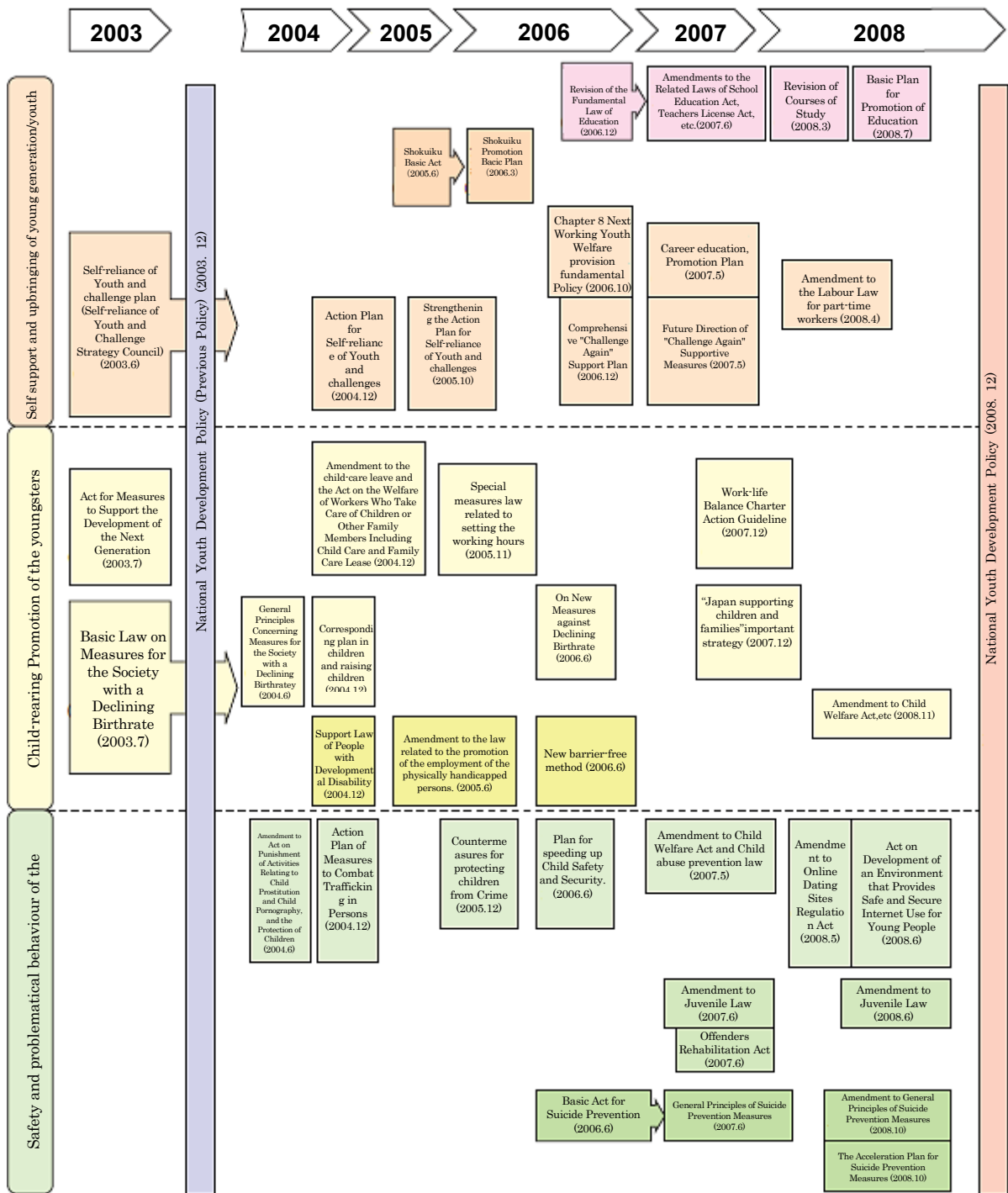
In addition, with the proposal of that Meeting taken into consideration, the abovementioned plan shall be formulated around June 2009.

(Formulation of new “National Youth Development Policy”)

The previous General Policies provided for them to be examined approximately five years after the date of enforcement, and therefore, since the fiscal year 2007 on the government has been taking the following measures: the holding of round-table conferences of the Minister of State for Youth Development, specialists grappling with youth development activities, and young people, and by requesting the opinions of children, and so forth. In July 2008, an outline of the new General Policies was decided at the Headquarters for Youth Development.

In the formulation of the new General Policies, the government, while responding to the rapid change in situation of recent years by dealing with the danger that various problems of the youth such as NEETs and freeters are becoming more and more complicated, the effect of more rapid development of an information society on children, and the successive occurrence of critical incidents caused by youths, and in order that all the youths in Japan can attain healthy growth, and also from the point of view of the respect and protection for human rights of the youth indicated in the “Convention on the Rights of the Child” too, while succeeding the ideas on youth development incorporated into the previous General Policies, but with a view to promoting youth development measures responding to the change in time, in December 2008 decided upon “National Youth Development Policy” at the Headquarters for Youth Development.

Figure 45 Trend of related Laws and Regulations for Youths (2003 to 2008)



Chapter 2 Policies by Age Group

◆Section 1 Infancy◆

(Ensuring and promoting the health of mother and child)

- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, in order that children can receive medical services any time and with a sense of security in their regions, while promoting the creation of medical cooperation systems at medical facilities related to infant medical care (including infant emergency medical care) according to medical plans set up by prefectures, by supporting the improvement of infant initial emergency centers, infant emergency medical care base hospitals, and so forth, attempts to improve infant medical care, including infant emergency medical care. In the 2008 reimbursement revision, pediatric care was focused on by raising the hospital charges children's hospitals where staff is sufficient or raising medical charges when medical care is provided at night or on holidays, in coordination with local medical institutions.

(Better support for child-rearing)

- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, from August 2008 on, and in order to attempt to promote a good work-family balance, has held discussions on reviewing the Child Care and Family care Leave Law of the Equal Employment Committee, the Labour Policy Council, with the abovementioned Council having just presented proposals in December the same year. The following were suggested in the abovementioned proposals: (1) Making obligatory the short-time work system and exemption from irregular labor, (2) the extension of the leave period in case both parents take child care leave, (3) the improvement of child care leave and the establishment of short-term leave system for family care. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, based on those proposals, in April 2009 presented the "Bill to Amend Part of the Act on the Welfare of Workers Taking Care of Children or Other Family Members, Including Child Care and Family Care Leave, and the Employment Insurance Law" to the 171st Session of the Diet, where the bill was enacted.
- The number of children in the waiting list for day care facility centers and kindergarten had continued to decrease for four consecutive years after a peak in 2003, but as of April 1, 2008, it had commenced to increase for the first time in five years and reached about 20,000.

In the light of this background, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare with an aim "to make the number waiting for day-care centers and kindergartens zero, and ensuring the services where all the working people can safely leave their children with and go to work", developed "New Zero Waiting List Strategy" in February 2008 for enhancing and promoting the quality and quantity of day care policies.

By next 10 years, the target is set to increase provision proportion of day care service provision (children aged 3 or under) from 20% to 38% and proportion of services for sound upbringing of after-school children provision (1st grade to 3rd grade Elementary school students) from 19% to 60%. Especially for the 3 years from 2008 to 2010 the initiative will be promoted as the focal period to achieve the target.

In addition, in the fiscal 2008 supplementary budget, the improvement of day-care centers according to the "New Zero Waiting List Strategy", responses to new demand for nursery care utilizing centres for early childhood education and care etc, training for improving the quality of nursery care all took place, while the "Anshin Kodomo Kikin Fund" was established in prefectures for use in improving systems that then enable people to raise their children with a sense of security.

(Better quality of child care and education in day-care centers and kindergartens)

- Since October 2006, special measures have been taken by establishing a mechanism to authorize day-care centers and kindergartens with capabilities to provide education and child care to pre-school children and with support capabilities to provide supporting child-rearing practice locally by prefectures as "Centre for early childhood education and care".

The authorized facilities are evaluated by protectors and approved facilities, on the other hand, the operational problems are also raised by facilities and local public organizations.

Efforts are therefore being made to improve the operations based on measures such as (1) new financial measures transcending the border between kindergarten and day-care centers, and (2) corrective measures such as the improvement of accounting procedures and the dissemination and education of the system, which were created at a director-general level investigative commission held in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology(MEXT) and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare(MHLW) in July 2008. Moreover, in October in the same year, three ministers of the Cabinet Office(measures for declining birth rate), MEXT and MHLW agreed to start a Committee on the Centre for Early Childhood Education and Care System. They discussed about the problems related to Centre for Early Childhood Education and Care System and compiled a report in March 2009. The points raised in the report are as follows; (1)Improvement of financial supports, (2) Dissolution of double administrative overlap, (3) Promotion of comprehensive provision for education and day-care, (4) Enhancement of support for child rearing at home and in regions, (5) Preservation and improvement of quality.

◆Section 2 Elementary School Phase◆

(Securing and promoting health)

- The “School Health Act” (Act No.56 of 1958) was revised in June 2008, which made it possible to provide health guidance by nursing teachers in coordination with other related teachers and enhance school healthcare in coordination with local medical institutions. Also from 2008, the measures are promoted for better school health education by implementing “a comprehensive coordination project with local specialists to protect health of children” to send specialist physicians to schools and promote health education in school.
- In June 2008, the “School Lunch Act” (Act No.160 of 1954) was revised, and in the law, promotion of “Shokuiku”(dietary education) in school was mentioned clearly. At the same time, the following was set forth; diet and nutrition teachers should give instruction on food utilizing school lunch, regional food production should be used for school lunch to promote the instruction, and school principals should create a plan for instruction on food.

(Developing skills for daily life)

- In the Courses of Study that has been partly and prioritized from April 2009 on, particularly in the lower grades of elementary schools, efforts are being made to improve moral education, including the acquirement of basic life habits such as greetings, and social rules, judging on what is right and what is wrong, and refraining from doing anything wrong as a person.

(Developing academic abilities)

- Since fiscal year 2007, The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has carried out the National Assessment of Academic Ability in mathematics and Japanese for students in the sixth year of elementary school and the third year of lower secondary school. The results have revealed that there have been challenges in the utilization of knowledge and skills.

(Ensuring opportunities for activities that lead to accomplishment of social independence)

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has been promoting measures for improving children’s experience activity opportunities as the courses of study for elementary and lower secondary schools published in March 2008 provided for the further improvement of experience activities and the Basic Promotional Plan for Education decided by the Cabinet in July 2008 provided for opportunities of various experience activities to be provided.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, shall promote the “Children’s Rural Exchange Project” wherein Elementary school students will be staying in rural areas for 1 week long having practical experience, while not only selecting model regions as a basis for the expansion of the receiving regions and supporting the improvement of the receiving systems but also assisting the improvement of information dissemination and receiving systems which contribute to the coordination of receiving regions and elementary schools.

◆Section 3 Early Adolescence◆

(Developing Occupational skills and motivation)

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, from 2007, in co-operation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and from 2008, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, has been implementing "Local Industrial Leader Development Project" where vocational upper secondary schools and local production industries work together to support an organization to develop professionals engaged in manufacturing locally, food and lifestyle industries. In addition, regarding career and vocational education to be provided at schools in the future, advice was provided to the Central Council for Education in December 2008.
- From 2005 for 3 years, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) implemented "local-oriented and private section involved career education project" in order to assist young people to better understand significance of working and fun to work from an early stage like elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary school age. During the fiscal year 2008, due to increasing need for those coordinators, and from the point of view of aiming at promoting the distribution of know-how, projects for training and evaluating the coordinators were implemented at eight regions in the country.
- To accelerate and enhance the initiative to promote career education, etc, in the "Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education" endorsed by the cabinet of July 2008, promoting career education was included as the measures which are to be implemented for the next five years.

◆Section 4 Youth Phase and Post Youth Phase◆

(Enhancement of University Education)

- Regarding the university's function of training human resources, and due to the fact that the points on which universities are placing emphasis do not necessarily agree with those that production industries are expecting of them, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry are jointly promoting an "Industry-Academic Personnel Development Partnership", a place to combine the communication and efforts of industrial and academic circles, with a mid-term review having been published in July 2008.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry are attempting to strengthen the educational functions of universities through support for efforts in developing and verifying human resource training programs created in the Industry-Academic collaboration.

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, in the fiscal year 2009, in order to attempt to improve the opportunities for members of society to re-study at universities, specialized training colleges and so forth, while utilizing the functions of specialized training colleges, is providing opportunities to study for youths, the old age / middle age, women, NEETs and so forth in the "Project of Support for Vocational Ability Improvement Utilizing Specialized Training Colleges" with a view to improving their vocational abilities according to the individual characteristics, and is implementing the "Vocational Education Promotion Plan to Incorporate Specialized Training Colleges and Senior High schools" that provide various opportunities for vocational experiences to upper secondary school students while cooperating with upper secondary schools in order to cultivate the vocational awareness of youths.

(Enhancement of Occupational capabilities and employment support)

- The Ministry of Economy, has defined the skills or abilities recognized in the workplace or in the society as "Basic strength of the human being as a part of the society", ("Strengths to move forward in life", "Skills to think through problems", "Skill to work in a team") and activities promoting the development and evaluation of these skills are been implemented. In fiscal 2008, concerning various subjects, the cultivation and evaluation of social member basic powers were systematically performed at nine model universities. In addition, in the classes and activities of universities a "Social Member Basic Powers Development Grand Prix", in which students compete with each other for their growth was held, in which 40 university teams participated in from in the entire country.
- The Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare, for job-hopping part-timers who did not had the opportunities to build occupational capabilities, to develop and enhance the capabilities so that they can have a stable employment, in April 2008, established "Job Card System", (through meticulous career consulting, awareness, clarification of the issues were done and by combining classroom lectures and company training, occupational training provided. Job history and evaluation results from the companies were put together in a "job card" that can be used in employment search activities).

Chapter 3 Measures for youths with difficulties

◆Section 1 Efforts in difficult situation◆

(Support for youths with disabilities)

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology revised the courses of study applicable to schools for special needs education in March of 2009, in consideration of the “Act to Amend Part of the School Education Act” (Act No. 80 of 2006), which is mainly constituted of legal stipulations requiring the promotion of special needs education at elementary and lower secondary schools, as well as the systemic conversion of conventional schools for the blind, deaf, and disabled into “Schools for Special Needs Education” that accept those with a diverse range of disabilities..
- The Information Center of Education for the person with Developmental Disabilities” was established at the National Institute of Special Needs Education in FY2008, as a core center that provides a variety of educational information on the proper outlook and support for developmental disabilities to school teachers and parents, as well as online courses/workshops for teacher training. Henceforth, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will coordinate with the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare in enhancing necessary contents.

(Juvenile delinquency countermeasures,etc)

- Related ministries and agencies are performing a review of new measures as an “Investigation and research on cases of juvenile delinquency etc” based on the understanding of the matters that may be considered as causes and background of juvenile delinquency while performing the arrangement and collection of juvenile delinquency measures currently taken in dealing with those matters and their analysis and review. In March 2009 a report on “sudden type” delinquency was created.
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is promoting (1) projects for creating systems where a local community as a whole supports the recovery of youths, such as functions required as a youth activity basis, and (2) efforts for pioneering new social activity places, such as measures to facilitate recovery activities.

(School truancy / social withdrawal)

- In order to provide various support to truant children and pupils, in the fiscal year 2009 too, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology continued to entrust the development of effective study curricula and activity programs congruous with the current status of truant children and pupils etc to NPOs, and private and public facilities providing instruction and support to truant children and pupils and protectors.

(Support for youth development under unfavorable working conditions)

- From the fiscal year 2006 on “Local Young People’s Support Stations” have been established in every region that are not only providing specialist consultations congruous with the conditions surrounding youths but also as a core of a network of regional youth support institutions enable the services of each institution to be effectively received. In the fiscal year 2009, while expanding establishment bases (from 77 to 92 points) and strengthening the network functions with educational institutions etc, model projects actively appealing to youths and protectors are being implemented.

(Prevention and protection of youth victims)

- Child abuse incidents, such as the deprivation of a child’s life, continue to occur, while the number of consultations on child abuses received by Child Guidance Centers in the whole country keeps growing, and in the fiscal year 2007 reached 40,639, which is about 3.5 times as large as that immediately before the enactment of the Child Abuse Prevention Law. Child abuse has therefore become an important problem to be urgently grappled with by the whole of society.
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, in the fiscal year 2009, based on the purpose of the Child Abuse Prevention Law, and regarding early detection, notification of child abuse occurring at schools, cooperation with related institutions, the handling of abused children, and so forth, in order to attempt to improve the awareness and handling skills of teachers distributed training materials named “Prevention of Child Abuse and School” to boards of education of prefectures and designated cities.

- The inspection of death cases caused by child abuse, which is significant in extracting problems accompanying attempts to prevent the reoccurrence of those cases and to implement countermeasures against them, has been being performed from the fiscal year 2004 on by the “Expert Committee on Inspection of Cases Requiring Protection Such As Child Abuse” established under the authority of the Children Committee, the Social Welfare Council, and four times reports have to date been created. In June 2008, at the abovementioned Inspection Committee, a general report was created into which the first to fourth reports were summarized and incorporated.
- In 2007 the Child Abuse Prevention Law and the Child Welfare Law were revised and enforced in April 2008. The main matters that have been revised are as follows. In addition, following them, the management guidelines for Child Guidance Centers etc were revised.
 - Strengthening walk-in inspections enabling the entrance accompanied by unlocking etc only after being provided with a permit by judges with a view to confirming children’s safety and so forth.
 - Strengthening the restriction of protectors’ meeting, communication, and so forth, and establishing a system where the governors of prefectures can prohibit parents from stalking their children and wandering around the children’s housing etc.
 - Clarifying measures in case of protectors not obeying those instructions.

In addition, in November 2008, the “Act to Amend Part of the Child Welfare Law” was enacted in taking measures such as the establishment of new child rearing support services, the improvement of raising in home-like environments abused children, and so forth. The main content is as follows:

 - The legalization of child rearing support services such as (1) the “All Homes Visiting Project for Infants (Project of visiting all homes with an infant at 4 months after birth or younger)” where by visiting all homes with an infant, the provision of information on child rearing support, the understanding of raising environments, and support through consultations and advice provided are performed, (2) the “Visiting Project for Supporting Child Care (formerly called ‘Visiting Home Project for Childcare Support ’)”, where support such as child rearing-related consultations, instructions and advice through visitations are provided to families requiring child raising support, and (3) the legalization of child-rearing support services such as the “Regional Child-rearing support Basis Project” in which places for mutual exchanges between infants and their protectors are established and the assistance of consultation, information provision, advice and so forth on child rearing are provided.
 - Strengthening functions of local networks to protect children (local councils on measures for children who need protection)
 - The revision of the foster parent system and provisions such as the prevention of occurrence of abuse inside of institutions have been incorporated (enforced from April 1, 2009 on except for a part).
- Regarding the “Foster parent system” in which children are raised in a home-like environment, and in order to attempt to improve the support system for foster families while promoting entrustment to foster parents, from the fiscal year 2008 on, the “Foster Parent Support Institution Project” has been implemented, while support for foster parents’ child raising, such as the coordination of communication between foster parents and related institutions, visitation support for foster families and the promotion of mutual exchanges among foster families, and the active dissemination and education of the foster parent system are comprehensively being implemented.
- Into the “Act to Amend Part of the Act on Regulation on Soliciting Children by Using Opposite Sex Introduction Services on the Internet” (Act No. 52 of 2008) new provisions have been incorporated and enforced since December 1, 2008 on, such as the following: the introduction of a notification system to business operators, the strengthening of regulations such as the establishment of the duty of preventing the public from reading anything enticing children to become a partner of a heterosexual relationship, and the promotion of private activities for preventing children from utilizing dating sites.
- In June 2008 the “School Health Act” (Act No. 56 of 1958) was revised and renamed the “School Health and Safety Act”. The revised act provides that efforts shall be made including the safety inspection of school facilities and equipment and instructions on safety in daily lives, such as the formulation and implementation of General School Safety Plans, the creation of action guides at the time of occurrence of danger, and so forth.
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, from the fiscal year 2008 on, has been implementing the “Support Project of General Measures against Bullying” and promoting efforts of schools related to the effective method of responding to the occurrence of behavioral problem with the cooperation of external specialists, the prevention and early detection of bullying, and so forth.

In particular, regarding “bullying on the internet”, from the fiscal year 2007 on, the “Conference of Specialists for Building Systems for Protecting and Raising Children” has been held, while in June 2008, as the second summary, the “To Protect Children from 'Bullying on the Internet' --Let's reconsider the Use of Keitai Net!--” was created.

In addition, in January 2009, while issuing notices for the Board of Education of each prefecture, efforts congruous with the current status of each region are being promoted with regard to efforts to protect children from “bullying on the internet”, such as the improvement of informational moral education and an appeal to families and regions.

(Support for foreign youths)

- Under recent severe employment circumstances, and taking into consideration the fact that foreign residents including persons of Japanese descent have been placed in difficult conditions, particularly with their children being in a severe status with regard to study at schools, the “Office for the Coordination of Policies on Foreign Residents” was established in the Cabinet Office in January 2009, while the “Immediate (Short-Term) Support Measures for Foreign Residents in Japan” (January 30, 2009) was formulated under the cooperation of related ministries and agencies.

In addition, on March 27, 2009, the “Council for the Promotion of Measures for Foreign Residents ” was established, while the “Promotion of Support Measures for Foreign Residents in Japan” (April 16, 2009) was formulated under the cooperation of related ministries and agencies concurrently with the formulated of the “Policy Package to Address Economic Crisis” of the entire government.

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, taking into consideration the situation in which the recession is making more difficult the study of Brazilian children etc. going to Brazilian schools etc, and mainly as an urgent support measure within the fiscal year 2008, announced on January 30, 2009 the “Urgent Support for Resident Foreigners' Children --Emergency Assistance for Children of Resident Foreigners --The Emergency Assistance Plan---”, a summary of the measures of support for persons transferring to public schools and for creating places of the children’s own etc.

Moreover, on March 27, the “Emergency Assistance for Children of Resident Foreigners (2nd --The Emergency Assistance Plan--”, a summary mainly of the utilization of the fiscal 2009 budget and the existing systems etc, was announced.

◆Section 2 Efforts of comprehensive support for youth with difficulties◆

- In order to promote the integrated youth development, in March 2009, the government presented the “Bill on Promotion of General Measures for Youth” at the 171st Session of the Diet

The main content of this bill is as follows:

- The Fundamental Principles for Promotion of General Measures for Youth shall be created, while as a special institution for promoting its implementation, the Headquarters for Promotion of General Measures for Youth established in the Cabinet Office with the Prime Minister of Japan designated as the general director.
- In order to aim at the effective and smooth implementation of support for enabling youths to lead independent social lives, a system shall be developed where local governments shall create a regional network and regional support institutions jointly continue to support youths until they can become independent.
- While in the fiscal year 2007 developing training programs for technical advisors (hereinafter referred to as “youth advisor”) congruous with youth development took place and in the fiscal year 2008 as model regions of nine regions in the country whose core institution is the Juvenile Guidance Centers (including the institutions with the function of Juvenile Guidance Center), and holding lecture meetings for training youth advisors, based on the training programs, the Cabinet Office implemented model projects that develop systems for supporting individually and continuously young people with various problems in cooperation with related institutions and organizations with the regional core institution designated as the abovementioned center, etc.
- In a review of support measures for the youth with difficulties in independence and social participation such as NEETs and socially withdrawn youths, and in order to grasp the current status of upper secondary school dropouts and lower secondary school truant students, the Cabinet Office under the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology performed surveys on their situations and so forth in the fiscal year 2008.

Chapter 4 Measures for Improving the Environment for society-wide Support of the Healthy Development of Youth

◆Section 1 Rebuilding mutual relationships at home, schools, and regions◆

(Efforts of “Opening homes” for support of protectors etc)

- In the fiscal year 2008 the “Project to Form Basis for Regional Home Education Support” was implemented where through the establishment of the “Home Education Support Teams” in the nearest regions and the provision of meticulous home education support, including the provision of information and study opportunities and the improvement of consultation systems, bases for each region that as a whole support home education were formed.
- Regarding measures for single mother families, based on the “Living Measures” (decided at the Joint Meeting of Government, Ruling Party Conference, and Minister Conference for Economic Countermeasures on New Economic Measures on October 30, 2008), from February 2009 on, the payment period of the special grants for high technical skill training programs has been extended. With that extension continued in the fiscal year 2009 too, the improvement of support measures for mothers of single mother families shall be attempted.

(Developing “Open schools” with the use of external power)

- In the fiscal year 2009, with a view to aiming at improving the academic ability of children and at cultivating their norm awareness and of being able to develop environments enabling teachers to meet face-to-face with children, the project of utilizing external human resources such as 14,000 retired teachers and the development of regional headquarters for school support as well as the revision of school personnel constant of 1,000 people are being implemented.

(Municipal development that minimizes the likelihood that youth will become victims of crimes and other acts)

- From the fiscal year 2009 on, with the “Project of Urgent and Comprehensive Support for Safety and Security Measures for City Parks” established, support for safe and security measures, such as the development of barrier-free city parks, has been provided.

◆Section 2 Developing comprehensive networks◆

(Strengthening related institutions and developing easy-to-use service systems)

- In cities, wards, towns and villages the establishment of “local networks to protect children (local councils on measures for children who need protection)” is being promoted with the aim of regional related institutions, which share information and ways of thinking on children and their families, being able to respond to them with the appropriate cooperation of each other. As of April 1, 2008, the share of cities, wards, towns and villages with the local councils on measures for children who need protection or the abuse prevention network not obliged to be established was 94.1%.
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has been making efforts to train leaders for the support of long-term nature experience activities performed by elementary schools from the fiscal year 2008.

◆Section 3 Responding to the Changes Regarding Information and Consumer Environment◆

(Developing the knowledge and ability to respond to changes in Consumption Environment and Information)

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, based on the “2nd Summary of Conference of Experts for Developing Systems for Protecting and Raising Children”, created and distributed a collection of manuals and cases related to ‘Bullying over the Internet’ to the Board of Educations of prefectures and elementary, lower and upper secondary schools in the entire country in November 2008. From here on in, regarding the cultivation of children’s information literacy and information moral education, efforts shall be made toward the smooth and secured implementation of the new courses of study.
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, from the fiscal year 2008, has been making efforts toward the dissemination by not only developing teaching materials for E-Learning but also opening a site named “Media Literacy in the Fields of Broadcasting” (http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/top/hoso/kyouzai.html).

- The “Consumer Education Liaison Conference of the Cabinet Office and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology” was held once in the fiscal year 2008, where opinions were exchanged on cooperation between consumer departments and Boards of Education in promotion of consumer education, including through school education. This conference will continue to be held, and education and enlightenment method to consumers, including youths are examined.
- In order that the persons who have finished consumer problem courses held at the National Consumer Affairs Center of Japan and local consumer affairs centers can provide consumer education at schools, social education facilities etc as expert and lecturer training programs were formulated in the fiscal year 2007. From the fiscal year 2008 on, with lecturer training courses held with the use of the abovementioned programs, the inspection, revision and so forth of the programs shall be performed.
- A portal site where information on consumer-education-related teaching materials created by each ministry and agency, practice cases, and consumer education experts has been collected shall be created by the end of the fiscal year 2008, while its utilization commenced upon by the end of the fiscal year 2009.

(Securing and training partners in the private sector)

- The Act on Development of Internet Environment for Young People enforced on April 1, 2009 provides that
 - a conference of the Prime Minister and related ministers of Japan shall be established, where a basic plan on measures for providing safe and secure Internet use for young people shall be formulated and promoted,
 - efforts shall be made to promote education and awareness-raising activities on appropriate Internet use in school, social and home education,
 - mobile phone and PHS business operators, Internet service providers, manufacturers of equipment with functions to access the Internet etc shall owe obligations to provide software for filtering content harmful to young people, etc , and
 - the state and local entities shall support private bodies, etc. engaged in activities on appropriate Internet use.

From now on, based on the enforcement of the abovementioned act, basic plans shall be formulated, while measures jointly performed by related ministries and agencies. In addition, based on the abovementioned act, and in order that harmful information measures may be promoted by the private sector, activities of making the act known to all the persons shall be performed by related ministries and agencies.

- In order to protect youths from harmful information on the Internet, in April 2008, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications requested mobile phone business operators to make efforts to improve filtering services.
- In order to review comprehensive measures against illegal and harmful information on the Internet, a “Meeting for Reviewing the Handling of Illegal and Harmful Information on the Internet” was held at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. In April 2008, a “Mid-term Summary” was created that mainly dealt with the efforts toward improvement, further dissemination and promotion of filtering services of mobile phones etc while a “Final Summary” was drawn up in January 2009. Based on the Final Summary the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications is formulating the “Anshin Net Tsukuri (Making Secure Internet)” promotion programs, which shall become a comprehensive policy package concerning illegal and harmful information measures for the Internet, while making efforts toward the development of safe and secure Internet use environments.
- In February 2009, the Cabinet Office, Cabinet Secretariat, National Police Agency, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry jointly requested Prefectural Governors, Prefectural Boards of Education and Prefectural Police to make efforts in awareness activities regarding the enforcement of the Juvenile Internet Environment Improvement Act and the dissemination and promotion of filtering for children’s mobile phones.
- The police are promoting public relations and enlightening activities for children and their protectors etc in order to protect children from cyber-criminal harm and effects of illegal and harmful information on the Internet. In particular, with an emphasis on public relations in February 2009 put on the “Promotion of information security measures against cybercrime”, lectures were also provided on cyber security at elementary and lower secondary schools etc in the entire country. In the lectures on cyber security concrete cases of and countermeasures against illegal information on the Internet, crimes caused by harmful information, cybercrime against children and so forth were introduced, and the introduction of filtering software or services recommended.

- In September 2008 an awareness building DVD was created that reveals collected cases on crime, harm, and trouble resulting from use of mobile phones.

In addition, in February 2009, leaflets, in which necessary considerations when using the Internet with a mobile phone were revealed, were created and distributed to all sixth graders at elementary schools throughout the country (about 1.2 million). In addition, leaflets on the creation of mobile phone usage rules by parents and children were created and distributed to prefectural boards of education and PTA organizations. Awareness activities on mobile phones are therefore being promoted.

Moreover, based on the results of research on grappling with problems arising from mobile phone use at schools a notification dated January 30, 2009 was issued that provides guidelines such as “Pupils and students are prohibited in principle from bringing mobile phones to elementary and lower secondary schools” and “Restrictions shall be placed on the use of mobile phones by students when at school”.

Chapter 5 Framework for Promoting the Measures

◆Section 3 International cooperation◆

- International human rights treaties related to youth developing are the “Convention on the Rights of the Child”, the “Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict” and the “Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography” which are complimentary to the convention Japan is one of the countries which are parties to the convention and the optional protocols.

Child sexual exploitation problems, such as child prostitution and child pornography, are growing more and more serious with the development of the Internet and IT technology. In November 2008 “The Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents” was held at Rio de Janeiro with more than 3,000 persons attending, including delegations from about 140 countries. At the opening ceremony, Yasutoshi Nishimura, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan on behalf of the Government of Japan, which was the host country of the Second Yokohama Congress, made a speech expressing the Japanese policy of continuing to actively grapple with the child sexual exploitation problem in cooperation with the international community.

Based on the outcome document of “The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call for Action to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents” that was set this April, attempts are being made to make the abovementioned document known to the public and strengthen efforts in cooperation with related institutions.

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