

FY2020 Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base Project Report

Miyagi Prefecture has established “seamless support from children to adults” in its disaster reconstruction plan for mental health care following the earthquake. Moreover, the Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center (hereinafter, “Center”) has been entrusted with mental health care services for children during the five-year period from April 2016 to March 2021. The contracted work included the following five projects: “counseling project,” “professional dispatch project,” “training project,” “raising public awareness project,” and “research project.”

The following is a summary of the contents and achievements of the 2020 Children’s Mental Health Care Community Base Project (hereinafter, “Base Project”) and the five-year project. The figures are reprinted from the data of those aged under 20 years from the Center’s statistical materials.

1. Contracted project content and achievements

(1) Counseling project

The Center provides counseling on mental health care for children through municipalities; educational institutions (e.g., elementary, junior high, and high schools); and nursery schools. When professionals are dispatched for municipal health examinations of infants (hereinafter, “infant health examinations”) and counseling service booths, supporters, and families often request advice on how to deal with children, and counseling is provided for them.

The number of counseling cases in FY2020 was 431 and 125 for the total number of cases, and the total number of actual people, respectively. This increased from the total number of cases (373) in FY2019, and slightly decreased from the total number of actual people (134) in FY2019.

Table 1 shows the number of consultation cases according to age and counseling recipient, and Table 2 shows the total number of consultation cases according to age and place of residence. Regarding age, the number of consultations for those between the ages of 7 and 15 years, which numbered 163 cases in FY2019, decreased. However, consultations for those between the ages of 16 and 19 years, which numbered 139 cases in FY2019, greatly increased. By region, the number of cases in Kesenuma City largely increased, with the number of cases for those between the ages of 7 and 15 years, and between the ages of 16 and 19 years, exceeding 100 cases. In Ishinomaki City, there was a large decrease in the 7–15-year age group. In the jurisdiction of the Stem Center, there were no major changes since FY2019.

Table 1 Number of consultation cases according to age and counseling recipient
(Total number of cases: 431; number of actual people: 125)

		6 years and younger	7–15 years	16–19 years	Total
Total number of cases (according to counseling recipient)	Individual	1	99	176	276
	Family	72	48	32	152
	Other	0	0	3	3
	Total	73	147	211	431
Number of actual people		61	34	30	125

Table 2 Total number of consultation cases according to age and place of residence

Place of residence		6 years and younger	7–15 years	16–19 years	Total
Total number of cases (according to counseling recipient)	Sendai City	3	2	6	11
	Shiogama City	0	0	0	0
	Natori City	0	0	2	2
	Tagajo City	0	0	0	0
	Stem Center				
	Iwanuma City	0	0	0	0
	Tomiya City	0	0	0	0
	Watari Town	0	0	0	0
	Yamamoto Town	0	1	0	1
	Matsushima Town	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	2	2	4
	Ishinomaki Regional Center				
	Ishinomaki City	30	6	7	43
	Higashimatsushima City	16	5	8	29
	Onagawa Town	2	0	0	2
	Kesenuma Regional Center				
	Kesenuma City	0	131	148	279
Tome City	0	0	0	0	
Minamisanriku Town	0	0	12	12	
Anonymous		22	0	1	23
Total		73	147	186	406

*Of the 431 total cases, 25 had “Ichinoseki City” as their place of residence, so they were excluded in Table 2.

(2) Professional dispatch project

Professionals such as child psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and public health nurses were dispatched to municipal health centers, nursery centers, elementary/junior high schools, etc., to provide consultations and training for staff members. Professionals were dispatched to a total of 262 institutions in FY2020, which was an increase of 229 institutions in FY2019. Table 3 shows the number of dispatches according to dispatch destination and profession, and Table 4 shows the number of dispatches according to dispatch destination and municipality.

Among the institutions to where professionals were dispatched, municipalities were the highest at 197 cases, of which 140 were handled by public health nurses. This increased from 110 cases in FY2019. Public health nurses were the most frequently dispatched professionals, followed by clinical psychologists, psychiatric social workers, and psychiatrists. Dispatches to nursery centers and kindergartens numbered 19 in FY2019. Dispatches to elementary and junior high schools numbered 13 and 3, respectively.

Ishinomaki City had the highest number of dispatches (117 cases), followed by Watari Town (42 cases), Yamamoto Town (33 cases), and Natori City (25 cases).

Table 3 Number of dispatches according to dispatch destination and profession (262 cases)

Profession / Dispatch destination	Prefecture-related	Municipality	Nursery center / kindergarten	Elementary school	Junior high school	Other	Total
Psychiatrist	0	9	0	3	2	1	15
Clinical psychologist	4	27	7	0	0	1	39
Psychiatric social worker	1	21	0	0	8	2	32
Public health nurse	0	140	4	0	0	22	166
Other	0	0	10	0	0	0	10
Total	5	197	21	3	10	26	262

Table 4 Number of dispatches according to dispatch destination and municipality (262 cases)

Dispatch destination		Prefecture-related	Municipality	Nursery center / kindergarten	Elementary school	Junior high school	Other	Total
Municipality								
Stem Center	Sendai City	0	1	0	3	2	1	7
	Shiogama City	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Natori City	1	14	10	0	0	0	25
	Tagajo City	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Iwanuma City	0	12	0	0	0	0	12
	Watari Town	0	42	0	0	0	0	42
	Yamamoto Town	0	32	1	0	0	0	33
Ishinomaki Regional Center	Ishinomaki City	3	83	8	0	0	23	117
	Higashimatsushima City	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
	Onagawa Town	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Kesenuma Regional Center	Kesenuma City	1	2	0	0	8	2	13
	Tome City	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Minamisanriku Town	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		5	197	21	3	10	26	262

(3) Training project

In FY2020, we sponsored and dispatched instructors for 31 workshops. This decreased from 47 workshops in FY2019. Table 5 shows implementation status according to workshop instructor profession and municipality, and Table 6 shows the implementation list of the training projects. Workshops sponsored by the Center include “Psychological first aid (PFA) training for children” (hereinafter, “Children’s PFA training”) and “Trauma-informed care training,” where basic methods for psychological support following a disaster were demonstrated. These were each hosted once in one location within the prefecture (Sendai).

Table 5 Implementation status according to workshop instructor profession and municipality

Venue		Psychiatrist	Clinical psychologist	Psychiatric social worker	Public health nurse	Other	Total
Instructor profession							
Stem Center	Sendai City	4	0	1	0	0	5
	Shiogama City	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Shiroishi City	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Natori City	0	0	0	2	8	10
	Tagajo City	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Iwanuma City	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Kurihara City	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Osaki City	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Zao Town	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Marumori Town	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Taiwa Town	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ishinomaki Regional Center	Ishinomaki City	2	0	0	1	0	3
	Higashimatsushima City	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Onagawa Town	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kesenuma Regional Center	Kesenuma City	0	0	5	0	0	5
	Tome City	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Minamisanriku Town	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		12	2	6	3	8	31

“Other” includes clinical development psychologists and nurses

Table 6 Implementation list of training projects

Implementation date	Hosting municipality	Training name (theme)	Primary participants	Number of participants	Instructor profession
2020/5/29	Sendai City	Mental health care for reopening schools	Miyagi Prefectural High School education counselors, etc.	78	Psychiatrist
2020/7/8	Kesenuma City	Activities of the Kesenuma Regional Center	Child counseling center staff	8	Psychiatric social worker
2020/7/9	Taiwa Town	Mental illness in children	4 th -year students at Miyagi University Nursing Group	12	Psychiatrist
2020/7/13	Natori City	Utilization of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)	New Natori City public health nurses / registered dietitians	20	Public health nurse
2020/8/4	Natori City	How to work with groups including anxious children	Masuda Nursery Center	10	Clinical development psychologist
2020/8/20	Shiogama City	Involvement in mother-child cases from the perspective of family relationships	Public health nurses under the jurisdiction of Shiogama Public Health Center	26	Clinical psychologist
2020/8/24	Natori City	Let's use data	New Natori City public health nurses / registered dietitians	10	Public health nurse
2020/8/28	Natori City	Teamwork, compassion, and you: Is empathy exhausting?	Natorigaoka Nursery Center	17	Other
2020/9/14	Marumori Town	Psychological support for children from a long-term perspective in the later stages of a disaster	Kanayama Elementary School	20	Psychiatrist
2020/9/15	Sendai City	How to approach the hurt heart of a child: Learning the basics of trauma-informed care	Child welfare, etc.	34	Psychiatrist
2020/9/25	Sendai City	One-day training for psychological first aid for children [PFA for children]	Educators, etc.	16	Psychiatrist
2020/10/5	Sendai City	Status and issues of mental health care for children from the perspective of Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center	Administrative officials, etc.	19	Psychiatric social worker
2020/10/6	Natori City	How to work with groups including anxious children	Masuda Nursery Center	10	Clinical development psychologist
2020/10/8	Higashimatsushima City	Building networks that support the growth of children	Higashimatsushima City Regional Council for Aid-requiring Children	55	Psychiatrist
2020/10/14	Ishinomaki City	Supporting the growth of children	Educators	20	Psychiatrist
2020/10/22	Natori City	What is teamwork?	Natorigaoka Nursery Center	20	Other
2020/10/27	Natori City	How to work with groups including anxious children	Natorigaoka Nursery Center	10	Clinical development psychologist
2020/11/2	Kesenuma City	Appearances and truth of worrisome 2 nd -year junior high school students	2 nd -year junior high school students of Orose Junior High School	59	Psychiatric social worker
2020/11/10	Natori City	Attentive listening	Natorigaoka Nursery Center	20	Other
2020/11/13	Kesenuma City	Activities of the Kesenuma Regional Center	Child and family support center staff	3	Psychiatric social worker
2020/11/26	Kurihara City	Child-rearing without corporal punishment: For a society that supports child-rearing together	Kurihara City residents	120	Clinical psychologist
2020/12/8	Kesenuma City	Status of drug addiction and crisis avoidance	Kesenuma High School part-time system	52	Psychiatric social worker
2020/12/9	Natori City	How to work with groups including anxious children	Natorigaoka Nursery Center	10	Clinical development psychologist
2020/12/15	Natori City	How to work with groups including anxious children	Masuda Nursery Center	12	Clinical development psychologist
2020/12/21	Shiroishi City	Dealing with suicidal ideations	Educators	40	Psychiatrist
2020/12/23	Ishinomaki City	Psychological support for children from a long-term perspective in the later stages of a disaster	Ishinomaki Kita High School	40	Psychiatrist
2021/1/15	Zao Town	Main points of attentive listening	Zao High School	10	Psychiatrist
2021/1/19	Ishinomaki City	Case study meeting	New-term Ishinomaki City public health nurses	6	Public health nurse
2021/2/1	Sendai City	What is occurring in the heart of a child during COVID-19	Kawasaki City Western Area Rehabilitation Center	25	Psychiatrist
2021/2/10	Osaki City	Dealing with students who have developmental disabilities	Furukawa Reimei High School	30	Psychiatrist
2021/2/18	Kesenuma City	Nursing mental health self-care	Kesenuma City Hospital School of Nursing	33	Psychiatric social worker

(4) Raising public awareness project

As shown in Table 7, in FY2020, we distributed clear files for public awareness to training participants and others, created self-care posters for children, and propagated them to public high schools and special-needs schools in the prefecture.

Table 7 Implementation list of raising public awareness projects

Implementation date	Host municipality	Content	Number of people receiving materials
2020/9/15	Sendai City	Children's mental health care community training: Lecture and distribution of clear files for raising public awareness to participants	35
2020/9/25	Sendai City	Distributing clear files on raising public awareness to participants of PsychoSlogical first aid for children [PFA for Children] one-day training (Sendai)	16
2020/10/5	Sendai City	Distributing clear files for raising public awareness to FY2020 Child / child-rearing supporter support conference attendees	25
2021/3/4	Sendai City	Distributing posters for raising public awareness (self-care) to public high schools and special-needs schools in Miyagi Prefecture	111

(5) Research project

The annual "Longitudinal support study for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families" is reported in the "Research Report" of this issue.

Table 8 shows the research presentations in FY2020.

Table 8 Implementation list of research projects

Implementation date	Activity content	Theme	Supervisor profession
2020/9/11	Disaster-related session of the 38th Meeting of the Japanese Society of Psychosomatic Pediatrics (held online)	Various effects of the spread of COVID-19 in Japan on children's physical and mental health	Psychiatrist
2020/9/21	19 th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting poster session (held online)	Longitudinal support study for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families (1): From the relationship between cognitive development, problematic behaviors, and family damage status in children in Miyagi Prefecture	Psychiatrist
2020/9/21	19 th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting poster session (held online)	Longitudinal support study for children born after the great East Japan earthquake and their families (2): Damage status of parents and progress of each cluster due to past traumatic experiences	Clinical psychologist
2020/9/21	19 th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting poster session (held online)	Mental health of mothers and community support practice	Psychiatrist

2. Summary

Comparing FY2020 with FY2019 shows that the number of consultations has increased, reaching its maximum value in the 5th year of the project contract. The number of actual people has not greatly increased; therefore, we assume that the number of children and parents requiring support over multiple sessions has increased, such as in difficult cases.

The professional dispatch project has increased since FY2019; however, it decreased from the 309 and 266 cases in FY2018 and FY2017, respectively. The research project decreased significantly compared to the previous year both regarding the number of times and number of participants due to COVID-19. Face-to-face implementation, as well as implementation with large groups, was difficult. Thus, methods that are easier than conventional ones are needed. The same applies for raising public awareness.

The Children's Mental Health Care Community Base Project, which was entrusted to us since FY2016, ended in FY2020. This project provided counseling for children who required mental health care and their parents, and provided consultations and training for supporters involved in the mental health care of children. To improve children's mental health care and mental health, the Kesennuma Regional Center, Ishinomaki Regional Center, and Stem Center have implemented the five projects mentioned in the Introduction, with the aim of providing "seamless support from children to adults." Below, we reflect upon each project.

First, for the "Consultation project," we responded to consultations from children, parents, and supporters using various methods such as walk-ins, home visits, and telephone calls. Each regional center had different motives and methods for responding. Flexible responses were provided according to the circumstances of each community, with differences in the number of cases also appearing. Going forward, we will continue to carefully respond to needs and collaborate with other organizations to investigate a system for accepting consultations after the closure of the Center.

For the "Professional dispatch project," dispatches of center staff-based supervisors and professionals were conducted based on requests from municipalities to discuss cases with managers and nursery teachers. During this process, there were some municipalities that recognized the usefulness of collaborating with external professionals and accordingly created their own budgets for this, and we hope that these trends will spread to other municipalities. For the "Research project," we provided center staff-led lectures on themes such as "Mental health care in children after earthquakes." We invited professional instructors to give training, such as "trauma-informed care training" and "PFA for children training" to professionals such as public health nurses, nursery teachers, and schoolteachers. Participants were also very interested, and it was a good opportunity to consider possible problems for children, preventing those problems, and the ideal way for providing support.

For the "Raising public awareness project," we distributed public awareness materials during training projects and salon activities; moreover, we distributed posters to elementary schools, public high schools, and special-needs schools. Additionally, from FY2012 to FY2019, we conducted the "Camp project for parents and children in disaster-affected areas" to disseminate correct knowledge about psychological education and disasters to parents and children in the disaster area.

For the "Research project," we have been conducting the "Children's Cohort Survey" since FY2016 with the aim of evaluating changes in children and families, as well as clarifying efficient support. This is expected to be valuable survey data; therefore, we will continue this project in the future. The Children's Mental Health Care Community Base Project concluded in FY2020; however, "seamless support from children to adults" will be continued from FY2021 onwards under the three projects of "resident support," "support for supporters," and "raising public awareness." We wish to strive for the required cooperation while continuing projects such as the "PFA for children training" and "Children's Cohort Survey," which will be required even from FY2021 onwards.