

Education Rebuilding by Society as a Whole

**A Further Step toward the Rebuilding of the Public Education System
and the Reconstruction of the Basis for a New Era of Education**

Second Report

June 1, 2007

Education Rebuilding Council

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Executive Summary

I. Take Every Approach to Boost Academic Ability

—Concrete measures in reviewing current education with reduced classroom hours and curriculum content—

Recommendation 1: Concrete measures for increasing classroom hours by 10%

—Establish flexible classroom-hour setting through arrangements such as utilization of summer and other vacation periods, addition of a 15-minute class in the mornings, and establishment of a schedule of seven classes a day with each class being reduced by 5 minutes. Realize Saturday classes, if necessary—

Recommendation 2: Make classes more understandable and appealing to all the children

—Increase the content and raise the quality of textbooks, review educational content and subjects in response to current social requirements such as citizenship education, make use of IT in all classrooms, consider the “Academy for Development of Teaching” concept, and provide education more customized to a variety of children—

Recommendation 3: Improve teacher quality and increase significantly the hours for communicating and interacting with children

—Promote utilization of special certificates to appoint people from various sectors of society, enhance in-service training to improve the content of classes and skills, establish a flexible pay structure based on teacher assessment, and reduce the burden of teachers’ clerical tasks—

Recommendation 4: Promptly address difficulties faced by schools

—Maintain a crisis-management system at schools, establish a support team for school problem-solving and fulfill accountability of schools and boards of education, and thoroughly examine and utilize results of nationwide academic achievement surveys to provide support with allocation of teachers and funding—

Recommendation 5: Support initiatives based on the ingenuity of schools

—Allow more flexibility in standards for classroom organization and expand and enhance achievement-based teaching, broaden the school choice system, and support the development of teaching materials and skills by teams of teachers—

II. Strong Sense of Discipline and Sound Body: Aim for Balanced Character Formation

Recommendation 1: Give all children a strong sense of discipline

—Designate moral education as a school subject and seek its enhancement compared with current “moral education classes”—

Recommendation 2: Inspire and nurture children’s team spirit and sensibilities and broaden their outlook and potential through a variety of hands-on activities

—Provide all children with nature experiences (one week in primary school) and social career experiences (one week in lower secondary school), and make community service experiences mandatory (at upper secondary schools)—

Recommendation 3: Aim at a society that supports parental learning and child-rearing

—Promote relevant moral education through the cooperation of schools, families, and communities, enhance support for education at home and parenting counseling, actively provide information about scientific knowledge, enhance early childhood education, and establish measures against harmful information and material on children—

Recommendation 4: Build a local base for education rebuilding by communities as a whole

—Implement the “After School Hours Plan for Children” nationwide and encourage the creation of school management councils—

Recommendation 5: Build networks for education rebuilding by society as a whole

—Change the mindsets of principals and boards of education, and train and retain local coordinators—

III. Revitalize Universities and Graduate Schools So That They can Contribute to the Progress of Both the Global and Local Community —Thorough university and graduate school reform—

Recommendation 1: Guarantee the quality of university education

—Tighten graduation approval requirements, promote external evaluation, consider comprehensive reform of entrance exams, enhance scholarships and free tuition to motivated students who study hard, and improve the educational skills of teachers—

Recommendation 2: Through globally-based, diversified systems and curriculums, aim at creating the kinds of universities at which multi-national, talented students will gather and study

—Widely encourage September matriculation, implement international recruitment of teachers, offer more classes in English, promote a foreign student policy as a national strategy, and keep close contact with businesses and society on curriculum reviews and human resource issues—

Recommendation 3: Reform of graduate school education aiming for a world-class educational level (Global standard basis, specialties, human resources mobility)

—Thoroughly implement a systematic and organized education system, create entrant selection procedures open to all nationalities, world-class graduate schools, and financial supports for students—

Recommendation 4: Enhance the level of local university education through cooperation among national, public, and private universities

—Support regional university consortiums and jointly establish graduate schools—

Recommendation 5: Further reform of national universities according to the current requirements of society

—Push bold reorganization and integration forward, set up a system that can operate multiple universities under one national university corporation, and drastically reform the personnel and payroll system—

IV. A Budgetary Basis Suited to a “New Era of Education”

Education rebuilding is the Cabinet’s top priority. Enhancing the content of the education budget is essential to drive forward reforms that reaffirm the basics of education and usher in a “new era of education” by society as whole.

To that end, funding must be secured for an education budget with priorities, promoting thorough efficiency, which is truly necessary for education rebuilding.

—Three concrete measures for rebuilding primary and secondary education—

Ensure equal educational opportunities nationwide.

Concrete measure 1: Provide priority support where necessary

Concrete measure 2: Institute a flexible pay structure based on teachers’ efforts

Concrete measure 3: Minimize the difference of educational expenses on a local basis

—Three concrete measures for realizing university and graduate school reform—

Put an emphasis on “selection and concentration,” “diverse funding,” and “allocation based on evaluations.”

Concrete measure 1: Expand and enhance “competitive funding” and achieve efficient distribution

Concrete measure 2: System reform that enables self-help efforts by universities and colleges

Concrete measure 3: Reform of management expenses grants for national university corporations

Four Response Measures

- (1) Increase classroom hours by 10% with the aim of improving academic ability.
- Proceed by shortening summer and other vacations, adding a 15-minute class in the mornings, increasing the number of class hours in a day, and taking other measures at the discretion of schools.

Also, make it possible to hold Saturday classes (advanced learning lessons, supplemental learning lessons, period of integrated study, etc.), when necessary, at the discretion of boards of education and schools, while continuing the basic policy of a five-day school week.

Revision of the Teaching Guidelines (Courses of Study) etc. during fiscal 2007

- (2) Enhance moral education

- One week of nature experiences in primary school, one week of social career experiences in lower secondary school, and mandatory community service experiences in upper secondary school.

Also, designate moral education as a school subject within a new framework and prepare a variety of textbooks and teaching materials (selected from diverse materials).

(Note: No quantitative assessment. Class teachers are to be in charge of teaching moral education.)

Revision of the Teaching Guidelines (Courses of Study) etc. during fiscal 2007

- (3) Institute a flexible pay structure based on teachers' efforts in order to secure good educators.

Revision of the Special Measures Law on Educational Personnel Salaries, etc.
prospectively in April 2008

- (4) Reform of universities and graduate schools through a globally-based perspective

- Promote international recruitment of teachers, increase the percentage of foreign teachers, have more classes in English, and a foreign student policy as a national strategy.

Also, give more flexibility to the "April matriculation principle." Support university efforts to realize a "September matriculation quota" at all national universities.

(Widely encourage the adoption of a September matriculation quota)

Amendment of the Enforcement Regulations for the School Education Law during fiscal 2007, support with guidelines for the establishment of mid-term objectives by national universities, and management expenses grants, etc.

Secure funding for an education budget with priorities, promoting thorough efficiency, which is truly necessary for education rebuilding—

Introduction

1. Notes on the Compilation of the Second Report

The Education Rebuilding Council put together this second report as a follow-up to the first report it published in January 2007. The four urgent response measures recommended in the first report have since all been implemented by the government. The other recommendations made in the first report include many issues requiring further deliberation, and the council is continuing to study how to give them concrete shape.

In the second report, we first of all recommend specific measures for reconsidering current education with reduced classroom hours and curriculum content in order to boost academic ability, with a view to taking the rebuilding of public education, which was a pillar of the first report, a whole step further.

True academic ability contributes to the character formation of each individual, must grow into the knowledge and abilities needed in the real world, and above all is incomplete without considering the demands and future trends of the broader society that awaits one after higher education. Character is something that is elevated only with emotional and physical harmony, including living habits, deep sentiments, and a notion of right and wrong cultivated at school, through family discipline, and in the course of interacting with one's community. Accordingly, in this report we make recommendations emphasizing moral education and university and graduate school reform as well as the system of educational funding needed to realize those proposals, along with the specific measures for reconsidering current education with reduced classroom hours and curriculum content.

In addition, the council will deepen its discussion of specific measures concerning the evaluation of boards of education, the improvement of teacher quality, and other recommendations made in the first report as well as issues

that could not be addressed sufficiently this time, including university entrance reform and the 6-3-3-4 system, for inclusion in a third report in the future.

2. Aim of Public Education Rebuilding: —“Toward a New Era of Education”—

The situation today demands that we carve out a new era of education through the rebuilding of public education by society as a whole based on the Fundamental Law of Education, which was revised for the first time in 60 years.

In order to rebuild public education, we first of all aim to provide children with a uniform and seamless education appropriate to their age and developmental stage, from early childhood until they leave the nest and enter society. We must also ensure that all children have the opportunity to acquire basic academic abilities and sense of discipline, and must stop the entrenchment of an academic achievement gap. On top of this, it is important to promote education that attaches importance to individuality and that capitalizes on the special qualities of the community, and to develop an environment in which schools can apply their creativity while constantly striving for self-improvement through a friendly rivalry where diverse education is realized, and in which the quality of education continues to increase. Further, we must establish a responsibility system in schools and boards of education in order to earn the trust of children, parents and guardians, and the broader society.

In making recommendations, we focused on important issues, including the achievement of a balance between that which all children in any given age group should acquire on the one hand and respect for diversity and individuality on the other; maintaining trust in the educational establishment; and adopting a perspective of cooperation with teachers in schools, those involved in educating our children, and individual members of the public at large.

3. Vision of the Human Being Aspired To—Abilities We Want Children to Acquire—

We hope that all children will grow into moral human beings who have acquired high academic abilities and sense of discipline and who have achieved a harmonious balance among knowledge, emotion, will, and body—that is, academic abilities, sentiments, desires, and physical fitness. We hope that they will each have their own dreams and hopes and become people who have firmly acquired the basic abilities needed to live independently in society. Further, we think that efforts must be devoted to ensuring that each child is given an opportunity to develop his or her potential to the full, to blossom, and to lead a happy life. On top of that, we also believe that efforts must be made to nurture innovative human resources who can produce the cutting-edge knowledge needed in an age of global mega-competition, and to nurture leaders who can play an active part in the international community.

We believe that it is important to acquire abilities such as the following, taking account of age levels from preschool through to graduate school, in order to nurture the type of person described above:

Firstly, the basic living habits, study habits, reading habits, and physical fitness that form the foundation of learning.

Secondly, basic and foundational knowledge and skills, intellectual curiosity, deep sentiments, the desire and attitude to learn, perseverance, and a challenging spirit.

Thirdly, the ability to apply basic skills and knowledge, to identify challenges, to think independently, and to make judgments and decisions, ambition, public spirit, a social nature, and understanding of and concern for others.

Fourthly, cooperativeness, communication ability, the ability to take action, the ability to think, creativity, and the leadership needed to make the best use of the above qualities in the real world and in working life.

Fifthly, the originality, expertise, and international character needed to produce innovation.

I. Take Every Approach to Boost Academic Ability

—Concrete measures in reviewing current education with reduced classroom hours and curriculum content—

In terms of concrete measures in reviewing—as we recommended in the first report—current education with reduced classroom hours and curriculum content, we suggest a policy of increasing classroom hours, creating appealing classes, improving teacher quality, and supporting flexible responses and ingenuity by schools.

Recommendation 1: Concrete measures for increasing classroom hours by 10%

— Establish flexible classroom-hour setting through arrangements such as utilization of summer and other vacation periods, addition of a 15-minute class in the mornings, and establishment of a schedule of seven classes a day with each class being reduced by 5 minutes. Realize Saturday classes, if necessary—

- Establish a flexible class setting that makes the best use of the ingenuity of boards of education and schools to increase classroom hours by utilizing days from summer and other long vacations, introducing a two term system, adding a 15-minute class in the mornings, making classes 40 minutes long and having seven classes in a day and so on.

- Continuing the nation's basic policy of a five-day school week, make it possible to hold classes on Saturdays (advanced learning lessons, supplemental learning lessons, periods of integrated study, etc.) when necessary, at the discretion of boards of education and schools.

Recommendation 2: Make classes more understandable and appealing to all the children

—Increase the content and raise the quality of textbooks, review educational content and subjects in response to current social requirements such as citizenship education, make use of IT in all classrooms, consider the Academy for Development of Teaching concept, and provide education more customized to a variety of children—

■ Reform of teaching methods

○ The national government should enhance the quality and increase the quantity of textbooks and should ensure that they incorporate an abundance of advanced lessons and supplemental lessons. It should also redesign subjects and educational content in line with the changing times, and review the continuity of appropriate curriculum for the developmental stage. In so doing, the government should attempt to enhance educational content so as to meet current social requirements, including citizenship education, legal education, and consumer education.

○ Schools should work aggressively on the repetitive learning of reading, writing, and arithmetic, reading of books, learning of kanji (Chinese characters), and other basic skills to boost academic abilities. It should also firmly establish and promote food education along with the school lunch program.

○ The national government should enhance Japanese language education and also increase the classroom hours for English as well as the number of English vocabulary words taught in lower and upper secondary schools, and introduce English education into primary schools. It should also expand the use of foreign teachers.

○ Schools should make use of IT devices to improve classes. The national government and boards of education should provide IT environments, including intra-school LANs, electronic whiteboards, and computers for teachers.

○ The national government should set attainable objectives, and schools should objectively conduct absolute evaluation* against those attainable objectives.

* Absolute evaluation: Assessments that look at the extent of accomplishment of the attainable objectives that should be achieved in a specific grade and term, in contrast to relative evaluation, which look at relative standing and ranking within a grade and class.

■ Consideration of the Academy for Development of Teaching concept

○ The council will begin doing what it can to give concrete form to the Academy for Development of Teaching (tentative name) concept*, focusing on universities, and will consider the overall concept further.

* A permanent framework for continuing to improve education by using networks for research, in-service training, and teacher training at participating universities and boards of education to continuously grasp and analyze problems in schools, changes in society, knowledge shared among ministries and agencies, and the ever-increasing store of the latest knowledge, and to reflect those findings in the educational content of the primary and secondary education levels, the development of IT teaching materials and aids, the training of in-service teachers, and teacher training for working adults.

■ Education more customized to a variety of children

○ When conducting classes and providing instruction, schools should provide instruction and support that is more customized to children's diverse cognitive levels and learning styles. They should also provide individualized responses to children failing to attend school and those who are faced with difficult family problems.

○ The national and local governments should make efforts to strengthen the education system to meet special needs in primary and lower secondary schools, schools for special needs, education as well as kindergartens and upper secondary schools through the careful placement of teachers and support staff, the utilization of outside professionals, in-service training for the entire faculty, and other measures in order to provide individualized support carefully tailored to the needs of children requiring special support, including children with developmental disabilities.

○ The national government and universities should strive to further enhance the content of special needs education in teacher training courses and also endeavor to enhance the support from universities and other institutions given to students with disabilities.

○ The national government should implement a comprehensive project relating to education to meet special needs in a model district, such as for children with developmental disabilities, conduct research about pedagogical methods and the utilization of support equipment and software, and disseminate the outcomes of that research.

Recommendation 3: Improve teacher quality and increase significantly the hours for communicating and interacting with children

—Promote utilization of special certificates to appoint people from various sectors of society, enhance in-service training to improve the content of classes and skills, establish a flexible pay structure based on teacher assessment, and reduce the burden of teachers' clerical tasks—

- Having entered a period of mass retirement of teachers, boards of education should encourage the utilization of special certificates to appoint large numbers of working adults and those who have completed graduate schools aiming to fill 20% or more of the teaching force with such appointments by 2012.

- The national government and boards of education should enhance in-service training to improve teaching methods, including the utilization of IT in classes. Boards of education should also promote efforts to train and secure high-quality teachers other than by appointment, such as through teacher training programs (teacher *juku*).

- In an effort to attract talented people into the educational community, the national and local governments should continue to improve the treatment of teachers, reconsider the uniform, favorable treatment of teacher pay at public schools, establish a flexible pay structure based on teacher assessment, and support outstanding teachers. They should also take measures to allocate additional school personnel, such as senior vice principals (*fuku-kocho*) and managing teachers (*shukan*).

- To enable teachers to devote their efforts to the education of children, the national and local governments should promote the simplification and reduction of surveys taken and documents to be submitted, the development of a system for jointly carrying out the administrative affairs of multiple primary or secondary schools, the outsourcing of administrative affairs, cooperation with people in the community, and the spread of IT in educational settings.

- The national government and boards of education should strive to enhance equipment and teaching materials and make facilities earthquake resistant in order to improve the educational environment of children.

Recommendation 4: Promptly address difficulties faced by schools

—Maintain a crisis management system at schools, establish a support team for school problem-solving and fulfill accountability of schools and boards of education, and thoroughly examine and utilize results of nationwide academic achievement surveys to provide support with allocation of teachers and funding—

- Creation of a framework for rapidly solving problems at schools
 - Schools should routinely maintain a crisis management system, and swiftly and cooperatively deal with incidents and accidents when they occur.
 - Boards of education should establish a Support Team for School Problem-Solving (tentative name) to solve problems in schools, in cooperation with the bodies concerned, as they handle children with various challenges and face difficulties in communicating with parents and guardians. The team should include professionals such as supervisors, counselors at juvenile detention and corrective institutions, university instructors, lawyers, clinical psychologists/psychiatrists, social workers, and police officers, including ex-police officers.
 - Schools and boards of education should not conceal problems faced by the school from parents, guardians, and the local community, and should disclose information, fulfill their accountability, and make a genuine effort to solve problems.
- Examination of nationwide academic achievement surveys and support for schools
 - The national government and boards of education should thoroughly examine the results of nationwide academic achievement surveys. Boards of education should require schools with poor academic achievement to submit improvement plans. The national government and boards of education should provide special support to those schools in terms of funding, allocation of teachers, and personnel.

Recommendation 5: Support initiatives based on the ingenuity of schools

—Allow more flexibility in standards for classroom organization and expand and enhance achievement-based teaching, broaden the school choice system, and support the development of teaching materials and skills by teams of teachers—

- The national government should allow much more flexibility in standards for classroom organization and allow the placement of teachers according to circumstances. In an effort to enhance academic ability, the national government and boards of education should take measures to allocate additional school personnel and prioritized budgetary measures, including increasing subject teachers in the upper primary grades, expanding and enhancing achievement-based teaching and small-group instruction, and improving the quality and increasing the quantity of books. They should also encourage the tapping of people in the local community.

- At their own discretion, boards of education should allow children and parents and guardians to select schools according to their own preferences, personalities, and abilities, while keeping in mind local conditions. They should also allocate budgets, according to local conditions and performance, to schools that take an active effort to exhibit distinctive characteristics, such as schools that gather a lot of children.

- Schools should take positive action towards improving classes, for example through the development of teaching materials by teams of teachers. The national government and boards of education should support these types of school efforts in terms of funding and the allocation of human resources.

II. Strong Sense of Discipline and Sound Body: Aim for Balanced Character Formation

Given the current situation surrounding children, including bullying and crime among increasingly younger children, it is more important than ever that all children acquire a strong sense of discipline and public spirit and develop into well-balanced human beings in terms of both mind and body.

Children come to appreciate the preciousness of life, understand self and other, develop a sense of self-affirmation, recognize the significance of working, and realize their own role within society when schools and communities cooperate to implement moral education and provide nature experiences and workplace experiences.

Both education in the home and preschool education have important roles to play as they cultivate strong parent-child bonds. It is important for parents to learn as their children grow, for people feel the joy of having children around through the experience of child-rearing, and for communities as a whole to raise the children in the community.

Recommendation 1: Give all children a strong sense of discipline

—Designate moral education as a school subject and seek its enhancement compared with current “moral education classes”—

- The national government should make moral education a new subject, different from conventional subjects, and enrich its content.
 - Make all schools and teachers secure class hours for moral education and systematically provide instruction throughout the year.
 - Do not evaluate moral education by a mark.
 - Use a variety of textbooks and supplementary teaching materials according to their features. In so doing, ensure materials are used that engender respect for others and

nature through biographies and classics from one's hometown, from Japan, and from the world, and materials that pay due attention to impassioning children through arts, culture, and sports activities.

- Have class teachers in primary schools provide the instruction in moral education. Have class teachers in lower secondary schools, as well, be in charge of moral education, without establishing a specialized license. Make use of special certificates to encourage working adults from the community and from different sectors to stand at the podium.
- The national government should further promote basic research about the relationship between education and brain science, social science, and other related sciences. Based on the knowledge gained thereby, it should also study and arrange the content of virtues to be taught and the teaching methods, appropriate to the age and development stage of the children, and consider making use of them in school education.
- Moral education should be enriched broadly, connecting it to Japanese language, social studies, music, art, physical education, and the period of integrated study.

Recommendation 2: Inspire and nurture children's team spirit and sensibilities and broaden their outlook and potential through a variety of hands-on activities

—Provide all children with nature experiences (one week in primary school) and social career experiences (one week in lower secondary school), and make community service experiences mandatory (at upper secondary schools)—

- Schools should implement hands-on activities and community service experiences at all school levels, considering children's developmental stage and local conditions. The national and local governments should provide the necessary assistance and arrange the conditions.
- Implement weeklong group overnight trips, nature experiences, and hands-on activities in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries in primary schools.
- Implement weeklong workplace hands-on activities in lower secondary schools.
- Make community service experiences mandatory at upper secondary schools.

- Schools should strengthen career education in order to instill work values and give children a sense of their career options. The national government and boards of education should actively support the distinctive vocational education undertaken by specialized upper secondary schools and special training colleges in cooperation with their local communities.
- The national and local governments should encourage school education and community sports activities by encouraging participation by sports organizations, developing comprehensive community sports clubs, and cooperating with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts activities. Boards of education should support the activities of instructors, including making use of sports instructor banks (a system for registering and introducing sports instructors). They should also encourage arts and cultural activities in school education and local communities, including music, art, drama, and traditional performing arts.
- Schools and boards of education should encourage sister-school affiliations in order to deepen interaction between children from urban and rural areas.

Recommendation 3: Aim at a society that supports parental learning and child-rearing

—Promote relevant moral education through the cooperation of schools, families, and communities, enhance support for education at home and parenting counseling, actively provide information about scientific knowledge, enhance early childhood education, and establish measures against harmful information and material on children—

- Schools, families, and communities should cooperate to help children acquire a sense of discipline and wholesome living habits such as “early to bed, early to rise, breakfast.” Schools and families should also cooperate in helping children acquire the habit of using proper greetings, discipline, and manners appropriate to their age and developmental level.
- The national and local governments should enhance measures to support parents and guardians, including support for fathers’ participation in child-rearing, house-call support for education at home, and parenting counseling. They should also make use of opportunities where a number of parents and guardians gather together, such as PTA meetings, parent

education classes, health examinations for pregnant woman, and health checkups for children to expand and enhance occasions for parental learning, child-rearing courses, and venues where parents and children can learn and play together.

- Opportunities for children to gain an understanding of the importance of life and family, and the significance and enjoyment of child-rearing should be expanded and enhanced during home economics in lower and upper secondary schools.

- The national government should promote research studies about education and scientific knowledge from brain science, social science, and other related sciences. It should then actively disseminate the knowledge acquired from those studies and make use of it in future child-rearing supports.

Note: See appendix for examples of scientific knowledge related to child-rearing.

- The national and local governments should actively promote certified “kodomoen” (kindergarten and daycare centers) that function to support child-rearing in the community.

- The national and local governments should continue comprehensively considering funding and organizational problems together with reform of revenues for making early childhood education free of charge in the future. For the time being, they should promote early childhood education by reducing the burden on parents and guardians to pay for preschool education.

- In an effort to protect children from harmful material and information, the national government and schools should promote educational campaigns for parents and guardians about filtering devices for cell phones and the Internet and the prevention of harmful information through TV.

Recommendation 4: Build a local base for education rebuilding by communities as a whole

—Implement the “After School Hours Plan for Children” nationwide and encourage the creation of school management councils—

- The national government should grasp the status of implementation of the “After School Hours Plan for Children,” started in April 2007, and should make it easier for local governments to work on this program, aiming for full implementation in all primary school districts nationwide.
- The national and local governments should support the creation, at all schools nationwide, of a structure for PTAs, school graduates, and members of the community to support school management, including Saturday supplemental-learning lessons, extracurricular club activities, and facility management.
- The national government and boards of education should disseminate information about leading examples of school management committees, through which communities participate in school management, and encourage their creation (195 school management committees have been created as of April 1, 2007).

Recommendation 5: Build networks for education rebuilding by society as a whole

—Change the mindsets of principals and boards of education, and train and retain local coordinators—

- The national government and boards of education should encourage changes in the mindsets of principals and board of education supervisors so that they will enhance in-service training and the provision of information related to cooperation with the community and businesses and make use of the know-how of outside talent in school management and class improvement. They should also cooperate with chambers of commerce and industry and other economic organizations, NPOs, and others to train and secure coordinators to oversee the cooperation of schools, local communities, and businesses with a view to enhancing the After School Hours Plan for Children, hands-on activities, career education, and the period of integrated study.
- Businesses should create an environment that encourages work-life balance, including both work and child-rearing commitments, making it easier for employees to fulfill family responsibilities and actively participate in class observation days and school volunteer

projects. They should also strive to create opportunities to show children their parents or guardians at work.

- Schools, boards of education, those involved in educating our children, people connected to local government, and those in business should cooperate to build networks that contribute to education rebuilding by society as a whole.

III. Revitalize Universities and Graduate Schools So That They can Contribute to the Progress of Both the Global and Local Community

—Thorough university and graduate school reform—

Perspective on reform

○ As the structure and needs of society change, including intensification of the global competition for knowledge, the arrival of a new era of open enrollment at universities due to shrinking of the 18-year-old population, and demand for adult reeducation, the roles that universities and graduate schools are asked to play are changing drastically, making the reform of universities and graduate schools into institutions that meet the needs of the times a pressing issue.

○ Universities and graduate schools need to be thoroughly reformed from the following three perspectives for Japan's growth potential to overcome mounting global competition in the 21st century, which is the time of the knowledge-based society:

1. Nurture large numbers of the outstanding human resources who will form the foundation of competitiveness.
2. Nurture the leaders who will play leadership roles in society.
3. Reform universities and graduate schools into world-class educational and research bases that can generate innovation. For example, aim to have at least 5 Japanese universities/graduate schools in the top 30, including some in the top 10, in well-established international comparisons within the next 10 years.

Functions of universities and graduate schools

○ Universities are expected to engage in a friendly rivalry in a competitive environment, to display their distinguishing features, and to differentiate, based on their own choices, by functions, including world-class education and research, training of a wide selection of professionals, multidisciplinary and international

general education, community-based education, and the lifelong learning of the community.

- Universities and graduate schools in the coming knowledge-based society must be places to acquire broad and deep general cultivation as well as advanced knowledge in specialized fields. Although this type of general cultivation is developed over a lifetime, it is expected that people build upon their learning achievements through upper secondary school to acquire, at the university undergraduate stage, the broad and deep general cultivation that should be possessed as a basic grounding by human resources who will be active in a wide array of fields. To that end, a solid general education that surveys the larger “system of knowledge” without being constrained by classifications such as humanities versus sciences is important. At the same time, undergraduate courses are expected to provide basic education in specialized fields and to teach the fundamental competencies needed for one to make one’s way independently in society. At the graduate-school level, schools are expected to engage in advanced education and research in specialized fields as the highest seats of learning and to endeavor to train human resources who, in the future, can function effectively as professionals possessing advanced expertise and as world-class researchers who can generate innovation.

- In addition, in an effort to cultivate individual students’ abilities to the fullest extent, it is important for schools to make flexible structures that enable them to undertake education and research in diverse forms according to students’ capacity and progress without being constrained by affiliations and academic-year standings.

Five Reforms that should be Implemented Immediately

Recommendation 1: Guarantee the quality of university education

—Tighten graduation approval requirements, promote external evaluation, consider comprehensive reform of entrance exams, enhance scholarships and free tuition to motivated students who study hard, and improve the educational skills of teachers—

■ Guarantee the quality of education

○ The national government should offer strong support for efforts by universities, such as the following, to guarantee the quality of education in universities:

- The strengthening of efforts to tighten accreditation, the grade promotion system, and graduation approval requirements, such as the adoption of a grade point average (GPA) system* that tightens graduation approval requirements.

GPA system: A system in which grades for a course are given, for example, on a five-level spread (A, B, C, D, E) and a grade point is applied to each grade, such as 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0. The average of these points is taken and a certain level is set as the requirement for graduation, etc.

- Implementation of curriculum reforms based on social and economic trends and education tailored to students' diverse cognitive levels and learning styles.
- Development and publication of textbooks and instructional aids based on the latest research results, and instructional aids for self-directed learning that utilize a variety of media.
- Development of core curriculum and standard instructional aids and equipment that is made by relevant institution and universities.

Core curriculum: A curriculum that clarifies the knowledge, skills, and bearing that should be acquired in the university and undergraduate faculty, and sets attainable objectives and the necessary number of course credits.

- Diverse and flexible class schedules that allow students to take outstanding courses at other universities through inter-university partnerships.
- Promotion of external evaluation (promotion of multidimensional evaluation, establishment of evaluation systems and methods, commitment to information disclosure).
- Promotion of double majors in which students systematically take courses in fields outside of their major field of study.
- Introduction of volunteer activities into university education.
- Universities should encourage implementation of effective class evaluations by students.

The national government should undertake the following efforts to improve the educational skills of teachers:

- Make faculty development (FD) mandatory at all universities.

Faculty development: General name for an organizational effort to have teachers improve and advance the content of their classes and teaching methods.

- Support the development of in-service training programs related to educational techniques, and promote their use in appointing and promoting teachers.
- The national government should consider a mechanism for certifying that students have academic ability equivalent to a university graduate, such as through examination by private institutions.
- Consider comprehensive reform of entrance exams
 - Universities should clarify their individuality and distinctive characteristics and diversify entrance exams, such as through the use and rigorous operation of admissions office (AO) exams.
 - The national government should consider sweeping reforms including measures to diversify and introduce more flexibility into university entrance exams. In so doing, it should take into account the effect on primary and secondary education (allow more flexibility in the age of university matriculation, allow for the dispersion of entrance exam days and

multiple acceptances by national universities, make National Center for University Entrance Examinations (NUCEE) examinations into qualifying exams and hold them multiple times a year, consider the form of upper secondary school equivalency examinations, etc.).

■ Support motivated students who study hard

○ The national government should enhance scholarships for talented and motivated students. In particular, it should consider measures to open the way to higher education for talented young people who are underprivileged, for example by establishing a special category (free tuition) at national universities and enhancing aid for private universities that offer reduced or exempt tuition.

Recommendation 2: Through globally-based, diversified systems and curriculums, aim at creating the kinds of universities at which multi-national, talented students will gather and study

—Widely encourage September matriculation, implement international recruitment of teachers, offer more classes in English, promote a foreign student policy as a national strategy, and keep close contact with businesses and society on curriculum reviews and human resource issues—

■ Widely encourage September matriculation

○ The national government should widely encourage September matriculation in universities and graduate schools with a view to meeting the demands of young people returning from overseas and students coming from abroad and also to enhance opportunities for young people to gain varied experiences, such as through the adoption of Japan Gap Year*.

○ To that end, the national government should introduce more flexibility into the April matriculation principle at universities and graduate schools (amendment of the Enforcement Regulations for the School Education Law).

○ Further, the national government should provide guidelines for national universities to use when developing their next midterm objectives, support universities and graduate

schools that actively adopt September matriculation, and establish a September matriculation category at all national universities so that national universities can meet the demands of young people returning from overseas and students from abroad. The government should also encourage the establishment of a September matriculation category at private universities. It should take support measures for universities that establish a September matriculation category, such as through management expenses grants for national university corporations and subsidies for current expenditures of private institutions of higher education. In conjunction with September matriculation, the government should also encourage the adoption of the semester system (a system in which classes are concluded and credits acquired during half-year terms).

- * Japan Gap Year: The granting of a period of deferment of matriculation until September to students who have decided their matriculation by the end of March, so that they may undertake diverse hands-on activities during that period, such as volunteer activities. Or, a system to allow students who matriculated in April to undertake diverse hands-on activities until September and to assess those activities and grant the students a certain amount of credit for them.

■ Create an environment conducive to the internationalization of universities and graduate schools

- Universities and graduate schools should encourage the appointment of world-class teachers, such as through the international recruitment of teachers and a wide expansion of the fixed-term appointment system, in order to create outstanding, world-class education and research bases.

- Universities should endeavor to increase the ratio of foreign teachers and to appoint female teachers.

- The national government should, in cooperation with local governments and relevant institutions, strengthen urban infrastructures in order to expand the appointment of foreign teachers and the acceptance of students from abroad, such as through the development of housing and living environments, including those for families.

- The national government should establish an international (including Asia) mutual cooperation program (tentative name: University and Graduate School Globalization Plan),

and use this program to promote international cooperation with universities outside Japan (mutually transferable credit systems, double-degree programs, participation in international inter-university networks, summer school and other varied international exchange programs, etc.).

- Universities should expand both classes offered in English and organized educational programs that enable graduation from English-only courses.

- The national government should endeavor to enhance and develop the evaluation of university internationalization by universities and third-party organizations.

- Promote a foreign-student policy as a national strategy

- The national government should rebuild the foreign student-policy not only as an educational policy but as a national strategy that encompasses industrial policy and diplomatic policy, and should promote that policy aggressively.

- The national government should endeavor to strengthen local recruiting support systems; the screening of students before they come to Japan, their matriculation approval, and issuance of scholarships; consultation and support services while at school; and cooperation between universities and industry that takes account of post-graduation employment.

- The national government should improve the Japanese government scholarship system for students coming from abroad for effective utilization and encourage the acceptance of talented students from Asian countries using ODA funds, with a view to realizing a strategic and flexible foreign student policy.

- Regarding the overseas study of Japanese students, the national government should encourage university students to participate in short-term study-abroad programs and young researchers in long-term study abroad programs. It should also expand and enhance opportunities for lower and upper secondary school students to participate in homestays and exchange-student programs.

- Strengthen cooperation with businesses and society

- Universities should strengthen cooperation with businesses and society on creating interdisciplinary research fields and reorganizing the curriculum to meet the needs of businesses and society.
- Universities and businesses should clearly articulate the kinds of human resources and abilities desired by companies and society, and should establish fora where universities and businesses can exchange opinions about human-resource needs (industry-university human resources development partnership).
- Universities and graduate schools should expand personnel exchanges with businesses. They should also introduce long-term internship programs. Universities and graduate schools should promote exchanges with administrative agencies with a view to engendering cooperation between policymaking and scientific research.
- The national government should actively support efforts by colleges of technology to provide practical specialized education in cooperation with businesses in the community.

Recommendation 3: Reform of graduate school education aiming for a world-class educational level (Global standard basis, specialties, human resources mobility)

—Thoroughly implement a systematic and organized education system, create entrant selection procedures open to all nationalities, world-class graduate schools, and financial supports for students—

■ Reform the graduate school education system

- Graduate schools should thoroughly implement systematic and organized education that is not an extension of undergraduate schools. Master's degree courses should be enhanced with assured completion of course work and individual research instruction.
- Graduate schools, especially those that train researchers, should make active use of an early graduation system in which students proceed into graduate school upon completing their undergraduate work in three years.

- The national government should introduce more flexibility into the graduate degree system by, for example, allowing master's degree courses to be three years and doctorate degree courses to be two years, keeping in mind the characteristics of the field.

- From now on, and more than ever, graduate schools need to seek truly talented human resources widely, not just from within the graduates of their own undergraduate programs, in order to be the seats of a global competition for knowledge played out through the results of education and research. To that end, graduate schools should clarify beforehand information relating to educational objectives, content, and entrant selection, and then practice entrant selection that is officially open to students from other universities both inside and outside Japan, using a variety of selection devices, determined independently by each university, such as by emphasizing theses and research plans, participation of external examination boards, or testing in English.

- Form world-class graduate schools

- In order to form world-class graduate schools that can win out in international competition, core universities that put a major emphasis on their graduate schools should, by their own choice, pursue diverse environments in which the appointment of first-rate teachers through international recruitment and the attraction of talented students from both inside and outside Japan results in the enrollment of outstanding foreign students from around the world and a student body composition in which a large majority of the graduate students are not graduates of the same field at the same university (maximum of about 30%). The national government should strongly support the efforts of such graduate schools.

- Financial supports for students

- The national government should enhance financial support for talented and motivated graduate school students of all nationalities, and should actively appoint TAs and RAs* and provide fellowships at graduate schools. In particular, the government should strengthen support for talented students who go on to graduate school at other universities.

* TA: Teaching assistant. The purpose of the TA system is to provide talented graduate school students, in line with educational considerations, with an opportunity to gain training in education by having them perform educational

assistant work such as tutoring undergraduate students and overseeing their experiments, laboratory training, and practice exercises, and to help improve the treatment of graduate school students by paying them an allowance for this work.

- * RA: Research assistant. The purpose of the RA system is to nurture the abilities of graduate school students to execute research and to enhance the research structure by having graduate students, in line with educational considerations, participate as assistants in research projects undertaken by the graduate school, and to help improve the treatment of graduate school students by paying them an allowance for this work.

- The national government should build a framework for nurturing human resources, such as by providing opportunities where post-docs* can challenge themselves to pioneer new fields.

- * Post-doc: Postdoctoral. People who continue to engage in research at a research institute, usually after having completed a doctoral degree, in order to further improve their abilities as researchers.

Recommendation 4: Enhance the level of local university education through cooperation among national, public, and private universities

—Support “regional university consortiums” and jointly establish graduate schools—

- While maintaining their autonomy, universities should work on reorganizing undergraduate departments according to social changes and the demands of the times, cooperation with other universities, and the reform of organizational operation.

- The national government should support the formation of “regional university consortiums*” consisting of national, public, and private universities in local areas in order to nurture local human resources and energize regional economies.

- * “Regional university consortiums”: Cooperative associations formed among universities or among (multiple) universities and communities with a specific purpose.
- The national government should establish a framework that enables multiple national, public, and private universities to jointly establish graduate school research departments.
- Thorough support should be given to Inter-University Research Institutes that can win in international competition.

Recommendation 5: Further reform of national universities according to the current requirements of society

—Push bold reorganization and integration forward, set up a system that can operate multiple universities under one national university corporation, and drastically reform the personnel and payroll system—

- The national government should encourage national universities to take voluntary efforts such as the following:
 - Reorganization of undergraduate faculties at national universities.
 - Bold reorganization and integration of national universities.
 - Reduction of the undergraduate entrant quota at national universities in relation to the declining population of 18-year-olds.
 - Creation of a framework that enables one national university corporation to set up and administer multiple universities.
- National universities should drastically reform the teaching staff personnel and payroll system, reflecting ability and performance assessments in both educational and research duties in pay and thereby breaking down the uniform seniority-based payroll system. Further, in an effort to accumulate talented researchers, national universities should encourage the adoption of a flexible pay structure geared to performance, such as one in

which teachers and researchers could have higher salaries than the president of the university.

- In line with the intent of their incorporation, national universities should carry out decision-making regarding the overall administration of the university under the leadership of the president instead of leaving decisions up to faculty meetings.
- In line with the intent of their incorporation, national universities should stop holding presidential elections and decide who will be president through presidential selection committees.
- National universities should promote reform of university administrative offices and streamline administration, such as by further improving the quality of administrative staff and making personnel cuts.

The above university and graduate school reforms were compiled by the Education Rebuilding Council after a joint conference was held with representatives of the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, the Council for Science and Technology Policy, the Innovation 25 Strategy Council, the Council for Asian Gateway Initiative, and the Council for the Promotion of Regulatory Reform. Remaining issues will be considered in the future by the Education Rebuilding Council, with appropriate coordination being taken as needed.

Furthermore, the Education Rebuilding Council will steadily push these reforms forward by partnering with these other relevant councils to follow up on the status of promotion and considerations toward university and graduate school reform.

IV. A Budgetary Basis Suited to a “New Era of Education”

The future of Japan, a country poor in natural resources, hinges on its human resources, and the results of its education system will greatly affect the existence of the nation. The Education Rebuilding Council regards it as its responsibility to ensure that education rebuilding proceeds reliably with a medium- and long-term perspective and clear goals as the establishment of a Basic Plan for Education is hastened forward in response to the amendment of the Fundamental Law of Education for the first time in 60 years.

From the beginning, education rebuilding is a task that can only be realized as long as the national government, local governments, schools, families, local communities, the business community, the media, and other stakeholders each press forward as responsible parties and as a society as a whole. In that sense, the relevant national government agencies need to work together as a single unit, transcending sectional barriers.

Education rebuilding is the Cabinet’s top priority. Enhancing the content of the education budget is essential to drive forward reforms that reaffirm the basics of education and usher in a “new era of education” by society as whole.

To that end, funding must be secured for an education budget with priorities, promoting thorough efficiency, which is truly necessary for education rebuilding.

The Education Rebuilding Council hopes that flexible and prioritized fiscal investment will be made in policy measures to rebuild the education system.

—Three concrete measures for rebuilding primary and secondary education—

Fiscal support in primary and secondary education is necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity nationwide. Specifically, the following actions should be taken:

1. Provide individualized support where special challenges are faced and avoid entrenchment of an educational gap by ensuring equal opportunity to the recipients of education.
2. Provide support in areas where quality in education can be improved, by encouraging a friendly rivalry and the efforts of those directly involved.
3. Practice a policy of information disclosure and accountability that is acceptable to the public.
4. Expand the discretion of schools, continue encouraging self-sustaining development, and perform thorough ex-post evaluations.

Concrete measure 1: Provide priority support where necessary

- Boards of education should enlarge school discretionary budgets to expand the discretion and authority of principals in budgetary matters.
- The national government and boards of education should provide budgetary incentives to schools that make significant efforts and schools that achieve results, and should provide special support to schools dealing with special challenges.
- The national government and boards of education should provide priority support to education rebuilding by communities as a whole.
- Budgets should be allocated according to schools' issues, initiatives, and results, based on objective evaluations and data.

Concrete measure 2: Institute a flexible pay structure based on teachers' efforts

- The national government should support teachers by reconsidering the uniform positive treatment of public school teachers' pay and institute a flexible pay structure based on teacher assessment. The uniform 4% teachers' salary adjustment should be revised, such as by differentiating the pay scale according to a teacher's actual work. Further, allowances should be reviewed drastically. One result of such a review may be a significant rise in extracurricular club activities allowance from the current daily allowance of only ¥1,200 that is paid if a teacher works four or more hours on a holiday.
- In an effort to secure good human resources in the field of education, the national and local governments should improve the treatment of teachers. They should also encourage schools to make use of their creative ingenuity to recruit outside talent.

Concrete measure 3: Minimize the difference of educational expenses on a local basis

- In light of the fact that local governments have high educational expenses*, such as in the purchase of books and teaching materials and IT maintenance costs, the national government should prepare and publish a Public Education Expense Map in order to provide clear information to the public about the status of educational expenses, broken down by prefecture and municipality.

* Measures under the local allocation tax system provide ¥440,000 for the purchase of books, ¥3.4 million for the purchase of teaching materials, and ¥5.77 million for computer maintenance for a single primary school with 18 classes. However, since the use of the local allocation tax is left to the discretion of local governments, there is a large discrepancy between local governments as to the budgets that are actually allocated to schools. Taking the cost for teaching materials as an example, at the prefectural level the difference in the use of funds ranges from a low of 26% to a high of 184% of the base amount (fiscal 2005). In fiscal 2007, a large difference between local governments also appeared regarding the use of funds for the After School Hours Plan for Children, to which ¥4.4 million was allocated per primary school district, combining national government subsidies and the local allocation tax.

Regarding the operating expenses for private kindergartens, ¥138,000 per child is allocated through the local allocation tax measures, but the difference by prefecture in the use of funds ranges from a low of 71% to a high of 113% of the base amount (fiscal 2006).

—Three concrete measures for realizing university and graduate school reform—

The following three pillars should be the base of higher education finances:

1. Priority investment through selection and concentration.
2. Effort to secure diverse funding.
3. Efficient allocation of resources based on evaluations.

The budget for necessary policy measures should be secured through selection and concentration in truly effective areas, based on appropriate evaluations, while ensuring as much efficiency as possible. Basic expenses should certainly be secured.

In order to make a higher-education-related budget based on each university's efforts and results, the necessary educational budgetary basis should be secured by appropriately combining basic expenses with competitive funding while making the shift from uniform distribution to a more efficient distribution of resources based on evaluations.

Attention should be given to ensuring that outstanding education and research can continue stably over the long-term in areas that do not have short-term and direct links to economic activity, including the human and social sciences, basic science, and fields such as the environment, energy, and food, which are global issues nowadays.

Concrete measure 1: Expand and enhance “competitive funding” and achieve efficient distribution

- Expand and enhance “competitive funding” and improve overhead expenses.
- Expand and enhance “competitive funding” in both research and education at national, public, and private universities.

- Make the screening system for “competitive funding” more sophisticated from the perspective of fairness, transparency, and internationality. Reform the evaluation methods, including giving consideration to young researchers.
- Expand and enhance support for research facilities and equipment, which are the foundation of innovation, including those at private universities.
- Build a new system that enables the provisioning of scholarships from “competitive funding”, and extend the qualifications of researchers whose personnel expenses can be paid from “competitive funding.”

Concrete measure 2: System reform that enables self-help efforts by universities and colleges

- Consider diverse financing schemes, including using ODA budgets.
- Consider enhancing and strengthening preferential tax measures relating to donations from private companies and individuals and joint research expenses in order to encourage educational investment by the private sector.
- Implement support to back up the acquisition of funds from the private sector through self-help efforts on the part of the each university, including (1) introducing more flexibility into investment management, such as by allowing the investment of private sector donations to national universities in mutual funds, and (2) allowing joint research funds with the private sector to be appropriated for teachers’ salaries.
- Expand the applicable scope of capital contributions from universities (university spin-off venture businesses).

Concrete measure 3: Reform of management expenses grants for national university corporations

- Use management expenses grants for national university corporations to firmly support the fundamental part of education and research while at the same time greatly expanding and enhancing “competitive funding”, creating an environment that is

conducive to universities engaging in friendly competition and adopting diverse incentive systems.

- Toward the establishment of the next midterm objectives and plan (from fiscal 2010), start considering specifics of a new distribution structure for management expenses grants for national university corporations so that they are based on each university's efforts and results.
- Significantly weight management expenses grants based on evaluations conducted from the perspective of (1) education and research, and (2) efforts to undertake university reform. At that time, make use of the results of third party evaluations of national university corporations.
- Make it possible to integrate a portion of regular employees' salaries into the direct overhead of "competitive funding". The personnel expenses of limited-term employees financed from competitive funding are already outside the frame of total personnel expenses reductions at national university corporations; the personnel expenses of regular employees financed from "competitive funding" should also be put outside the frame of total personnel costs reductions.

Further Agenda toward the Third Report

Toward the preparation of a third report in December, the Education Rebuilding Council will proceed with its considerations of the shape education rebuilding by society as a whole should take so that it is suited to the coming new era of education.

In so doing, it will also continue considering the matters given below as examples, which were considered before compilation of the second report.

1. Third-party evaluation system for schools and boards of education.
2. Teacher training, teacher appointment, and other matters related to improving the quality of teachers.
3. The 6-3-3-4 system.
4. The Academy for Development of Teaching (tentative name) concept.
5. English education in primary schools.
6. A system for guaranteeing children's education and sound development by all ministries and agencies.
7. Educational voucher system.
8. Efficient budget distribution, including appropriate school distribution.
9. Child-rearing support and early childhood education.
10. Sweeping reform of entrance exams.
11. University undergraduate education, education and research at universities and graduate schools, and budget support.

(Appendix)

Examples of Scientific Knowledge Related to Child-rearing

The Education Rebuilding Council recently held a dialogue with the members of the second subcommittee and the following experts about scientific knowledge related to child-rearing: Tadahiko Abiko (Professor, Waseda University), Naoki Ogi (Professor, Hosei University), Ichiro Kanazawa (President, Science Council of Japan), Masako Tanimura (Director, Department of Maternal and Child Health, National Center for Child Health and Development), Tadaharu Tsumoto (Unit Leader, RIKEN Brain Science Institute), and Takeo Hashimoto (Clinical Professor, Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, Kurume University School of Medicine).

In addition, various research reports and recommendations concerning scientific knowledge related to child-rearing, such as the following, have been published. The following is being provided as information about family education (see attached sheet for details).

- “[Parents and guardians] should be careful about the contact that infants and toddlers have to the media, including TV.”
- “Adults need to enrich communication with children. In particular, they need to try to be good listeners and to praise children.”
- “[Parents and guardians] should give children a habit of always eating breakfast.”

(Report from a special committee of the Science Council of Japan)

- “Early childhood education is important for the sound development of children’s emotions, since the mold for emotions is thought to be shaped between birth and about five years of age.”

(Report from an investigative commission of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

- “Children under the age of two should refrain from watching TV and videos for long hours.”

- “Infants and toddlers should not be left to watch TV and videos alone.”

(Report from a committee of the Japan Pediatric Society)

- “It is within reason to say that the inundation of information about sex and violence accompanying the development of the Internet, video games, and comics has created a hotbed of a whole manner of crimes.”

- “There are also voices of concern about the effect of violent video games against the backdrop of children snapping and losing their tempers.”

(Research committee report from the National Police Agency)

(Attached Sheet)

Report of the 19th Science Council of Japan Special Committee on the Emotions of Children (June 2005) (Abstract)

- Summary: 2. Content of the report (3) Content of remedial plans and recommendations
 - (1) [Parents and guardians] should be careful about the contact that infants and toddlers have to the media, including TV.
 - (2) Adults need to enrich communication with children. In particular, they need to try to be good listeners and to praise children.
 - (4) [Parents and guardians] should give children a habit of always eating breakfast.

<http://www.scj.go.jp/ja/info/kohyo/pdf/kohyo-19-t1030-19.pdf> (Japanese only)

Report of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Investigative Commission on the Scientific Elucidation of Emotion and its Application to Education etc. (October 2005) (Abstract)

- Summary: III. Recommendations etc
 - 1. The results of research conducted thus far on the emotions of children have taught us the following:
 - (1) The formation of appropriate “attachment” is important for nurturing children’s skills in handling human relationships and social adjustment skills;
 - (2) Acquiring a basic rhythm to their lives and food education are important to the sound development of children’s emotions;
 - (3) The existence of others, especially the role of parents and guardians, is important in children’s formation of a balanced self; and
 - (4) Early childhood education is important for the sound development of children’s emotions, since the mold for emotions is thought to be shaped between birth and about five years of age.

http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/seitoshidou/05032201/003.htm

(Japanese only)

Report of the Japan Pediatric Society Committee on Improving the Living Environments of Children (April 2004) (Abstract)

○ Introduction

The Japan Pediatric Society Committee on Improving the Living Environments of Children conducted a survey of 1,900 children in three regions at their 1-year-6-month checkup and considered the results together with information from both inside and outside Japan in order to investigate the effects of watching television (note: indicates television and videos) on the development of infants and toddlers. The results showed that: there is a relationship between watching TV for long hours and a delay in the emergence of meaningful words at the age of 1 year and 6 months; in particular, a delay in the emergence of meaningful words is more likely in children who watch TV for long hours on a daily basis and in families where parents and children do not speak with each other much daily, including when watching TV; and most parents are not aware of this effect of TV.

○ Recommendations

1. Children under the age of two should not watch TV and videos for long hours. Regardless of the content and way of watching, children who watch TV for long hours are more likely to have delayed language development.
3. Infants and toddlers should not be left to watch TV and videos alone. When allowing children to watch TV, it is important for parents to sing along with children and answer their questions.

<http://www.jpeds.or.jp/saisin-j.html> (Japanese only)

Report of the Japan Pediatric Association Research Committee on Awareness Survey related to “Children and the Media” (October 2005) (Abstract)

- Summary

We examined the effect on children three years of age and older of watching TV for long hours during the infant and toddler years. We conducted a questionnaire survey of parents and guardians who have children from three years old through preschool age, primary school students, and lower secondary school students, and analyzed the results through cross tabulation. Among the children from three years old through preschool age, significantly more children assessed as being “unable to communicate” and as having “delayed language development” appeared in the cohort that watched three or more hours of TV a day during the infant and toddler years compared to the cohort that watched no more than two hours of TV a day; those who watched more TV also showed emotional instability. Among the primary school students, although the findings tended to show improvement, those who watched more TV were recognized as having slight emotional instability. We concluded that child disciplines are important, since parents’ approach to child-rearing is reflected in the watching of TV and videos.

Report of the National Policy Agency Study Group for Protecting Children from the Harmful Influences brought about by a Virtual Society (December 2006) (Abstract)

- 1. Introduction

It is within reason to say that the inundation of information about sex and violence accompanying the development of the Internet, video games, and comics has created a hotbed of a whole manner of crimes. The situation of harm caused by offenses detrimental to the welfare of juveniles through dating sites is quite serious, and problems caused by children’s misuse of cell phones as a means of bullying are becoming more serious. There are also voices of concern about the effect of violent video games against the backdrop of children snapping and losing their tempers. The effect of this type of information has been pointed out in a number of cases of violent crimes against children.

Note: Offenses detrimental to the welfare of juveniles refers to crimes that harm the wellbeing of juveniles through the infliction of harmful effects on their minds and/or bodies, such as acts that make children the objects of sexual misconduct.

Reference: There were 1,581 arrests for crimes connected to dating sites in 2005. Of those, cell phones were used in 96%. These crimes produced 1,061 victims under the age of 18 of murder, rape, child prostitution, child pornography, and sexual misconduct, etc.

These figures increased considerably in the first half of 2006, with 909 arrests for crimes connected to dating sites (28.0% increase over the same period in 2005), and 610 children being victimized (22.7% increase).

<http://www.npa.go.jp/safetylife/syonen29/Virtual.htm> (Japanese only)