

Plan on Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy in Yokohama (Outline)

2016～2020

Contents

● 1	Introduction	P1
● 2	Child Poverty in Yokohama	P2
● 3	Perspectives for the Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy	P4
● 4	Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy Taken by Yokohama	P6
● 5	Measures for tackling child poverty	P8
● 6	Plan Execution	P17

What is Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy

In January 2014, Japan began to enforce the Law on Promoting Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy. In August that year, it formulated Program on Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy. Purpose of the program is to promote child poverty alleviation comprehensively, so that future children will not be inhibited by the environment where they are born and grow up. While creating an enabling environment, the program also helps poor children seek equal opportunities to receive education.

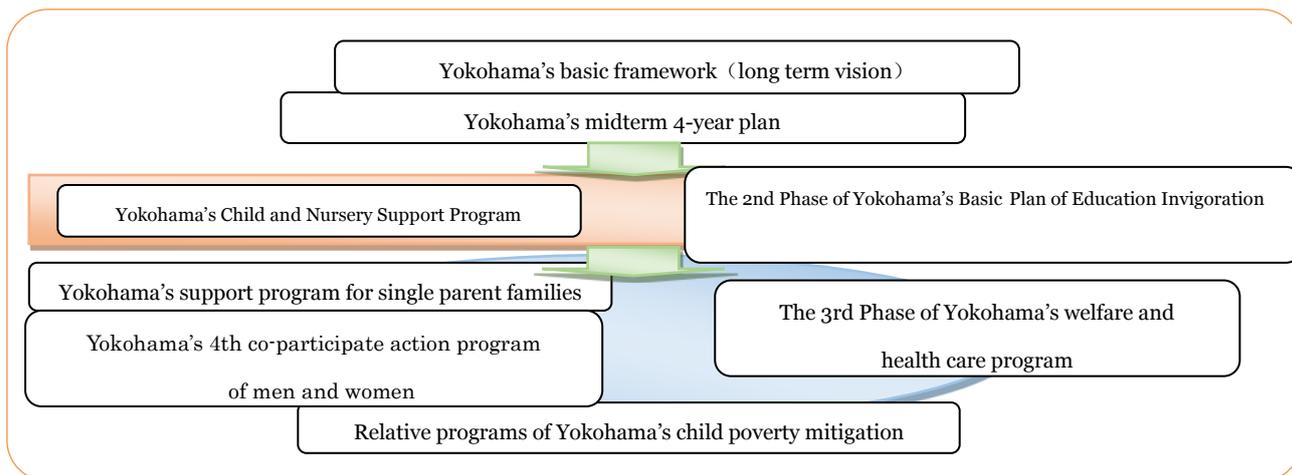
Based on the national program, the Yokohama City worked out the Plan on Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy in Yokohama, which integrates the basic goals and approaches, as well as measures to be taken from 2016 onwards.

1 The purpose of the program

- Children are the future of Yokohama, so this program aims to provide highly effective measures and establish a pragmatic mechanism to give more concern to Children during their nurture and growth, to prevent the growing environment gap resulted from family economic conditions or the chain reaction of poverty caused by fewer choices in schooling opportunities and employment.

2 The positioning of the program and its relation with other programs

- In accordance with the national guideline and based on the research background and general principle of “Yokohama’s Midterm 4-Year Plan 2014-2017”, “Yokohama’s Child and Nursery Support Program” and “The 2nd Phase of Yokohama’s Basic Plan of Education Invigoration”, this program has refreshed the measures conducive to mitigating child poverty and also proposed the ideas of primary goals and promoting measures and plans for next 5 years.



3 Duration of the Plan

- 5 years (2016~2020)

4 Target objects

- **【Age group】** Support is provided from pre-birth to colleague graduation. Basically it means children, juveniles under 25-year-old and their families
- **【Criteria】** ①children, juveniles and families living in poverty
②children, juveniles and families that will easily land in predicament caused by guardian’s diseases, disability or single parent condition

1 Methods of investigating child poverty condition in Yokohama

- In order to investigate the real condition of child poverty, Yokohama has conducted a citizen questionnaire survey (hereinafter referred to as citizen investigation) among 6,000 households who have children or juveniles aged between 0 to 24 years old, a questionnaire (hereinafter referred to as subject investigation) for households living on relief and child support allowance, and a hearing (hereinafter referred to as supporter hearing) among supporters that are from 17 relevant organizations or groups involved in supporting child and families with problems in daily life.

2 Child poverty condition in Yokohama

Children from families living below poverty line

- Child poverty ratio is referred to as the percentage of children from families whose disposable income per capita is lower than half of the country's average (poverty line).
- Statistics from the citizen investigation show that 7.7% of the children in Yokohama, or around 44 thousand of them, live under national poverty line (2013 Domestic Life Investigation). It is also estimated that half of the single parent families in the city live under national poverty line. It is fair to say that the poverty condition in Yokohama is serious, especially in single parent families.
- As for how they see their living condition, in the citizen investigation, 5.8% respondents think it is quite tough, 17.5 % single families and 20.9% families living under poverty line give the same answer. In subject investigation, 27.4% respondents also think it is quite tough.
- Over the past year, families that once could not afford to buy necessary food account for 4.6% in citizen investigation, 16.6 % in single parent families and 19.0% in families living under poverty line.
- Over the past year, families that once could not afford to buy necessary stationery and textbook account for 4.7% in citizen investigation, 19.2 % in single parent families and 21.6% in families living under poverty line.

Children and families with financial constraints, especially those falling into poverty easily

- According to child poverty alleviation strategy in national guideline, children living on social security and children from single parent families or families living on relief are deemed as the “child who need support badly” who “should be supported first”.
- **Children need to be fostered by society:** by the end of 2014, 880 children who have no guardians or cannot be raised by their own families because of maltreatment or other reasons have been fostered by society, which accounted for 0.15% of children under 18 years old. Yokohama sees an increase in child maltreatment cases and there were over 1000 cases in 2014. Among the cases, 20% were fostered by society.
- **Children from families receiving living allowance:** in Yokohama, the number of children under the age of 18 from families living on allowance are increasing and that number stood at 10 thousand by July, 2014, which accounted for 2% of total number of children under 18. Single-mother families with living allowance has increased 3.7 times in the past 20 years, and reached 4000 in 2014.
- **Children from single parent families:** in 2013, 31 thousand children in Yokohama were living on child support allowance, which represented about 5% of children under 18.

Child, family and child poverty

- ◆ The following problems have been recognized in the hearing and questionnaire.
 - ◆ It is common that some guardians who have suffered maltreatment or violence from their parents or spouses cannot seek help from their relatives. Among these people, some guardians “have been isolated from the society” by severing their relations with others including supporters, thus leaving children out of support.
 - ◆ The Children’s Counseling Center points out that a large percent of families involving child abuse are facing financial constraints. We provide help to not only children suffering from physical abuse, but also to those being neglected by their family in ways like inappropriate diet, irregular schooling and being left at home alone.
 - ◆ According to the citizen investigation, in terms of the schooling condition of children aged from 6 to 17, 9.7% respondents, 24.2 single families and 26.4% families living under poverty line think the condition is “quite backward” or “a bit backward”.
 - ◆ According to the citizen investigation, 3.8% children and juveniles, 9.6 from single families and 10.8% from families living under poverty line “have played truant” or “are playing truant”.
 - ◆ 20.7% respondents, 56.5% single families and 49.6% families living under poverty line believe that they “have” or “have not yet, but may in the future” let their children give up moving on to a higher level of education or drop out from school.
- ◆ After analyzing children and their families’ various difficulties underlying child poverty, we recognized the phenomenon of “inter-generation chain”, that is the difficulties that guardians are facing will affect children’s nurturing and these difficulties will be passed on to children. To solve children’s problems, in addition to tackling economic straits, it is also imperative to cut off the inter-generation chain.

Problems co-existing with child poverty

Guardians

- Growing and dv experience
- Disability and health problem
- Social isolation
- Education experience
- No fixed job or unemployment

Children and juvenile

- Child abuse including neglecting and disordered life
- Disability and health problem
- “Loneliness”
- Under-achiever and learning retardant
- Playing hooky
- Education and drop-out
- No fixed job, unemployment and housebound

Child support for poor families

- When asked about their difficulties in child rearing, 60% guardians with financial problems say “they are worried about education fee ” and over 50% “are worried about child’s attending higher school and exams”.
- In subject investigation, when asked about what is probably the best support for children, over 60% say “living and educational allowance” and over 30% say “houses with low rent (dorm or homestay)” and they would like to seek financial support.

- From research on various difficulties that child, juvenile and households face, Yokohama summarizes the following perspectives

1 Concern for children, juveniles and households without access to support

(1) identification, connection and support

- Some believe that families isolated from society and having no access to support are confronted with severe conditions. It is necessary to re-estimate the conditions of those families from all aspects and provide them with targeted supports.

(2) institutional construction of support providers

- Supporters should listen to children and their guardians, get to know their difficulties, approach them and show concern to them, and then provide targeted support to them.

2 Building physical and mental health, self-assurance and sense of trust in infant and early childhood period

- While helping maintain physical and mental health, emotional stability and develop a stable living style, people should also assist to develop children's self-assurance and sense of trust to promote their growth.
- Through closed communication with their nurturer, especially their guardians, infants and young children can develop a sense of attachment and build a stable emotion and self-assurance. This is crucial for children to develop life routines, lay a good foundation for schooling and forge perseverance to face difficulties in life.

3 Forging children's learning ability and the coordination between education and welfare

(1) building their learning ability in primary and secondary schools

- In primary and secondary education, school should work together with relevant parties to enhance support to children's study to ensure the best of their learning ability.

(2) supporting children and students with the synergy of education and welfare

- Schools alone cannot address problems like children and family poverty, employment, disease and disability of guardians. Therefore, the involvement of particular welfare and health care service is necessary. Schools, governments and children's consulting centers should enhance cooperation to provide continuous support.

(3) learning support for children about to entering senior high schools

- Currently, Yokohama has established a "personal learning support program" in all districts to support children from families living on relief. However, some still have no access to this support. Its coverage and support sites should be further expanded. In addition, as for the support to 3rd-year student in junior high school, some suggest that support be provided at earlier stage to improve learning results.

(4) enhancement of learning support and support network to students in senior high schools

- At present, Yokohama has taken steps to support high school students' further study or employment, but collaboration with relevant organizations should be enhanced to develop their self-support ability. When cooperating with schools, relevant organizations should be committed to: providing necessary information and consulting service to help students' further study, building support system for children dropping out of high school and providing opportunities and relevant support to help them go back to school such as letting them take the graduate level certificate tests.

4 Communication with various adults

- In child support activities, the children need to communicate regularly with model adults around them to learn about their future employment, details of self-reliance and necessary ways to achieve their goals. These points are particularly important in learning support programs.

5 Support to children and guardians from single parent families

- Whether single parent families are poor or not at this moment, we should provide them all-round support including psychological support, help them with their employment so that they can raise their children while working, and build a nurturing environment easily available for them.

6 Solutions for children fostered by society

(1) self-reliance support after they depart from the welfare institutions

- It is necessary to further guarantee that they have access to a stable living place after they leave the welfare institutions, employment consultation, support centers and shelter for them when they have to give up their job.

(2) reinforcing the support for further studies

- In order to avoid the scenario where socially fostered child has to give up their future plans including going to college, we need to strengthen the awareness of financial support and support from society at large.

7 Support to juveniles in difficulties

- While promoting the activities including professional consulting and job training provided by juvenile self-supporting agencies, we should also give more concern to juveniles and build an enabling environment for them to join social activities.
- We need to engage more people in social support program so that more juveniles who have so far no access to social support can enjoy it.

8 Solutions to child poverty starting from gestation period and childbirth

- Maternal and child care in gestation period and childbirth stage plays an vital role in eliminating children's uneasiness, preventing child abuse, identifying child poverty and providing support to these children early.

9 Continuous support and personal information sharing

- For the purpose of providing sustaining support, we will work together with the existing organizations such as welfare institutions, Children's Commissioner, chairman of Children's Committee and "Regional Consultative Association of Children Protection Measures". Meanwhile, we will discuss essential ways of sharing personal information to enhance cooperation among different organizations.

1

Yokohama's basic goals, approaches and plans to address child poverty

- 1 Based on our commitment to solving child poverty, Yokohama has formulated the following basic goals, execution approaches, and plans for addressing child poverty in the 5 years plan term.

4 Child Poverty Alleviation Strategy in Yokohama

Basic goals

Giving full play the strengths and potentials of children and youth, who represent the future of Yokohama; enabling them to create an affluent and happy life; building a city that cares about its citizens; creating an environment where children and youth can enjoy basic nursing and education, regardless of their economic conditions, to growth up healthily and achieve self-reliance.

Basic approaches

Children are the future of Yokohama. To support their growth and avoid gaps in rearing environment caused by family financial background, or the prolongation of poverty due to less schooling or job opportunities, as an autonomous body that is directly connected with children, youth and their families, we take effective measures and build a practical system, based on the division of labor between the state and the county.

An environment that ensures “rearing and growth” and “educational opportunities”

Mechanisms that are “practical” and offer “continuous support”

Perspectives for personnel training based on the social conditions of the district

Structure of the plan

Foundation of the Strategy

Education and rearing programs that ensures a sufficient environment for children

Major measures



2 Tracking Progress

- Setting respective targeted values for different groups, such as children in the growth stage, teenagers with difficulty, and single-parent families as an approach to learn about the progress of the agenda.
- Tracking progress of the programs based on whether the overall approach has improved the situation of child poverty and whether it has maintained the self-reliance of children and teenagers.

Groups	Items	Most recent value	Targeted values (by 2020)
Gestation period	Ratio of interviewing registered pregnant women	92.3% (2014)	over 95.0%(※1)
Preschool stage	Number of children waiting to enter nurseries	8 people (April, 2015)	0 (※1)
Preschool and primary school	Ratio of connecting the child-care program, the teaching program of preschool period and the teaching program of primary schools.	53.4% (2014)	over 65%(※1)
Primary and middle school students	The percentage of children that says "I have my advantages"	Primary school:74.2% Middle school: 64.2% (2014)	Primary school: over 75.0%(※2) Middle School: over 65.0%(※2)
Middle School Students	The percentage of students that have dreams and future plans	69.8% (2014)	over 75.0%(※2)
	Number of children participating in daily learning support activities for high school	488 people (2014)	1,200 people
High School Students	Ratio of students that continue to study※3	93.1% (2014)	over 95.0%
	Ratio of students that have decided their future plans (further study/ work)※4	97.9% (2014)	over 99.0%
Teenagers with difficulties	Population with improved performance of self-reliance through the continuous support from teenager self-reliance support institutions.	1,082people (2014)	over 1,500 people(※1)
Guardians	Employed population among the groups relying on self-reliance support institutions like single-parent institutions.	303 people (2014)	over 1,900 people(※1) (accumulated figure of 7 years since 2014)

※1 Targeted value of supporting plans for children and children rearing in Yokohama (2019).

※2 The targeted value of the 2nd Fundamental Plan of Education Vitalization in Yokohama (2018)

※3 The ratio of students continuing to study equals to the population of graduates divides the population of enrollees.

※4 The ratio of students that have decided their future plans equals to the population with plans divides the population of graduates.

1 Promoting the education and rearing programs

- Education and development in pre-school stage will lay a foundation for the behavior and lifestyle in grown-up stage. We focus on every child's development from the very beginning of preschool stage so as to guarantee their continuous and consistent education and rearing of growth and study.
- Yokohama Education aims at enabling children to master “knowledge” (solid learning ability), “morality” (affluence in heart), “health” (physical health), “public sense” (civism and sense of social participation) and “openness” (an open mind to contribute to the international community).

Major measures	Introduction
Protecting education and rearing in infant stage	From the perspective of protecting individual rights, when children attend certified organizations like kindergartens, nurseries, small child-care centers, home-visit child-care institutions, the “New Children and Children-rearing Support System” will provide common caring aids for children that receive preschool education or need infant caring. With regard to the cost of using the above organizations, we have committed ourselves to reducing the financial burden for tax-free low-income families and families living on subsistence allowance.
Providing entrance subsidy for private kindergarten	For children receiving education in kindergartens with support from private schools, subsidies will be granted to them to reduce the entry fee and rearing fee based on their family income so as to ease the financial burden for low-income families such as those living on subsistence allowance and those tax-free families.
Cooperating and connecting infant stage, preschool stage and primary school stage	To achieve long-term development of children, it is very important to keep the “continuity and consistency” of their growth and learning. So our city has put forward a course agenda connecting the education in nurseries and in kindergartens so as to continuously support children's development.
Focusing on developing individual's basic self-learning ability	Schools have formulated “Action Plans on Improving Learning Capability”, focusing on improving teaching approaches based on the levels of learning abilities, and meanwhile, focusing on the measures and system of guidance for each child so as to enhance their basic learning abilities.
Enhancing children's social capability	Develop the qualities and abilities that children need to be self-reliable, to establish good relationship with others and to proactively participate in collective activities.
Emphasizing the senses of self-efficacy and self-affirmation in school and in class	Schools have adopted programs for all children, such as “the Yokohama Program of Children's Social Abilities”, focusing on creating a teaching style of involving everyone, and establishing a group with mutual recognition and a friendly environment.
Cooperating with the local on helping after-school study	To develop the learning habits and the basic learning ability of middle school students who need support in learning, “Program of After-school Learning Places” are expected to be launched in 76 schools cooperating with the local by 2020.
Promoting vocational education based on development stages	To enable children to understand the significance of work, and remain hopeful and purposeful, primary schools and middles schools have worked together on vocational education.

Measures on supporting the attendance of school	To prevent truancy, schools are working on creating classes and schools that can nurture children's senses of self-efficacy and self-affirmation. To help those who have skipped school be independent and continue to learn, Yokohama education support center has provided support for these students and their guardians through plenty of sincere friend visits, sincere spaces and sincere room activities.
Promoting diet education in school (diet habits)	Through diet education in school, we aim at developing children's independent eating habits, cultivating the foundation for their life-long physical and mental health and rich personality.
Enhancing the understanding on poverty issue	Targeting on the living conditions of poor children, the influences of poverty on children's health, learning abilities and future, and the measures schools have taken to solve this issue and seek understanding from teaching staff under different circumstances.

2 Five major measures

Measure 1 Discovery, connection and care

Guiding principles

- Identifying problems in the daily interactions between children (from gestation to late teens) and their families, and nurseries, kindergartens, schools, local communities and local governments, and make support measures more accessible by developing the network of relevant organizations.
- In local communities, create a warm and friendly environment through approaching and caring for children, teenagers and families in trouble

Major measures	Introduction
<p>1 Caring measures for mothers and children, and regional children-rearing supporting measures.</p>	<p>【Consulting for gestation period and children-rearing period】 Promoting mother and children health measures, such as gestation registration, sending health manual, antenatal care, parents lessons, follow-up visit for pregnant and lying-in women, follow-up guidance for new-born and infants, health examination for infants. Meanwhile, we will cooperate with relevant medical organizations like obstetrics department, pediatric department and children-rearing organizations and relevant staff to provide consulting for people in need. Moreover, we have set up “Gestation SOS Yokohama”(★) to provide consulting services for those accidentally got pregnant from early pregnancy.</p> <p>【Staff in local children-rearing support stations to provide support】 In each local children-rearing support station, specialized “Yokohama children-rearing friends” will provide information, consulting service, assistance, suggestions to meet individual demand, ensure that diversified education, children-rearing facilities and local children support could be well utilized.</p>
<p>2 Cooperation between schools and district governments</p>	<p>【Consistency of district governments’ windows for preschool stage】 Involve the windows for school-age children (left-behind children included) into the children and family support courses of district governments, and offer continuous support from infant stage to school age.</p> <p>【Setting school social workers, psychiatrists and children experts in school (★) and full-time teachers for student guidance】 To prevent and solve the problems of school bullying and school skipping, we will deploy children experts in all primary schools, and deploy full-time children experts, psychiatrists, and school social workers in all middle schools, thus enriching the children and students support system.</p> <p>【Providing support for further study in high school and future planning (further study / work)】 Deploy psychiatrists in all municipal high schools to provide consulting services. Connect the guidance on students with the one from teaching staff to support students’ further study and self-reliance through deploying more “further study instructors” and having industrial advisors provide consultancy for employment.</p>
<p>3 Promotion of comprehensive solutions to the prevention of child abuse</p>	<p>【Cooperating with local community to carry out promotion campaigns on preventing child abuse】 Implement solutions to child abuse issue in a comprehensive manner: strengthen the cooperation with children consultancies, schools and police offices through promotion campaigns on the prevention of children abuse; adjust and enhance the relevant system, develop specialized personnel in this regard, enhance organized response and supporting measures, and establish local networks of preventing child abuse.</p>

【Strengthen the consultancy and support system of children advisory service】 We are planning to develop a batch of highly-professional staff that are able to properly cope with complicated and severe child abuse issues, so as to handle the increasing consultancy and notices. In accordance with the *Guidelines on Strengthening the Cooperation on Coping with the Child Abuse Issue in Yokohama*, we are going to rely on the government (welfare and health center) for early detection of abuse issue and the prevention of re-happening. Meanwhile, we will deploy police officers in children consultancy stations to enhance the cooperation and advisory system.

【Strengthen the regulations of kindergartens】 While achieving the cooperation between organizations like children advisory stations and district governments, we will enroll the children of the parties involved in kindergartens for regulations so as to prevent the abuse from getting worse. We will also allocate child-care workers if the children need special care, thus establishing a flexible children resettlement system.

4 Supporting the self-reliance of people living in difficulty

【Enhance the internal cooperation between government authorities and competent departments】 To provide consulting services on self-reliance to impoverished population, We will allocate advisors on self-reliance in all districts, strengthen the cooperation between government departments and competent departments that provide comprehensive consultancy and support.

【Establish a network that connects local consultancy organizations to promote outreach self-reliance consultancy】 Strengthen the connection of the network that led by schools and kindergartens and involves community caring centers, the livelihood committee and other organizations that have daily interaction with children, teenagers and families, and enhance its outreach functions so as to provide proper support for people living in difficulty, including children as early as possible.

※★refers to career and measures solely owned by our city.

Guiding principles

- Provide high-quality infant education and rearing for children in difficulty, support the children rearing for children and families, thus make children feel self-useful and self-affirmed, and grow up in a healthy way.
- We will enrich the after-school gathering places for preschool children and the local gathering choices for teenagers so as to support their development.
- Strengthen the special support on living and learning for single-parent families, protecting the development and growth of children living in difficulty, and help them develop basic habits, so as to lay a foundation for future study.

Major measures	Introduction
<p>1 Guarantee for children’s development and growth</p>	<p>【Guarantee for infant-stage education and rearing (extension)】 According to the <i>New System on Supporting Children and Children Rearing</i>, being cared is an individual right that needs to be guaranteed for the children that need education and caring from kindergarten. From this perspective, when they use certified kindergartens, nurseries, small child-care centers and home-visit caring organizations, we can provide common support for those organizations. Moreover, we are going to reduce relevant fees from attending these organizations for families that receiving living security and for no-tax low-income families.</p> <p>【Subsidies for entering private kindergartens(extension)】 For children studying in kindergartens that receive subsidies from private schools, we will provide subsidies in terms of entry fee and caring expense based on their income levels, so as to ease their financial burden.</p> <p>【Cooperation and connection of infant stage, preschool stage and primary school stage(extension)】 To ensure children’s healthy development, it is very important to keep the “continuity and consistency” in the process of growth and learning. Therefore, we have formulated course agenda that connecting the education in nursery and kindergarten so as to keep supporting their development.</p> <p>【Gathering places for children after pre-school stage】 Guide children towards proactive lifestyle and recreation based on the growth stage of children in After-school Kids Club, so as to realize the cooperation between the school, family and local community, provide various kinds of exchange and experiences. Use “Local Activity Center for Teenagers (★)” to enable teenagers, mainly middle school and high school students, to gather and communicate with peers or people in different ages and experience social participation plans in a relaxed way. We are using these centers and places in civil building in a flexible way. From now on, we will work with schools, district governments, families, gathering places nearby, and relevant organizations to enhance the communication among teenagers, make full use of local resources, and focus on early detection of teenagers’ difficulties and dangers so as to provide support for them.</p>
<p>2 Support for children in difficulty from single-parent families</p>	<p>【Support on life and study for children in single-parent families】 We will launch evening life support demonstration program (including supper) for children from single-parent families, helping these children, who are mostly alone at home, to develop basic living habits and thus grow up healthily. We will also verify this demonstration program, and work on future supporting policies for these children.</p> <p>【Daily living support program】 We will enrich the daily living support program to provide support on living techniques and learning abilities, helping primary school and middle school students from difficult families to live a comfortable life, develop basic habits, explore future potentials, and master independent living abilities.</p> <p>【Daily support program for families like single-parent families】 For single-parent families and widowed families that have difficulty in housekeeping and children rearing, we will send family life support staff to help with their daily life. Moreover, for families with pre-school children and working-late guardians, we will regularly send support staff to assist the children’s life and rearing.</p>

【Supporting program on the certification examination of high school graduation】 We will pay partially for the lecture fee in order to create a better environment for children's employment and job hunting, and promote the stability of the work market. For example, participating in the supporting lecture on the certification examination of high school graduation.

【Medical subsidies for families like single-parent families】 For single-parent families that have joined the healthcare insurance program, if the person involved get treatment in medical institutions, we will bear part of the medical expenses based on the insurance program.

【Entry subsidy and award system for children that enter higher private schools】 For children hard to enter municipal primary schools or middle schools due to financial difficulty, we will take the form of entry subsidy to provide their guardians with expenses on stationeries, school excursions, food, etc. We will help these students to finish the application procedures. Subsidies will also be provided in these aspects as the entry award for financially-difficult children who live in the city but go to public schools out of the city, or for children studying in private primary schools, middle schools and pre-high schools, and for non-Japanese children that go to foreign schools (primary stage and middle stage) in the city.

※Programs with★ are the measures and programs specific to Yokohama

Measure 3 Preventing poverty from passing on to the next generation

Guiding principles

- In addition to school education, we will help improve the children's learning ability through learning support, so that the children can be self-sufficient socially and economically in the future. The city will enhance the assistance for poor junior middle school students
- The city will help children move on with their education and become what they want to be through consultation and financial assistance provided by schools, district governments and civil society.

Major Measures	Introduction
1 Learning support	<p>【Individualized learning support program】 For children from families receiving subsistence allowance, the city enhances the learning assistance to help increase their interest in and ability of learning, with the goal of high school enrollment, so that they can support themselves afterwards, thus preventing poverty from prolonging to the next generation.</p> <p>【Life and learning support to children in single-parent families】 To help children raised by a single parent, the city carried out a model program to provide life assistance in the evening, including providing supper. This program aims at helping these children who are usually alone at home develop a healthy lifestyle. We will also examine the outcome of this program to help formulate future assistance methods.</p>
2 Support for further and continuous education	<p>【Self-reliance support program (education aid workers)】 A specialized post is set up under the district aid unit to help junior middle school students and their guardians to provide information on the educational system and security system to motivate them to go to high schools. This program also teaches them to seek help from various consultation agencies and provide continuous support for those enrolled in high schools.</p> <p>【High School Scholarships】 Providing scholarships or textbooks to high students who have difficulty continuing their education for financial reasons</p>

Measures taken by relevant districts and companies

~Children's canteens~

In a public hearing, we discovered problems on children's diet: undernourishment due to poverty, bread or snacks for dinner, eating alone while parents are at work, etc.

In a survey conducted in this city, 50% of respondents in single-parent families chose "often" or "sometimes" in a question on children eating alone.

In recent years, "children's canteens" catches people's attention, as it provides an additional shelter to children and mobilizes the power of the whole district to care for children and support their nurturing. A children's canteen is a place where children can come alone and enjoy warm hand-made food for free or at a low cost. In addition to providing a nutritious and balanced diet, these canteens also create a better eating environment for children where they can cook with adults and have meals with other people. Moreover, the canteens improve communication between children and the local people by providing a place for close conversations and learning support.

"Children's canteens" run by NPOs, civil groups and volunteers are now being promoted nationwide. In 2015, the national organization "Children's Canteen Network" was founded, to facilitate communication between canteen operators in the form of civil society activities.

In addition to security programs run by the state and autonomous organs, district and social efforts represented by "children's canteens" also provide a variety of assistances to children in need. The future potential of popularization is worth anticipating.

Aid workers

To ensure children and students from families receiving subsistence allowances can go to their dream schools and master the knowledge they need in the future to be socially and financially independent, we work with social workers provide educational consultation and learning support focusing on senior high school enrollment.

This program aims at helping third-Grade students by sharing with them and their guardians the long-term benefits of high school education, explaining the entrance system and providing learning support. These are achieved through face-to-face talks and home visits. To help truants get back to school, apart from home visits, aid workers also cooperate with schools and consultancies.

In addition, assistance are continue to be offered after the students get into high school, to ensure the students finish their studies.

Measure 4 Building the Capacity of Young People in Need

Guiding principles

- Connecting young people with supporting institutions, by promoting district care and supporting participation in social activities.
- Promoting the self-reliance in young people by beefing up the aid system of professional institutions and providing stage-specific support that starts from early consultation.
- Professional institutions working with districts to help young people in need build up their skills so that they can support themselves independently in the future

Major measures	Introduction
<p>1 Consultation and employment support system for youth in need</p>	<p>【Youth consulting centers】 Providing comprehensive consultation to young people and their guardians and continuous support for participation in social activities; also providing training for youth support personnel and groups</p> <p>【District Youth Plaza (★)】 Working with consultation centers and support stations to provide a place to go for young people who are reluctant to leave home; helping young people achieve self-reliance through social and employment experience programs</p> <p>【Youth Support Station】 Youth Support Stations provide individual consultations to young people having difficulty in employment and to their guardians, organize employment training sessions and offer short-term employment experience programs. In addition, the Stations also work with high schools and onsite consultation to nurture career consciousness and formulate career development plans.</p> <p>【Youth Independence Tutoring Centers】 At Youth Independence Tutoring Centers, young people who have difficulty leaving home and going to school can recover their physical strength through exercises, reestablish life routines and learn to get along with others by living in a group environment in training camps, so that they can achieve social and financial independence.</p>
<p>2 Building an enabling environment for youth in need to achieve self-reliance</p>	<p>【Settlement of children leaving welfare institutions】 Providing information, consultation and support to children after they leave welfare institutions to help them get used to their new life. For some people who are unable to support themselves immediately after they leave, the program strengthens accommodation assistance and helps them live independently.</p> <p>【Follow-up surveys】 Carrying out follow-up surveys on welfare institution graduates who are at a high risk of social isolation and poverty. The survey informs about the living and employment conditions of graduates, the problems they face, as well as feedback from themselves and their employers. It helps reevaluate the outcome of assistance measures and programs carried out by this city since 2012 and will be used to formulating more effective ones in the future.</p> <p>【Training and Dispatching of Supporting Partners (District Youth Plaza) (★)】 Developing supporting partners from ordinary citizens, groups and companies who can understand the young people in need and coordinate activities; dispatching personnel to programs, especially District Youth Plazas.</p> <p>※ Supporting partners trained in a “district support model program” in 2015</p>

※Programs with ★ refers to programs and measures specific to Yokohama

Cooperation between high schools and supporting institutions

High schools work with various institutions and groups, including Youth Support Stations, to formulate customized measures to help student achieve self-reliance.

The City of Yokohama runs and supports the Youth Support Stations. The city, high schools and Youth Support Stations work together to provide assistance, including onsite consultations, to students having financial difficulty and difficulty in life and employment (In 2015 it worked with 16 county or city high schools).

☆ Examples of the programs carried out by youth support institutions and groups

- Regular onsite support and individual face-to-face talks by Youth Support Stations
- Shelter provided by NPO-run libraries
- Learning support provided by volunteers, including colleague students or teachers

Measure 5 Laying foundations

Guiding principles

- Ensuring life security through financial aid, including cash subsidies
- Helping their guardians obtain employment certificates or find jobs so that they can support themselves

Major measures	Introduction
1 cash subsidies to ensure basic living	<p>【Life security】 Providing living, educational, accommodation, medical, nursing, childbirth, employment, funeral and worship subsidies to poor people in accordance with their level of poverty by the national standard, to ensure subsistence</p> <p>【Parental subsidies】 Providing subsidies to single-parent families to ensure their living, promote self-reliance and improve children's wellbeing. Due to the national system reform, starting from August 2016, the subsidy standard for additional childbirths was raised to increase the financial aid for single parent families.</p>
2 Employment support for guardians	<p>【Employment assistance for allowance receivers】 A specialized post is set up under the district aid unit to help allowance receivers support themselves by providing job information or assistance on using "hello work" platform. For those who cannot find a job immediately, aid workers help improve their willingness to work through life and social training and career experience, etc. Hello work windows (job spots) were set up within government buildings for allowance receivers, to integrate the efforts between districts and the "Hello Work" platform.</p> <p>【Employment assistance for poor people】 A specialized post is set up under the district aid unit to provide consultation to poor families who are unable to enjoy subsidies. Aid workers help make employment assistance plans, provide life and social training, and teach them to make full use of "Job Spot".</p> <p>【Subsidies for single parent families(subsidies for vocational and professional training)】 Providing subsidies to single parents to cover the cost of training sessions and pay for babysitters while they are away. This can ease their burdens, make it easier for them to obtain job qualifications and provide a good foundation for them to find a job or switch to another one. Expanding the percentage, ceiling and duration of subsidies, to strengthen the employment assistance single parent families.</p> <p>【Employment and Independence Assistance Centers (Single Parent Assistance Yokohama)】 As a comprehensive aid organization for single parents, the centers work with relevant institutions to provide information or organize experience sharing activities, employment consultation, lectures or legal consultation. They also provide family planning training, life consultation and learning support to help single parents achieve self-reliance.</p> <p>【Assistance Programs for Obtaining High School Graduation Certificate (after leaving school)】 To help single parents and their children receive education, so that they can be better paid in the labor market and enjoy stable jobs, we will cover part of the cost for training courses on passing high school graduation certificate exams.</p>
3 Support for families with children	<p>【Child subsidies】 We provide allowances for parents to support the life and healthy growth of children.</p> <p>【Medical subsidies for children】The state government provides financial aid to families with children, so that the proportion of out-of-pocket payment in the medical expenditure of pre-school children was reduced from 30% to 20%. To create a sound environment for children's growth and reduce the family burden, the Yokohama City provides medical subsidies to families with school-age children.</p>

Independence aid system for poor people

The social security system (such as unemployment insurance) and life security system form the basic safety net in Japan, to prevent its citizens from falling into poverty in the event of unemployment or illnesses. However, with the increase of informal employment and changes in family and social structure, more and more people are unable to live on the traditional safety net.

Because of this, the independence aid system for poor people was established in April 2015. This system helps them find jobs or reallocate family budget, so as to lift them out of poverty or maintain their living standard, before they are covered by the security system.

The aid units in all district governments in Yokohama have a information window about life security system and independence aid system for poor people. Workers there provide information and support based on the specific conditions of the people seeking help.

1 Program Execution

Cooperation and execution mechanisms

- The support for children and their families involves many aspects. Although some programs are carried out with the concerted efforts of different agencies, the understanding of each agency's own responsibility and mutual understanding, as well as the information sharing system still need to be improved.
- The aid regarding children and child-rearing calls for long-term vision. We need to consider the entire growth process as well as the specific stage and individual characteristics to provide inclusive and continuous support.
- Because of this, individual aid providers should integrate their efforts to strengthen the foundation, improve the mechanisms and create a multi-level support system.
- In plan execution, to carry out specific assistance measures, with local governments as the major aid provider, supported by the civil society, it is important for the citizens to raise their awareness on child poverty and do what they can to contribute to this cause.
- For instance, the local government carries out new aid measures, including providing food to children and learning support to local high school students. New aid provider such as organizations and private companies work with government bodies and county- or city - run high schools. It is also necessary to provide extended services, such as self-assistance at local level or collecting information about the situation of other cities.
- Coordination meetings can be arranged between the Child and Youth Bureau, Welfare Bureau and Education Bureau, as well as between Aid providers and people who cares, to ensure the smooth operation of PDCA Cycle, strengthen the cooperation between relevant people and provide comprehensive solutions.

Personnel Training

- Alleviation of child poverty calls for the concerted efforts of education and nursing institutions, local communities, specialized agencies and executive bodies that fulfill their respective roles. This include care for children and young people in need as well as their families, provide consultation, and help put them in touch with care providers.
- Although measures have been taken to train the education and nursing staff, employee at specialized agencies and community members. While improving their sensitivity towards poor children and improve their aid skills, it is also important for them to learn to take the perspective of children, young people and their families.
- Therefore, while carrying out the programs, we also continue to study how to summarize the understanding of the status quo and the responsibility of relevant agencies, including good practices and local resources, so that they can be incorporated in documents or training activities.
- In addition, local governments are considering establishing the websites to improve mechanisms and ensure measures to expand the human resources can be carried out smoothly.

Data Collection and Surveys

- When formulating the plan, the Yokohama City reviewed local data on child poverty and carried out surveys on the local people and on aid receivers through questionnaires and interviews.
- When carrying out the plan, the city will continue to collect necessary data to understand the local situation and the outcome of aid measures

**Plan on Child Poverty Alleviation
Strategy in Yokohama**

March 2016

Plan Adjustment Unit, Children and Youth Bureau,
Yokohama City

Add: 1-1 Minato-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama 231-0017

Tel: 045-671-4281

FAX: 045-663-8061

Email: kd-kikaku@city.yokohama.jp