



Naka Ward promotes the Naka Ward Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Action Plan to help non-Japanese residents build ties in the local community. This newsletter is published by Naka Ward in English and Chinese to provide foreign nationals with useful information on topics such as municipal administration, social programs and rules for everyday living.

Naka Ward Town News

English Chinese



Spending time with your child

Easy and fun

## Local Community to Help Raise Your Child

There are many new things parents experience when it comes to raising children. We went to Local Child-rearing Support Center のんびりんこ (Nonbirinko, see below for more information) and discussed about what parents normally do, where to ask questions and get advice, and some useful tips, etc.



**Discussion Participants (child's age; years in Japan)**

- Kartik Kumaramangalam (4-month-old; 1 year)
- Towana De Jesus (2-year-old; 1 year)
- Anamitra Banerjee (20-month-old; 4 years)
- Ashley Zhang (2-year-old, 9-year-old; 2 years)
- Fujii from のんびりんこ (Nonbirinko) (Yokohama Kosodate Partner)



◀ From the left: Kartik-san, Towana-san, Anamitra-san, Zhang-san ▶



### ● Where do you usually take your child? What kind of places do you think would be good?

**Anamitra:** My child likes to walk, so we often walk around Yamate. We play at home during hot weather, but it can be boring when it's just the two of us, so I'd like to go somewhere where my child can play with other children.

**Kartik:** Since my child is still very young, we go out together. I'd like to take my child someplace where similar-aged children are, since it's easier for them to play.

**Towana:** I go to indoor playgrounds and other places around the station, parks, and local festivals.

**Zhang:** I often go to Nonbirinko.

**Fujii:** Nonbirinko is indoors, so it is cool in the summer and warm in the winter, and there are other children to play with. Nonbirinko welcomes pregnant women and children from age 0 to age 6 (pre-schoolers), with many users between the ages of 0 and 2. There are also events for children of the same age. Some parents will arrange on the spot to meet again so their children can play, so why not attend an event and see for yourself.

### ● Whom do you talk with when you are having issues with raising your child? What concerns do you have?

**Towana:** My colleagues and people on social media group for parenting.

**Anamitra:** In addition to my parents, I talk to the Japanese class teacher at Naka International Lounge.

**Zhang:** I talk to my friends, but there are often things that I need more specific information about.

**Anamitra:** When it's just the two of us, I consider how other children of the same age communicate with their parents.

**Fujii:** Spending time with other children and other parents is excellent stimulation for a child.

**Kartik:** I believe it's important for foreign parents to speak their native language to their children. I grew up in England, where it is normal to be around people of different nationalities, but it's different here. I worry my child will feel lonely or feel they are different from others.

**Zhang:** Such worries come from not only being a foreigner, but also because each person has a different personality.

You're welcome to visit anytime! English-speaking staff are also available.

▼ Nonbirinko staff (Fujii-san is on the front right.)



**のんびりんこ (Nonbirinko), Naka Ward Local Child-rearing Support Center**

**Address:** belle 横浜 (Yokohama) 3F, 1-12-1 Sumiyoshi-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama (See map on P4)

**Open:** 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

**Closed:** Sundays, Mondays, New Year holidays

**TEL/FAX:** 045-663-9715

● **What is a Local Child-rearing Support Center?**  
Each ward in Yokohama has at least one of these centers. They mainly provide a place for pre-school children and their parents to play together and socialize. They also offer consultation and information on child-rearing. Use of the centers is free, but registration is required.

● **What are Yokohama Kosodate Partners?**  
These partners are specialists who can help you think through your child-rearing worries and problems, provide necessary information and introduce local facilities and support organizations. You can consult while your child plays in the main room, privately in a room or on the phone.

\* If you need an interpreter, please request it separately. (See P3 Q&A)

(In Japanese)

## Kartik

It's common in England to leave your child with a babysitter around three times a week. I learned in today's discussion that there is a system for **places where you can leave your child<sup>(\*)</sup>**, so **I will encourage my wife to use the system**. It is also good to know that **there are places and people who will listen from a neutral standpoint instead of only talking among family members**.



## Towana



I thought that my child, who is currently in a nursery school, would have to transfer to a kindergarten at 3 years old, but I was relieved to learn that my child would be able to continue at the same school. **I feel it is very important to interact with people in the same environment and making friends this way is necessary for many people**. Nowadays, there is a lot of opportunity for such interaction on social media, so I hope you will search for such a community.

Even for Japanese, moving to a new place can cause worries. But in many cases, **talking about it will make you feel better**. Come visit us to talk. **We look forward to seeing you!**



## Fujii

## Anamitra

I hope that others who are raising children will be **loving, patient, courageous and hopeful**. Coming to Nonbirinko today **makes me want to come every day** from now on. There are lots of toys and much interaction here. My child enjoyed it very much. **There are days when nursery school teachers and other specialists come to Nonbirinko and provide consultations**. I'm hoping to come on such a day, too.



## Zhang



Japan has places to play and is a good environment to raise children, but I feel I should not make mistakes—so even if I ask for an interpreter, I am not sure if I will be able to communicate properly. **Because of these worries and when I come up against a wall, I feel that the differences make it even more difficult to build a relationship of trust**. I wanted to know information about kindergartens, schools and hospitals, so I'm glad I was able to get information. **Raising children requires taking a step forward**, I think.

### \* Places that accept children for temporary care

#### "Temporary Childcare Services"

**Eligibility: Pre-school children who are not enrolled in a licensed nursery school, etc.**

Temporary childcare service is a childcare system when it is difficult for a parent to care for a child at home due to work, sickness, hospitalization, etc., or need some time for a break to refresh. ▶



#### "Temporary Childcare for Infants"

**Eligibility: Children resident in Yokohama, from 57 days old through pre-school**

Accepts children for daycare on a temporary basis, regardless of reason. ▶ (Reservations page) (in Japanese)

#### "Yokohama Childcare Support System"

**Eligibility: Children from 57 days old through the sixth grade**

Those who wish to take care of children and those who wish to have others temporarily take care of their child register as members, with the child cared for based on a system of mutual trust. (in Japanese)



### When you want care for your child on a daily basis



The following places take care of children before entering elementary school and provide childcare and education.

**"Nursery school (Hoikuen)" Eligibility: 0-5 years old**  
Nursery school provides childcare in place of working or parents with an illness. The age limit varies according to the facility. (See P3 for information about admission from April 2024.)

**"Kindergarten (Yochien)" Eligibility: 3-5 years old**  
Kindergarten provides play-based education. It is regarded as a "school," like elementary school and middle school.

**"Certified Child Center (Nintei Kodomoen)" Eligibility: 0-5 years old**  
Certified Child Centers function as both a nursery school and a kindergarten, providing both childcare and education.

\* The eligible age refers to the child's age on April 1 of that school year.

### ▶ Map for Outings in Naka Ward This map introduces indoor and outdoor facilities where parents can take infants and toddlers to play.



#### ■ Parent-child play spots

● **Oya to ko no tsudoi no hiroba** (Gathering place for parents and children) シャーロックBABY本牧 (Sherlock BABY Honmoku) (Playing and consulting with staff in an at-home atmosphere. Temporary daycare service [separate charge applies] is also available.)  
Mon-Fri, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
Cost: 100 yen per use (2 hrs) (as of Sept. 2023)



(in Japanese)

● **Kosodate shien-sha** (Childcare support) business ぶつくりんこ (Pukkurinko) (Parent-child play with more experienced moms at Community Care Plaza, etc.)  
Fixed day once per week, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Cost: 0 yen (free)

#### ■ Play at a private or public nursery school

(Play in the school playground, borrow picture books, consult about childcare matters, participate in lectures and [for a separate charge] use temporary childcare service.) Cost: 0 yen (free)

Lots of other things, too!

\* Printed information (only in Japanese) is also available at Naka Ward Office.

保育・教育コンシェルジュ (Childcare and Education Concierge) is available at the **Kodomo Katei Shien** (Children and Families Support) Division on the 5th floor of Naka Ward Office. Please make an appointment in advance. TEL: 045-224-8172 (in Japanese)



### Flu vaccinations for seniors

Seniors and those with weakened immune systems may become seriously ill if infected with influenza (the flu). Getting a flu vaccination also helps avoid the risk of a double punch from both the flu and Covid-19.

**Period:** Until Dec. 31 (Sun)

**Eligibility:** Age 65 or above

**Location:** Cooperating Yokohama medical institutions

**Cost:** 2,300 yen

- \* Make sure you bring identification such as your Residence Card to confirm your age, name and address.
- \* Phone the medical institution first to find out whether a reservation is required.
- \* Please contact Naka International Lounge (1F, Naka Ward Office Annex, TEL: 045-210-0667) if you prefer help in English or Chinese about cooperating medical institutions.

<Fukushi Hoken (Health and Welfare) Division, Naka Ward Office  
TEL: 045-224-8332>

### Beware of tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne infectious disease caused by inhalation of tubercle bacilli and usually causes inflammation of the lungs. It is said that one in ten infected people will develop the disease after exposure.

Tuberculosis is not a disease of the past. If you have symptoms such as a cough, phlegm, slight fever, lethargy, weight loss, etc. that persist for more than two weeks, visit a medical institution as soon as possible.

<Fukushi Hoken (Health and Welfare) Division, Naka Ward Office  
TEL: 045-224-8332>

### Class for pregnant Chinese speakers (with interpreter)

Are you worried about raising your child in Japan due to language and cultural barriers? Are you confused by the different childbirth and childcare customs in Japan compared with your home country? Join other Chinese-speaking mothers with similar concerns to think about and discuss matters of pregnancy, birth and child-rearing in Japan.

**Date/Time:** Dec. 7 (Thu), 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Gather near the *Sogo Annai* (information desk) on the first floor of Naka Ward Office at 1:10 p.m. (Event venue: のんびりんこ [Nonbirinko], Naka Ward Local Child-rearing Support Center)

**Eligibility:** Pregnant native Chinese speakers living in Naka Ward, and their families (event capacity: 10 persons)

**Cost:** Free

**Start of applications:** Oct. 16 (Mon), by email →

**E-mail:** na-purema@city.yokohama.jp

- \* Include your name, local district name, phone number, due date and the number of people who will participate.

<Kodomo Katei Shien (Children and Families Support) Division, Naka Ward Office TEL: 045-224-8171>



### To enroll your child in nursery school (daycare) from April 2024

Nursery schools (daycares) take care of children when their parents are at work, have an illness, etc. and cannot look after them at home during the day. Children can be enrolled from 57 days old through pre-school, but the age of the children accepted varies according to facility.

**Application period:** Oct. 10 (Tue)–Nov. 6 (Mon)

- \* Send by post, postmarked no later than Nov. 6 (Mon).

- \* If you applied in FY2023 but were not accepted, you will need to reapply for FY2024.

<Kodomo Katei Shien (Children and Families Support) Division, Naka Ward Office TEL: 045-224-8172>

### Shopping Street Series

#### Isezaki Mall

Isezakicho is located near Kannai Station and has long been a well-known and well-loved area, and has even been featured in several hit songs. The Isezakicho shopping street, known as Isezaki Mall, starts at the large welcome gate. Wandering around the pedestrian-only street, you will find long-established shops that have passed down their traditions, new shops, ethnic restaurants and *zakka* shops (selling miscellaneous goods aimed at improving everyday life), as well as art objects and other attractions.

Seasonal events are also something to look forward to, such as the winter Isezaki Lights illumination. Why not explore Isezaki Mall to find something interesting?

<Chiki Shinko (Community Promotion) Division, Naka Ward Office

TEL: 045-224-8131>



### Answer Our Survey to Win a Prize! until October 31 (Tue)

We are conducting a survey to improve the Naka Ward Town News. A draw for presents will be held from those who submit the survey.

See the Naka Ward website for details. ↓

<Kusei Suishin (Ward Administration Promotion) Division, Naka Ward Office  
TEL: 045-224-8123>



International Service Staff  
Naka Ward Office, Counter 22 (2nd floor)  
English 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Chinese 8:45 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

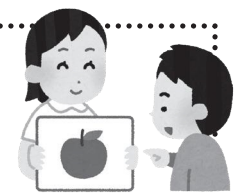
International Service Staff provide assistance with matters such as guidance on Naka Ward Office activities, interpretation at various ward office counters and support for filling out certificate applications. Stop by if you would like assistance.

### Help Me Know Q&A



### I'm concerned about my child's development. Where can I consult about this?

- ▶ **Kodomo Katei Shien** (Children and Families Support) Division of Naka Ward Office offers various consultations regarding child-rearing from pregnancy to age 18. If you feel uneasy about your child's development, such as not speaking enough or being restless, go for a consultation. You can also check your child's growth and ask for advice at health checkups for infants (\*1).
- ▶ **Kodomo Katei Shien** (Children and Families Support) Division, Naka Ward Office, (5F, Counter 54), TEL: 045-224-8171



### I don't understand Japanese very well, so I am worried about communicating my concerns about my child.

- ▶ For consultations at the Naka Ward Office, a Habilitation Center For Children(\*2), a Local Child-rearing Support Center, a nursery school, etc., Yokohama Association for International Communications and Exchanges (YOKE) runs a volunteer dispatch system called the Yokohama City Interpreter Volunteer Dispatch System. For any of the above facilities, you can use this system to arrange, free of charge, an interpreter via dispatch or remote interpretation. Because certain procedures between YOKE and the facility you wish to consult with must be done in advance, please talk with the facility first about arranging interpretation. As an alternative, you can also talk with the Yokohama Foreign Residents Information Center about arranging an interpreter.

- ▶ **YOKOHAMA Foreign Residents Information Center** (12 languages available)

TEL: 045-222-1209

E-mail: t-info@yoke.or.jp

URL: <https://www.yokoinfo.jp/en/>



#### Health checkups for infants \*1

Naka Ward Office holds health checkups for babies at the age of 4 months, 18 months and 3 years (a letter will be sent to those eligible). This basic medical checkup helps you confirm your child's growth and development, so make sure to attend. You can also consult about childcare, weaning foods, toothbrushing, etc. If you need an interpreter to attend, please consult in advance with the Naka Ward Office's *Kodomo Katei Shien* (Children and Families Support) Division.

\*2 **Habilitation Center For Children:** Consultations about children with disabilities, from newborns through elementary school.



# Let's Participate in Naka Ward Events!

Go for a Visit

Many events are scheduled in the fall. The Naka Ward Residents' Festival "Hello Yokohama 2023" and "Naka Ward Multi-cultural Festival" are two major examples. Join these local events for some fun!

Nov. 12 (Sun)  
10 a.m. ~ 4 p.m.



## ★Naka Ward Residents' Festival "Hello Yokohama 2023"

This festival has been held since 1976. Along with stage events for children, there will also be booths from various companies and organizations associated with Naka Ward. There will also be special booths for the upcoming "International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama, Japan" and "Naka Ward's 100th Anniversary" in 2027. We hope to see you there!

**Venue:** Zou-no-hana Park  
1-Chome Kaigan-dori, Naka-ku, Yokohama  
**Inquiries:** Chiiki Shinko (Community Promotion) Division, Naka Ward Office, TEL: 045-224-8131

\* Events may be cancelled due to bad weather, etc.



(in Japanese)



▲ Food stalls and exhibitions from companies and groups related to Naka Ward. Why do not you rediscover the charms of Naka Ward.



▲ Stage performances such as a brass band, Chinese lion dance, dancing and cheerleading liven up the atmosphere!

◀ Sports experience event by a professional sports team!

Dec. 16 (Sat)

## ★Naka Ward Multi-cultural Festival

Participate in workshops to experience foreign cultures. Be sure to attend!

\* For details, please check the website of Naka International Lounge.

**Venue:** Naka International Lounge  
35 Nihon-Odori, Naka-ku, Yokohama  
(1st floor, Naka Ward Office Annex)  
**Inquiries:** Naka International Lounge (Japanese/English/Chinese) TEL: 045-210-0667



### Thoughts of a Foreign Resident Life and Culture in Japan



## The Education Style I Choose in Japan



Before my children came to Japan, I spent a lot of time researching the Japanese education system. Particularly, the education system for children with excellent academic performance. In other words, I wanted to know about getting my children into good schools.

However, I became very anxious once my children got here. It was because I tried to have my children, who could not speak Japanese, take the middle school entrance exam. Then I had them do a lot of homework and study everyday as they began their studies in "immersion mode." With such intense pressure, they grew tired of studying. That's when I realized that it wasn't what they wanted and that I was forcing my expectations on them.

After a lot of reflection, I realized I needed to learn how to be a mother rather than raising an outstanding child. This is a common problem for parents who bring their children to Japan for school, I guess.

What my children need now is not just to study, but to spend time with their parents and friends. I also knew my true feelings. What I want as a parent is not a perfect child, but a happy and healthy child.

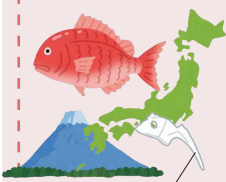
In gathering various information, I learned that there are many choices in life. Even if your child fails the entrance exam, there is always a suitable path available. In terms of academics, my children may not have the best marks and they may not be the top performers I had originally envisioned. However, if they are healthy in body and mind, they will have the power to move forward on any future path.

Ultimately, I chose to give my children what they really needed rather than what I thought was best. I don't know if this is the right choice, but in the current situation, I believe it's the most appropriate choice. (Naka International Lounge Chinese Language Staff)

### Good to Know! About Japanese Culture

## 鯛 *Tai* (Sea Bream)

An introduction to seasonal events and Japanese culture in terms of food, clothing and housing.



Tai no tai

In Japan, *tai* (sea bream) is known to be a "lucky" food because of its red and white coloring. This color combination is associated with happy occasions and long life. *Tai* is also part of word *medetai* (joyous), a pun that is often used for celebrations. Sea breams also have a sea bream-shaped bone, called 鯛の鯛 (*tai no tai*), that is said to improve one's luck with money and keep bad luck away. If you find this bone, carrying it in your wallet may bring you good fortune.

Sea bream is often eaten on festive occasions. One of these is a weaning ceremony called *okuizome* that dates back to the Heian Period (794-1185). *Okuizome* is a ceremony in which parents imitate feeding the child sea bream, with the wish that the child will never experience a lack of food in its life. It is held around 100 days after a child is born. The prepared fish is salt-grilled with the head and tail intact. The meaning of keeping the tail and head is to express the wish for longevity the idea of "from tip to tail," or "from beginning to end." If you have a chance, please experience this traditional Japanese culture.



We are always looking for locations to distribute *Naka Ward Town News*. If you have many foreign visitors to your shop, clinic, organization, etc. and would like to make this newsletter available to them, please contact us at 045-224-8123 to arrange delivery. The next issue will be published on January 1.