

Setagaya Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare



March 2025
Setagaya Ward

We aim to ensure that each and every child can realize his/her well-being as “a subject who lives in the present”.

The Features of the Guidelines: The Guidelines put down what are provided for in the four general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and make it clear that children themselves are subjects of rights, so that they serve as the basic guidance for practicing “child-rights centered daycare”.

** Well-being: The status of being physically, mentally and socially fulfilled*

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* In the following Guidelines,

- The term “facilities, etc.” refers to all facilities, bodies and entities, etc. engaging with children.
- The term “staff” refers to all personnel working in the facilities, etc. engaging with children.

List of facilities, etc.



Guidelines in Japanese



Eight Promises with Me

- Setagaya Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare -

I am in the beginning of life,
filled with the emotion , “What am I going to do?”

- Cherish me as a unique individual.
- Listen to what I feel and take it seriously.
- Wait until I choose.
- Cherish me whoever I am, regardless of what culture, mind and body I have.
- Consider what is best for me.
- Watch me with affection and engage with me, respecting what I am as I fail, stop, rest and go on slowly.
- Cherish my family, too.
- Support me as I grow up being myself.

It was fun today. Will something good happen tomorrow, too?



I Realizing Children's Rights and Well-being

Each and every child is always moved emotionally by something.

How do you see the child? Are you watching the child with affection? Waiting to see what he/she does?

~What should always be borne in mind for the protection of children's rights~

【Non-Discrimination】

All the rights under the CRC are secured for all children without discrimination on any grounds, including the child's or his/her parents' race, nationality, sex, opinion, disability or economic status.

【Best Interests of the Child】

It is challenges/endeavors for adults to take children's wishes and feelings seriously, engage with them and realize what is best for them as far as possible.

【Right to Life, Survival and Development】

It is the foundation of life for a child to be cherished and loved by surrounding adults as an individual and to grow up in a safe and secure environment.

【Respect for the Views of the Child】

Children can grow up as subjects of rights, being themselves, through responsive interaction and dialogue with adults without one-sided assumptions about children.

Four basic principles of the CRC, identified by the United Nations

【Setagaya Ordinance on the Rights of the Child】

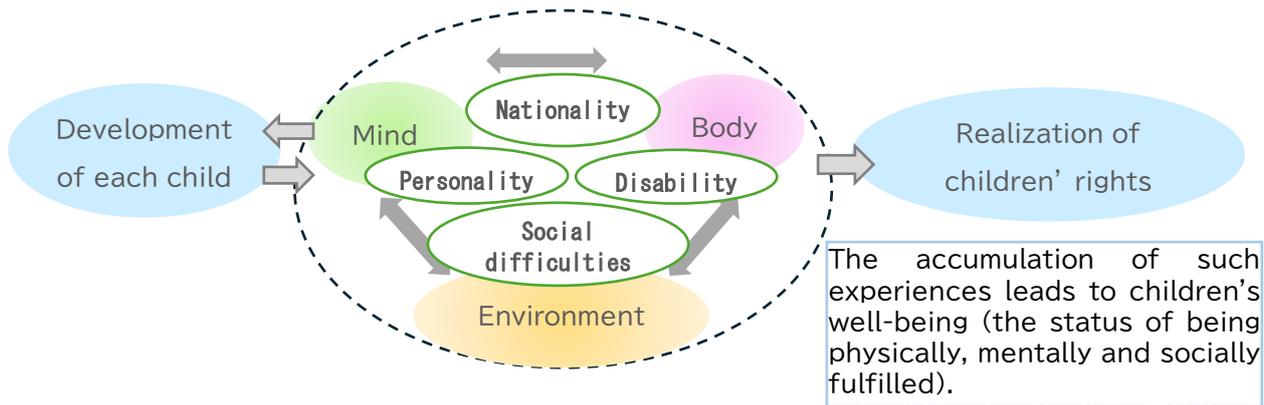
Children are subjects of rights from the birth who live in the present and have the right to be themselves and to lead happy lives. We, the Ward authorities and other adults, will embrace what children feel and think, considering and realizing what is best for children with children. (Article 3 (2))



Children are subjects of rights from the birth who live in the present. The experiences of having their views and thoughts taken seriously by the people around them in their childhood would lead to children's sense of security and confidence, giving them great power for leading lives thereafter. We ... will embrace what children feel and think, consider what is best for them earnestly, be engaged in dialogue with them and to endeavor to respond to their views and aspirations. (Preamble)

~We aim to ensure that each and every child can realize his/her well-being as "a subject who live in the present".~

Early childhood is a crucial period during which a child's personality, social nature, emotional stability and the capacity to develop relationships with others is nurtured. Children grow up and learn in a self-directed manner through play and other activities while living in the present. It is by no means a preparatory period for schooling. In order to build on the development during early childhood for the next stages of life, it is necessary to enrich the present lives of young children.



~ **Listening to children** ~

Listening to children means more than hearing their words; it involves adults' action to direct their attention to children, to find out children's thoughts and wishes through their words, body language, facial expression, emotions in their eyes, etc. and to realize them to the extent possible. In the present Guidelines, the realization of children's rights is perceived to be relevant for all elements of daycare.

~ **When children's emotions move** ~

Even if children appear to be doing nothing because their body does not move, their emotions are always moving. It is important to direct your attention to children, to watch them carefully and with affection and to wait.



~ Seeking for Daycare for the Realization of Children's Rights by Taking Their Small Voices Seriously ~

◆ **【Rights to Survive and Develop】**

◎ **Let us grow up safely and lively.**

- Don't pull us with force or scold us with loud voice.
- Let us play in different ways in different places.



◆ **【Right to Have Their Best Interests Be Considered】**

◎ **Cherish me as a unique individual.**

- Wait until I find out who I am.
- Don't do and say things that you wouldn't do or say to adults.
- When I can't do things as I like, explain why and then think about what I can do together.



◆ **【Right to Express Their Views and Thoughts Freely】**

◎ **I'm relieved when you watch me and listen to me.**

- It's fun just to keep watching it.
- My favorite color is purple. I decided to wear dark clothes from the waist up and light ones below.
- Don't put an end to our quarrel when we don't agree.



◆ **【Right to Non-Discrimination】**

◎ **Cherish me whoever I am.**

- I'm a boy, but I want to play the part of the witch wearing a skirt.
- It's really annoying to be teased because my skin color, hair color and hair style.
- I want to join, too.



* The phrases and quotes are based on the Setagaya Ordinance on the Rights of the Child and children's voices drawn from the questionnaire surveys.

II Supporting Daily Lives and Play (Learning)

The facilities, etc. are places of living for children, where “care and education is integrated as daycare” and which secure children’s mental and physical development through daily lives and play (learning).



1 Environment

It is important for the facilities, etc., where children spend long time in groups, to create a safe, clean and comfortable environment. Even if children spend time in groups, not all children have the same daily life rhythm. Since the timing or pace of eating, sleeping and toileting may vary among children, the living environment should be flexible enough to accommodate such differences.

As children have different interests in terms of play as well, it is necessary that toys, picture books and materials are tailored to levels of development and personality of each child. In addition, children need time to engage with the physical environment. Taking time to interact with materials, as if engaging in dialogue, is an aspect of the richness of play. On the other hand, children like to be involved in physical play, too. While they are often involved in outdoor activities in the facilities’ playground or parks in the neighborhood, they should be able to engage in physical exercise indoors in the seasons with the extreme heat or cold or when it rains.

It is the responsibility of the staff to arrange these kinds of spatial and physical environment. The staff should be involved in planning and practice allowing the development of rich play in accordance with children’s development and personality. Another important role of the staff is to become the source of children’s sense of security by, as part of the human environment, watching children with affection and satisfying their emotions with words and physical contact when necessary. Children sometimes make failures when they try to do something during play or when they play with peers. We learn most from failures; failures are evidence of challenges, which cannot be taken up without initiative and which are supported by the help of the people around children who keep an eye on them with affection. It is also essential for children to have spaces where

they can relax when they are tired or when they want to feel at ease during a long day.

When children play not only inside the facilities but also in the community or the natural environment, a wider range of fields will become daycare environments. And the richest environment in the facilities, etc. is the human environment, namely peers. Daily rich interactions with different ages of children nurture children's power to live.

【Checkpoints on the Environment】

- Do you keep an affectionate and calm eye on what children think and do? Do you also respect that children do nothing?
- Are toys and/or picture books tailored to children's developmental levels and interests available within their reach in adequate amount?
- Is there spaces where children can take a breathing time with a sense of security?



2 How daycare is provided

(1) Supporting play (learning)

Children acquire languages, numbers, scientific ideas and abilities to express themselves through play. Play at the facilities, etc. is a treasury of learning, and daily lives are a treasury of wisdom. In the facilities, etc., there are adults who keep a responsive eye on what children feel and peers who empathically play with them. Toys, picture books and natural materials, tailored to children's development and personality, are equipped there in an appropriate way, and places and time are secured for playing with them carefully, as if engaging in dialogue. Before taking action, children may carefully observe something, be excited with expectations or stand still idly. These are signs that their minds and bodies are about to move and expressions of their initiative. We should keep an affectionate and calm eye on them, rather than rushing them or being quick to propose something, which will allow us to find out what environments are necessary for the next stage.

Human and physical environments of these kinds bring about play (learning) among children from early childhood, which will extend greatly to collaborative play (learning) around the time when they enter primary school. In addition, playing with peers equips children with empathy and communication skills and nurtures

their ability to express themselves. A number of experiences of quarrels and dialogue will also foster empathy, listening attitudes and compassion among children.

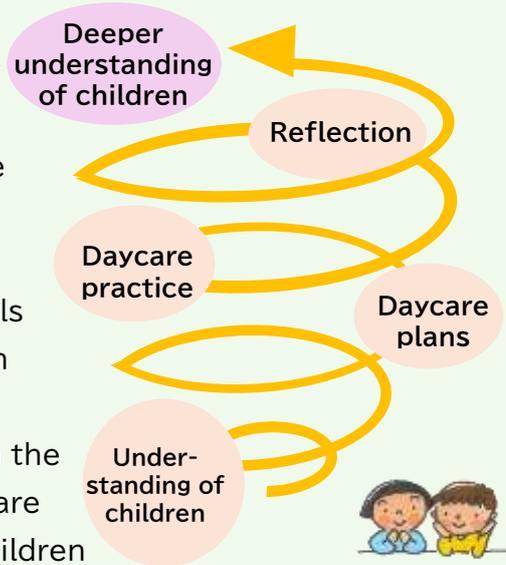


Children's voices from the responses to the questionnaires

When children start to have fun for playing according to the rules, they may sometimes be preoccupied with winning and losing or try to have their own way. They will, however, develop self-control and learn to respect and cooperate with others, while being supported by the staff's acceptance and advice. Furthermore, they will cooperate with each other and take part in initiatives when they play together with the same concepts and objectives, including by sharing roles, deciding something through consultation and encouraging each other, providing them with the foundations for citizenship and social engagement, on the basis of which they are to be involved in society with a sense of self-efficacy. Such an environment, where children can play and have fun, is planned and arranged by the staff. The experience of expressing themselves and playing to their satisfaction fulfills children's lives and nurtures non-cognitive skills (social and emotional skills). Play provides the basis for fostering children's mental and physical development and enabling them to live in accordance with their unique personality.

【Checkpoint for Supporting Play】

- Do you keep an eye affectionately and excitedly on what children think and do in the environment and activities you arranged? Do you have a sense of fulfilment with their zeal and big smile?
- Do you provide support for children to expand their curiosity, a spirit of inquiry and thinking skills by thinking and experimenting in accordance with their interest?
- Do you plan for the next activities and stages on the basis of what children are doing? Daycare plans are expanded along with deeper understanding of children through observing what they are doing and practice on the understanding. This cycle leads to further deeper understanding of children.



(2) Support through food education

The facilities, etc. provide the dietary environment leading to the establishment of appropriate eating and dietary habits, allowing children to take enjoyable and delicious meals every day. Eating is a source of the power to live; it also provides opportunities to know about one's appetite, sense of taste and preferences and to nurture one's personality and sociability. Food for children, including lactation and weaning food, does not serve the purpose of filling their stomach only; the facilities, etc. are also involved in food education (*shoku-iku*), encouraging children, through eating, to be familiar with the nature, society, culture and manners, to engage in rich and empathetic interactions with adults around them and peers and to learn the importance of eating.

Thus the facilities, etc. plan and prepare meals, paying attention to their shape, solidity and seasoning as well as to the timing of the provision, while taking advantage of the natural taste of the ingredients, in accordance with the standards on hygiene and nutrition management established by the central government. Careful arrangements are made with regard to food allergies, putting safety first.

These practices would make children love to eat, expand their interest in eating, let them feel the seasons and the best time of the year for different foods through cultivation and harvesting, and nurture their gratitude for life and natural cycles.

Eating is a source of the power to live

【Checkpoints for food education】

What is important is children's will to eat.

- Are you providing comfortable eating environment where children can eat safely and securely?
- Are children eating happily with the staff and peers?
- Do they have opportunities to come in touch with different ingredients and food cultures?



~ References for Food Education ~

(all in Japanese)

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Guidelines for Food Education at Daycare Facilities



Guidance for Provision of Food at Child Welfare Facilities



Food Uptake Standards for Japanese



Children and Families Agency
Guidelines for Daycare Facilities on Dealing with Allergies



On Lactation and Weaning: Guide to Support Lactation and Weaning

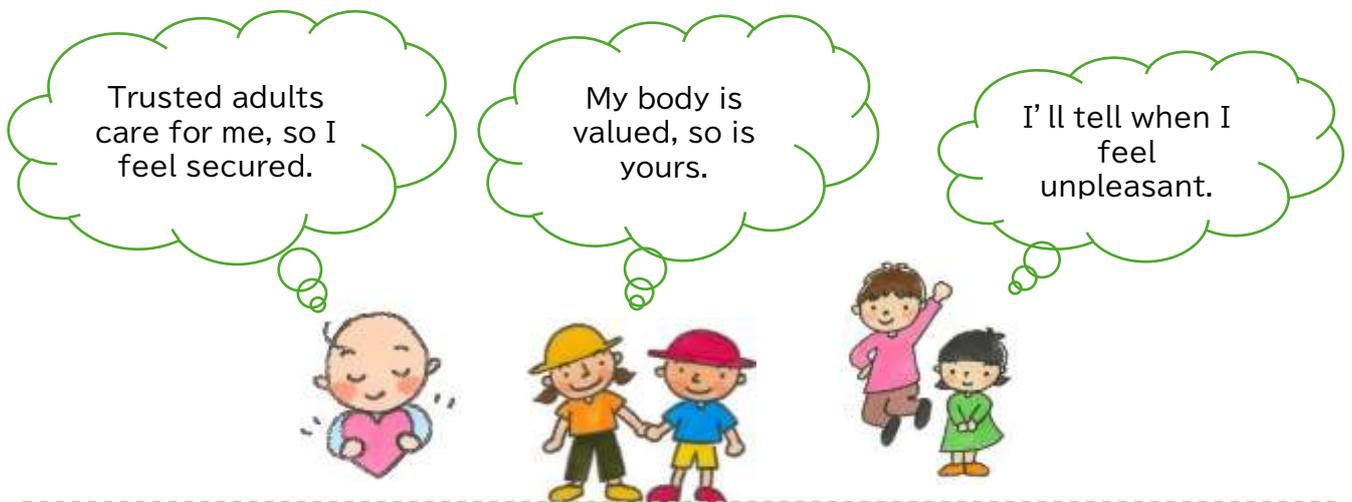


Guidance for Provision of Food at Daycare Facilities



(3) Support for health

While young children are less resistant and more vulnerable to diseases, they acquire immunity through overcoming different infectious diseases. In addition, some sorts of injuries cannot be avoided in the process of development when children learn how to move their body. This is why adults should pay attention to the physical status and living environment of each and every child. When children are unwell, it is manifested not only in the form of fevers or injuries but also as lack of appetite at the time when they usually get hungry, sudden sleepiness or unusual rhythms of excretion. In order to make it easier to recognize these indications, it is important to maintain children's daily rhythms on a routine basis as a foundation of health. On this basis, appropriate assistance in accordance with children's development will make them concern about their own health and safety, fostering their abilities to express that they are unwell and to avoid dangers. These kinds of deliberate care and respect for children's body will make them cherish their own body, which constitutes the foundation of the attitude to protect their private zones as well as to care for others' health and body. The facilities, etc. would care for the comfortable environment for and engagement with each child in collaboration of the parents/carers.



【Checkpoints on support for health】

- Do you grasp each child's health status every day?
- Do you share the policies for the prevention and control of infectious diseases among the staff as well as the parents/carers?
- Do you provide age-appropriate health education, encouraging children to know about the body and care for their own body as well as that of others?

【Reference】 (in Japanese)

・ Children and Families Agency
*Guidelines for Daycare Facilities
on Control of Infectious Diseases*



III Creating the Environment in the Facilities for the Protection of Children's Rights (Safety Management)

Anyone who deal with children have the responsibility to be conscious of risk management at all times and to create a safe environment which protects children's precious life and supports their healthy development.

Through a variety of experiences in daily lives, children grow up and come to recognize dangers.

Adults keep an affectionate eye on children, taking into account the age and developmental stage of each child, with a view to assisting them to know dangerous places and risky play and to think and act independently. Adults are also responsible for safety checks and environment improvement to realize a safe environment. By expressing and sharing identified risks among the staff, they can reduce the occurrence of risks further.



It is also necessary to have common understanding of the protection of personal data and online literacy among all the staff and to ensure appropriate management in this regard.

Unexpected situations, such as in natural disasters, by intruders or in daycare activities outside the facilities that are different from those inside the facilities, can be reduced through preparations. Plans for the rapid recovery and continuation of the operation are needed for cases of large-scale disasters. In addition, the facilities, etc. should prepare for epidemic outbreaks of infectious diseases.

- * Business Continuity Plans (BCPs)
- * Safety plans
- * Development and implementation of disaster drill plans for the year
- * Implementation plans for daycare activities outside the facility
- * Preparation of emergency supplies
- * Psychological care and appropriate support for children in emergencies
- * Health plans
- * Provision of health education, etc.

In particular, the staff should be equipped with necessary skills for the prevention of young children's accidents in the three settings, which have higher risks of serious accidents: (a) while sleeping; (b) while eating; and (c) while playing in the water.

【Reference】 (in Japanese)

Setagaya Ward's website, *Guidance Inspection of Daycare Facilities, etc.*

Children and Families Agency, *Handbook for the Prevention of Accidents of Children*

Guidelines on the Prevention of and Response to Accidents in Educational and Daycare Facilities, etc.

Checkpoints for the Prevention of Serious Accidents of Children



What we wish (Quotes from the responses to the questionnaire)

Give us guidelines for the prevention of accidents

We want children to be happy every day, and as parents, we want leave them in daycare with a sense of security.

~From parents~

We want both "safety and security" and "challenges" in daycare.

~From a parent~

I love to play here!

~From a child~



【Checkpoints on safety management at the facilities, etc.】

- The supervision by adults is necessary to prevent serious injuries. Children grow up while experiencing a series of minor injuries, which enable them to play safely on their own judgement. The staff should understand the age and characteristics of each child and ensure that children can stay safe.
- All the staff should have common understanding of the protection of personal data and online literacy among all the staff and ensure appropriate management in this regard.
- When an accident happened, its causes and measures for non-reoccurrence should be considered and shared among all the staff.
- Regular safety checks should be conducted, including for degradation of play-ground equipment, looseness of screws of indoor shelves and things that may be accidentally swallowed by children or stuck in their throat.
- The staff should anticipate and be prepared for different situations when they are involved in daycare activities outside the facilities, the situations in which are different from those inside the facilities.



【During sleeping time】

In order to prevent suffocation or SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), adults should be around sleeping children to check their state of breath and complexion on a regular basis (ideally, once in five minutes for 0 to 1-year-old, in ten minutes for 2-year-old and in fifteen minutes for children aged 3 years and more, in accordance with the standards established by the Setagaya Ward).

Make sure that children of 0-2 years of age be kept on their back while sleeping.

【While eating】

Suffocation or mis-swallowing can happen anytime. The staff should bear this in mind when interacting with children (such as when children move around with food stuff in their mouth, when they keep lying down while eating, when they get sleepy or when you burp young children after giving them milk).

【Playing in the water】

Children may be drowned in the water 3 centimeters in depth. Always keep an eye on children where there is water.

*** The above checkpoints are for the staff to watch over children in the facilities, etc. It is important for the facilities, etc. and the families to exchange information and talk about interactions with children.**

IV Expertise of the Staff and Management of the Facilities

1 Expertise required for the staff

The basis for achieving the maintenance and improvement of the quality of daycare is the proactive attitude and expertise of each and every member of the staff working in the facilities, etc. In order to provide education and care in which children's rights are guaranteed with the best interests of the child in mind, all the staff should have appropriate ethics, personality as well as understanding and awareness of their functions and responsibilities as the staff as the foundation of their expertise.

We hope that the staff interact with children with respect for each of them as a human being; ; enjoy daily lives and play with children, showing their initiative as well; and always keep learning for the improvement of their expertise.

Moreover, the staff should heighten their sensitivity to minor changes in children for deeper understanding of them, in addition to the efforts to acquire, maintain and improve expert knowledge and skills.

(1) For the practice to respect children's initiative

The staff must also show their initiative in the provision of education and care. The staff constitute an important human environment for children; they serve as models of living, playing and how to face the life. In order to enable children to manifest their strength and to live and play in accordance with their unique personality, the staff are also required to serve as their models by manifesting their strength and being involved the provision of education and care in an aspirational manner. In addition, since the staff are composed of different types of occupations (including nurses, dieticians and cooks), they should be involved in the provision of education and care as a team, recognizing each other's expertise and personality.



(2) For the provision of support for parents and families with children in the community

By reaching out to what parents feel as companions in child-rearing, parents themselves will be able to feel that raising children is fun. The staff acknowledge parents' anxieties, concerns and difficulties concerning child-rearing by building trust for the purpose of providing support.

【Checkpoints on the qualifications and expertise of the staff】

- Do you understand children's rights and seek to consider and realize what is best for their "present" as well as "future"?
- As experts in education and care, do you keep an affectionate eye on children's development and interact with them, valuing each and every child?
- Do you share how children are doing at home and in the facilities, etc. with the parents, thinking about children's development with them and providing support with them as partners of child-rearing?

2. Mechanisms to develop the staff's expertise

The staff are required to improve their expertise in multifaceted ways through training, practice and collegial dialogue. The improvement of the quality of daycare can be achieved by proactively reflecting the expertise in the practice. The staff should seek for the sustained improvement of the quality of daycare for better development of children, always aiming high instead of being satisfied with the current quality of daycare.

(1) Reflection from the professional perspectives: Self-evaluation

The staff gain a number of insights through daily practice. They reflect on what they find in their practice, what comes in sight by looking back after a while and what each and every child's experiences in daily lives and play mean, associating them with professional theories and perspectives on education and care. The process of exploring the meaning of the practice for better understanding of children, referring to the national Guidelines on Daycare and Guidance on Preschool Education and Daycare, the present Guidelines as well as Promises with Me (Checklist), is an important opportunity for learning.

In addition, new insights, which have not come in sight through one's own reflection, can be gained by sharing what they have found through the reflections through dialogue among the staff.

【Reference】 Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Make Daycare More Fun: Handbook on the Guidelines on Self-Evaluation at Daycare Facilities



Self-evaluation is not about determining whether you could or couldn't do something; it is important to conduct self-reflection on your internal aspects and to connect the findings about identified gaps to the development of yourself and the improvement of the quality of daycare in your facility.

(2) Human resource development of the staff and collegiality

The facilities, etc. should seek to develop their human resources by improving the expertise of the staff, making use of training opportunities in and outside the facilities. While the methodologies and contents of training vary, it is necessary for the staff to learn with the awareness of the challenges they face, including difficulties they encounter in the practice as well as specialized knowledge they have to have for the fulfilment of their assigned roles. The staff are expected to be proactive in learning, with a view to respecting children's proactiveness about learning.

In addition, it is a waste of opportunities to limit learning to individuals in terms of the improvement of the quality of care in the whole facilities. It is important to share the insights and knowledge obtained through training in the facilities and to make use of what other members of the staff had learned. The "climate of co-learning" emerges from the relationship in which one person's finding is positively accepted by the peers and in which it is allowed that the finding triggers exploration for the better through dialogue. It is necessary to build "collegiality", or the relationship in which different findings and views are not rejected but treated as opportunities for learning and in which the members of the staff accept each other and recognize others as the peers to work for the better.

The learning relationship can be extended outside the facility. The participation in local daycare networks, a unique initiative by the Ward, will lead to the development of personal relationships with the relevant bodies involved in local child-rearing and, through the facilitation of information sharing and collaboration, to the improvement of the quality of daycare across the Ward.

(3) Review of the workload and working conditions as well as the creation of workplaces where the staff can make use of their expertise

In order to enable the staff to work on a long-term basis, it is also necessary to review the working conditions and job management. Reducing workload burdens is about creating an environment where the staff can concentrate on what they are expected to do and reviewing the environment when necessary, rather than simply

reducing things to do. The staff will be able to concentrate on their work by, for example, reducing the burden of documentation through the introduction of ICTs, securing recesses appropriately and providing for relaxing spaces. In addition, sharing the roles with assistant workers will enable the staff to make use of their expertise more effectively.

Proactive working by the staff is affected by the environment and relationships at the workplace. It is important for the whole staff to consider the organization of the workplace where the staff can work with animation and motivation and to seek for the ways to realize it.

【Checkpoints on mechanisms to develop the staff's expertise】

- Do you associate what you and others have found with expert insights through regular reflection?
- Do you focus on the process of reflection in your self-evaluation, rather than on whether you could or couldn't do something?
- Are you creating a climate of co-learning, in which new findings and insights are shared within the facility, not limiting them to the individuals concerned?
- In order for the staff to make use of their expertise, do you review the workload and working conditions, seeking for the creation of the workplace where all the staff can work comfortably?



【Reference】 (all in Japanese)

・Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Guidelines for Reducing Workload Burdens and Restructuring Job Management in the Field of Daycare

Introductory Handbook for the Use of ICTs at Daycare Facilities, etc.

Collection of Cases for the Improvement of Job Management



3 Administration of the facilities and organizational management

A facility is an organization. An organization has its “philosophies”, a set of major objectives to be achieved by the organization. In order to ensure that a group of workers, who have a diversity of experiences and values on education and care, to function as an organization, they should first understand the “philosophies” and share how they should work to realize them. In order to enable the staff to be involved in education and care with a sense of security, to realize better education and care and to feel that they want to contribute to the organization, it is essential that the management entity operates the facility in a healthy manner and manages the organization with a view to making the best use of the staff’s qualifications and potentials.

An organization functions as such by looking at the diversity of the staff positively, taking advantage of the “strength” of each worker, ensuring appropriate role sharing and building teamwork through which the staff respect each other with the willingness to contribute to their facility and colleagues.

The management entity is required to secure working conditions to enable the staff to work with a sense of security and to guarantee appropriate treatment, corresponding to each worker’s career, for them. Necessary funds for education and care must be adequately secured, including for daycare rooms with appropriate size and equipment, which take into account the moving patterns of the staff and children, as well as for equipping the facility with furnishings, playthings and toys, reflecting the views of the children and the staff. In order to realize the “philosophies”, it is also necessary to develop the structure to support the managers, such as the backup and the transfer of rights by the founding corporation or other body, so that the head of the facility can adequately exercise his/her leadership as the facility’s leader.

The staff should recognize that they contribute to their team and facility, as members of the organization, by accepting and fulfilling assigned roles. All the roles have meanings, and in no cases, some roles are superior or inferior to other roles. Those who work in organizations must understand that each of them depends on others to work effectively and that everyone should respect each other.

4 Roles and leadership of the management, including the head and deputy-head of the facility

The head, deputy head and other managers of the facility are required, not only to comply with the relevant laws and regulations, but also to have appropriate understanding of the changes in the social conditions surrounding the facilities,

etc., to endeavor to improve the expertise as managers and to seek to ensure the necessary conditions for the improvement of the quality of daycare and the staff's capacity in the facility concerned.

The head of the facility has an important role in determining the management policy of the facility. He/she is expected to decide on the best policy, which leads to the interests of the facility, through dialogue with the deputy head and other managers. The head should always share the policy with the deputy head, who should convey it to chiefs and other middle leaders and, through them, to class leaders and each worker. The development of the information-sharing system is an important aspect of the management, which leads to the consolidation of the organizational structure.

The managers are required to have deeper understanding of the organizational management. They should find out each worker's strength and build a relationship where the staff members can recognize and help each other. It is important as well to turn their eyes on the challenges faced by the staff and encourage the improvement, having acknowledged their strength sufficiently.

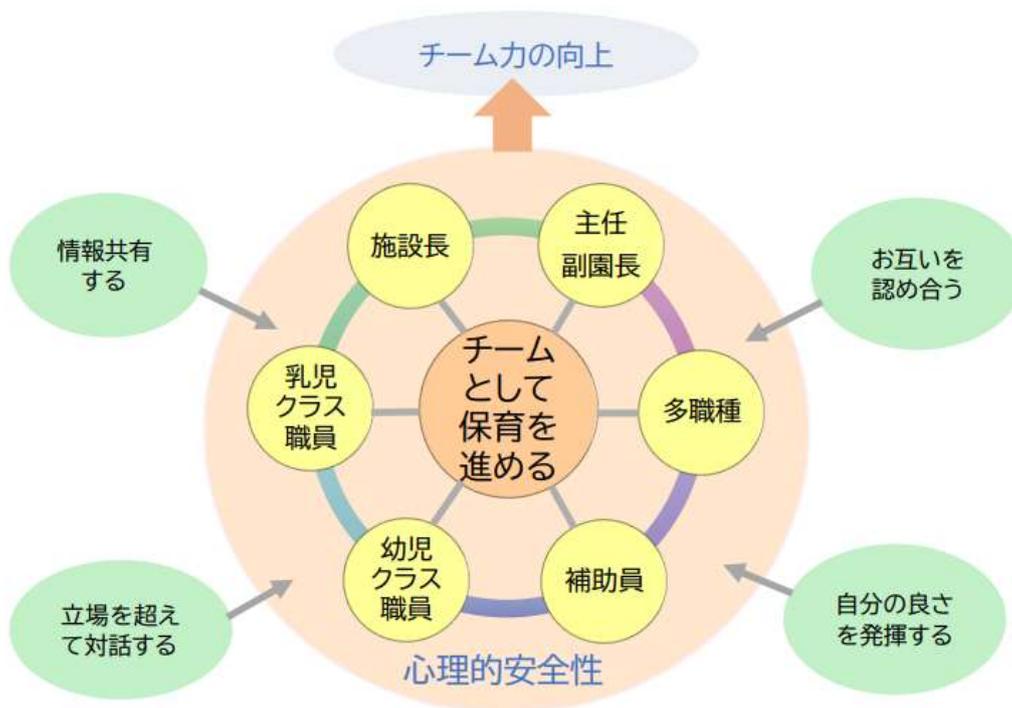
It is essential for the managers to build trusting relationships with the staff in order to exercise leadership. They should regularly pay attention to the staff, appreciate and respect them as the members of the facility and seek to communicate with them respecting each worker's views.

【Checkpoints on the administration of the facilities and organizational management】

- Create the organization for the realization of the “philosophies”, acknowledging the staff's diversity and accepting each other's differences.
- Create the workplace where each member of the staff can take advantage of their specialty so that they can work lively in accordance with their unique personality.
- In order for the managers to exercise leadership, it is essential for them to respect the staff's views and build trusting relationships with them.
- Seek to make the workplace free of harassment by creating the relationships and environment where all the staff can work with a sense of security. When any problem happens, promptly conduct a review without overlooking it and work for resolution.
- The management entity should provide a variety of support and equipment for the appropriate administration of the facility.
- When difficulties emerge in the facility, promptly report to and consult with the Ward and/or the management entity (corporation). Information sharing makes it easier to resolve the problems, rather than trying to solve them within the facility.

In addition, the head of the facility has a role to connect with the outside world, including by exchanging with other facilities, promoting collaboration among heads of the facilities and seeking for advice to local municipalities when it is difficult to solve a problem alone.

It is essential for the management entity to serve as a supervisor, who provides appropriate support and backup to enable the managers to fulfill their functions.



Improvement of the team strength

Involved in daycare as a team

Head Deputy head Different professionals Assistants Class teacher for young children Class teacher for infants

Psychological safety

Recognizing each other Demonstrate your strength
Dialogue across different positions Information-sharing

V Parenting in the Community

The Ward seeks to improve parenting support further so that all families with children can live with a sense of security from the pregnancy period, avoiding isolation and being connected with the community people and parenting support. Support for parents and child-rearing should be provided from the perspectives of “the realization of children’s rights and well-being” (see pages 4-5) and through reinforcing “the child-rearing capacity of the community”, which backs up children and child-rearing in the community.

1 How parenting support should be provided by the facilities, etc.

Mutual understanding between the family and the facility is essential for the realization of children’s happiness (well-being).

For this purpose, the staff should ...

- Tell the parents empathetically how their children are growing up;
- Listen to children and their parents;
- Think together if they have any concerns;
- Refer them to social resources or specialized bodies in the community if necessary. (Setagaya Ward supports this)



Parents/caregivers

Those who have direct contact with children

Spaces where children spend time

Community spaces

Measures and culture

Source: Children and Families Agency, *Basic Visions for the Development of Young Children – Development Vision for the First 100 Months*

【Checkpoints on parenting support in the community】

Support for the parents in the facility

- Seek to interact with the parents so that they can enjoy child-rearing, by telling them the intention of education and care as well as how their children grow up in the facility, showing empathy and sharing joy, through all channels available such as the conversations when they come to the facility to leave and pick up their children, other forms of daily communications and events.
- Promote mutual understanding between the parents and the facility by telling them how education and care is provided as well as how their children are doing, including through informal meetings with the parents, letters from the facility and personal meetings.
- Do you provide opportunities for the parents to meet and exchange in person? (For example, community-based exchanges, activities conducted by a group of parents in the events, the provision of spaces for parents' associations and other forms of exchanges among the parents)

Community support by the facility

- In order to make easier to utilize the facility, organize parenting classes or open the facility and playground to the community so that information and concerns about parenting can be shared and professional support be provided.
- With a view to supporting children's development with the community and to promote mutual development, secure opportunities for children to interact with those other than the staff by participating in local activities, meetings of neighborhood associations as well as festivals and other forms of local events.

Collaboration with elementary schools

- With a view to securing the continuity of children's development, do you seek to collaborate with elementary schools, including through interactions among children and exchanges of information among the staff?

2 Creation of spaces for parenting support

I feel it's necessary to create an environment where you can find someone to rely on casually in the facilities, at home and outside the family. (Quote from the responses to the questionnaires for parents)

There are a variety of spaces for parenting support other than the facilities in the Ward, such as children's centers, drop-in spaces and temporary daycare, where parents can chat with each other casually or take a short rest with relief. A number of parents do not have any relatives, friends or acquaintances who take care of their children. The staff should think with them about such things as necessary knowledge, practical ways of parenting (including how to change diapers and to hold young children in arms) and how to interact with children. It is also necessary for the parents, not only "to be taught by the supporters", but also to "acquire" necessary knowledge and skills on their own through exchanges with other parents or observations of other parents and children.

What can we do to promote it?

- Creating common spaces

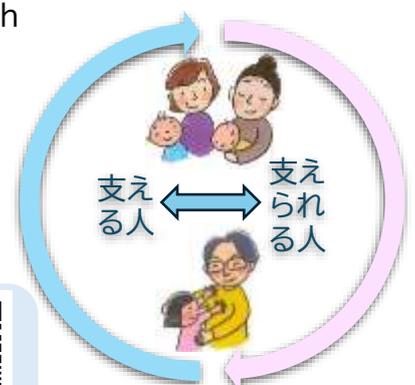
One of the important perspectives is who provides guidance and advice in what circumstances, rather than making parents passive recipients of expert guidance and advice. Build relationships where they can empathetically help each other, accepting the feelings when things do not go as they wish, instead of aiming at the prompt elimination of anxieties and concerns.

- Referring to local resources and appropriate support

Aiming at the realization of "a city where it is easier to give birth to and raise children", the Ward implements "*Neuvola* [places of advice in Finnish] Setagaya" to accompany and support expectant and nursing mothers as well as families with children without disruption.

The facilities, etc. should seek to ensure that all families with children are connected to local people and support close to them, including through collaboration with "community parenting support coordinators".

[Reference] Setagaya Ward's website
Neuvola Setagaya (seamless support from pregnancy through to early childhood)



Cycle of support between those who support and are supported

○ Cycle of support in the community

Create a “cycle of support”, in which parents will turn to supporters to back up the connectivity and continuity of support in the community.

What is good in “drop-in spaces” is that visitors and the staff have equal relationships. The staff don’t look down on parents, and parents are not treated as customers. They can spend time “together” beyond the relationship of “support-supported”. (Comment by a volunteer)



Do you confirm “Can I hold you up?”, rather than suddenly holding the kid?
(Source: Setagaya Holistic Children’s Rights Project
See the back issues (in Japanese) from → 

3 Development of the community capacity of parenting

I was greeted at a supermarket nearby by a middle-aged man with whom I enjoyed roasted sweet potatoes at a drop-in space. I finally felt that I’m really raising my child in this community.



Children do not grow up only at home or within the facilities, etc. Interactions with others promote children’s sociality and make the community a place where they can live with a sense of security. In order to ensure that children live happily in the present and develop the basis of the power to create the future, we should seek to expand their intergenerational “connectedness” with the people in the community, carefully and taking plenty of time.

A class of 2-year-olds of [the certified center for early childhood education and care](#) visited a facility for older persons for the purpose of exchange. They looked stiff at first, perhaps because both of them felt nervous, but they gradually opened their heart and got amicable! Warm interactions between 2-year-old children and a 93-year-old lady made me realize the importance of local exchanges. We have continued the exchanges and they are now getting along well like friends.

Playing store was popular at my [daycare center](#), then the parents managed to let them open a shop at a local festival. The shop by young children made our connection with the community deeper and the people came to have better understanding of children in the daycare center. Children came to have more confidence and motivation, too.

My daughter used to come to the [drop-in space](#) with me (mother) since she was young. She's now going to elementary school, and she's eager to care for babies at the space, saying, "Now I'm a volunteer!"

Kids were preparing for an exhibition at [the certified center for early childhood education and care](#), featuring things concerning the sea. They were saying, "I want to make sea otters! They float on their back! They break shellfish crams and eat them!" Then a child wondered, "How do shellfish crams look like?" They became excited and said, "Okay, let's go and see at a nearby fish shop!" The local fish shop prepared a lot for children and gave them shells as keepsakes when they left the shop. Later, children went to the fish shop to give the owner flowers as a sign of appreciation on the Labor Thanksgiving Day.

The children's center serves as the secretariat of [the social gathering for parents](#), organizing events for young children in collaboration with local drop-in spaces, daycare centers, counsellors to support parenting (working at children and families support centers) as well as civil society organizations and individuals. Through the preparatory process and the events themselves, these activities lead to the development of the relationships where supporters recognize each other and feel free to get in touch regularly. Collaboration of the supporters leads to the resolution of the concerns expressed by parents living in the community.

When I came to [the children's center](#) as a parent of an infant, I found that there

were volunteers. Now I work as a volunteer myself and support parents of young children at the events organized by the children's center.

VI Collaboration among Different Facilities and Entities for Early Childhood

As part of the Ward's unique initiatives, *Hoiku Netto* (childcare networks) are active in five areas in the Ward. There are other forms of networking activities across the Ward, including "Neighborhood Teams" (consultation mechanisms of neighboring daycare centers) and "Buddies" (consultation mechanisms of neighboring daycare centers established by the Ward). It is necessary to work for the improvement of the quality of daycare across Setagaya Ward by promoting in-person relationships and sharing information through such local networks.

【Checkpoints on collaboration】

- Participation in local childcare networks

Are you building in-person relationships through sharing information and challenges, with a view to improving the quality of daycare?

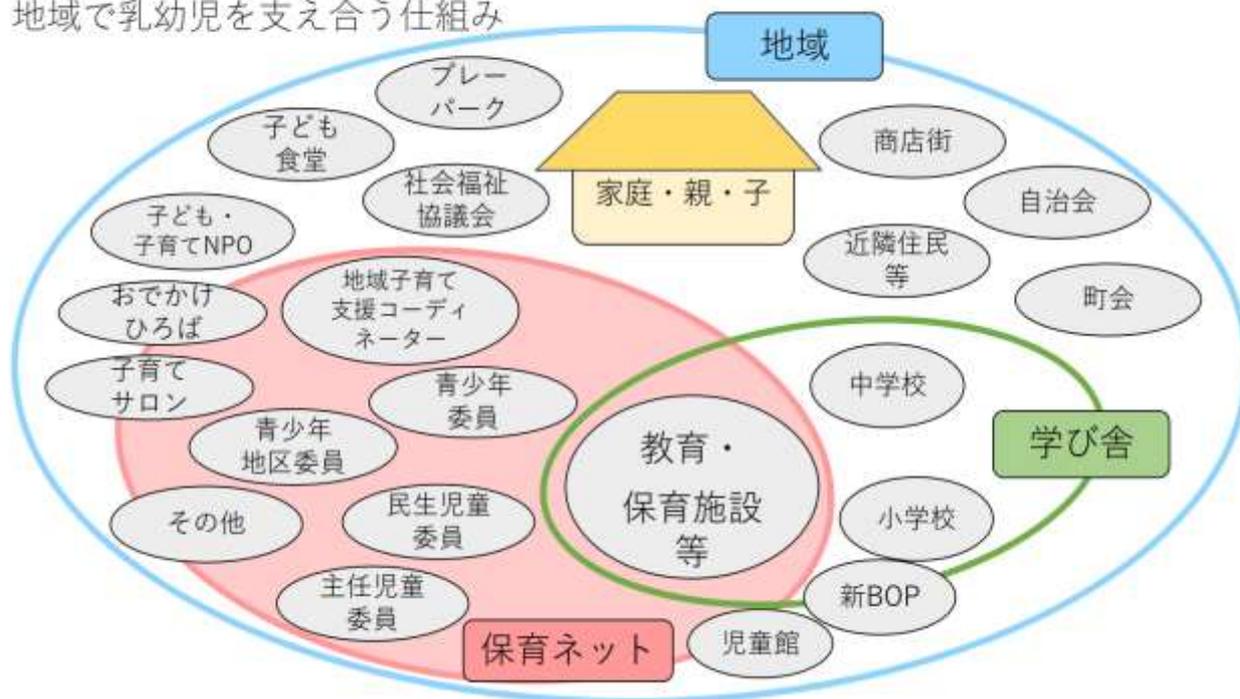
- Visits to other facilities, etc.

Are you trying to know the practice of education and care in other facilities, including through visiting them, and making use of the findings in your facilities, etc.?

- Expansion of the "connectedness" with the community for children's development

Do you provide your facility's resources (such as kitty pools and picture story boards) to other facilities?

保育の質ガイドラインにみる
地域で乳幼児を支え合う仕組み



Networks to support young children in the community reflected in the Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare

Community

〔「家庭・親・子」の左／保育ネットの枠外〕

Playparks Children's cafés NPOs for children and parenting
Council of Social Welfare

〔「家庭・親・子」の右／保育ネットの枠外〕

Shopping streets Residents associations Local residents
Neighborhood associations

Home / Parents / Children

Educational Institutions

Junior high schools Elementary schools New BOPs [bases of playing]
Facilities, etc. for education and day care

Hoiku Netto (childcare network)

Drop-in spaces Parenting salons
Community parenting support coordinators Youth commissioners
District youth commissioners Others
Welfare commissioners for children Chief welfare commissioners for children
Children's centers

VII. Objects and Status of the Revision of the Guidelines

We aim to ensure that each and every child can realize his/her well-being as “a subject who live in the present”.

1 Objects of the Revision of the Guidelines

(1) Features of the revision of the Guidelines

The Guidelines put down what are provided for in the four general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and make it clear that children themselves are subjects of rights, so that they serve as the basic guidance for practicing “child-rights centered daycare”.

In addition, we conducted hearings from a wide range of people, including children who attend all kinds of facilities, etc. concerning children and their parents as well as parents whose children would attend the facilities, etc. in the near future, about the status of the facilities, etc., how they feel now, what they expect and/or wish in the future. These views were reflected in the Guidelines.

(2) Changing environment of and emerging challenges for daycare

The Ward formulated the original guidelines in March 2015 as the basic guidance for all the facilities, etc. for practicing “child- centered daycare”. They were prepared by the Committee to Formulate the Setagaya Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare, which had met many times for discussions on the basis of the standards developed by the Ward to improve the quality of daycare through the discussions at the Committee on the Improvement on the Quality of Daycare and for the review of managing entities of private certified daycare centers or the guidance round of daycare centers. Since the formulation of the Guidelines, the Ward had promoted common understanding of how education and care should be provided among the administration, managing entities, parents and communities and sought to maintain and improve the quality of daycare.

Since the formulation of the Guidelines, demands for daycare have continued to be high, including because early childhood education and daycare was made free of charge and because the employment of women has been on the rise; against this background, the Ward has been involved in the provision of the facilities in order to reduce the number of children on the waiting list for daycare centers, focusing both on the quality and the quantity. Consequently the status quo of the facilities,

etc. has gone through major changes, including the increase in the number and the diversification of the services and providers.

In addition, a decade of the implementation of the Guidelines has witnessed the frequent occurrence of abuse (inappropriate care) in the facilities in the Ward, making it more important to work for education and care which protects children's rights.

(3) Circumstances affecting the Ward

The protection and promotion of children's rights has increasingly gained social momentum, as the Children and Families Agency was established in April 2023, the Basic Act on Children came into force and the policy document "General Principles for Child-Related Measures" was adopted. In 2024/25, the Ward formulated the Third Comprehensive Plan for Children and Young People, which forms the basis of the Ward's policies on children and young people, and partially amended the Setagaya Ordinance on Children, which is now called the Setagaya Ordinance on the Rights of the Child.

(4) Revision and the future use of the Guidelines

The process of revising the Guidelines began with the establishment of the Committee on the Revision of the Setagaya Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare in July 2024. Bearing in mind the essential ideas of the Setagaya Ordinance on the Rights of the Child, the Committee was involved in discussions with a wide range of stakeholders, including those working in the facilities, etc., parents and persons with relevant knowledge and experience, with a view to realizing a society where children's well-being is realized, and made the contents of the Guidelines tailored to today's needs. The revised Guidelines are expected to be made use of each and every member of the staff working in the facilities, etc. in the daily practice of education and care and to be widely shared among parents, managing entities, community members and other actors so that adults around children can guarantee children's rights and support their healthy development.

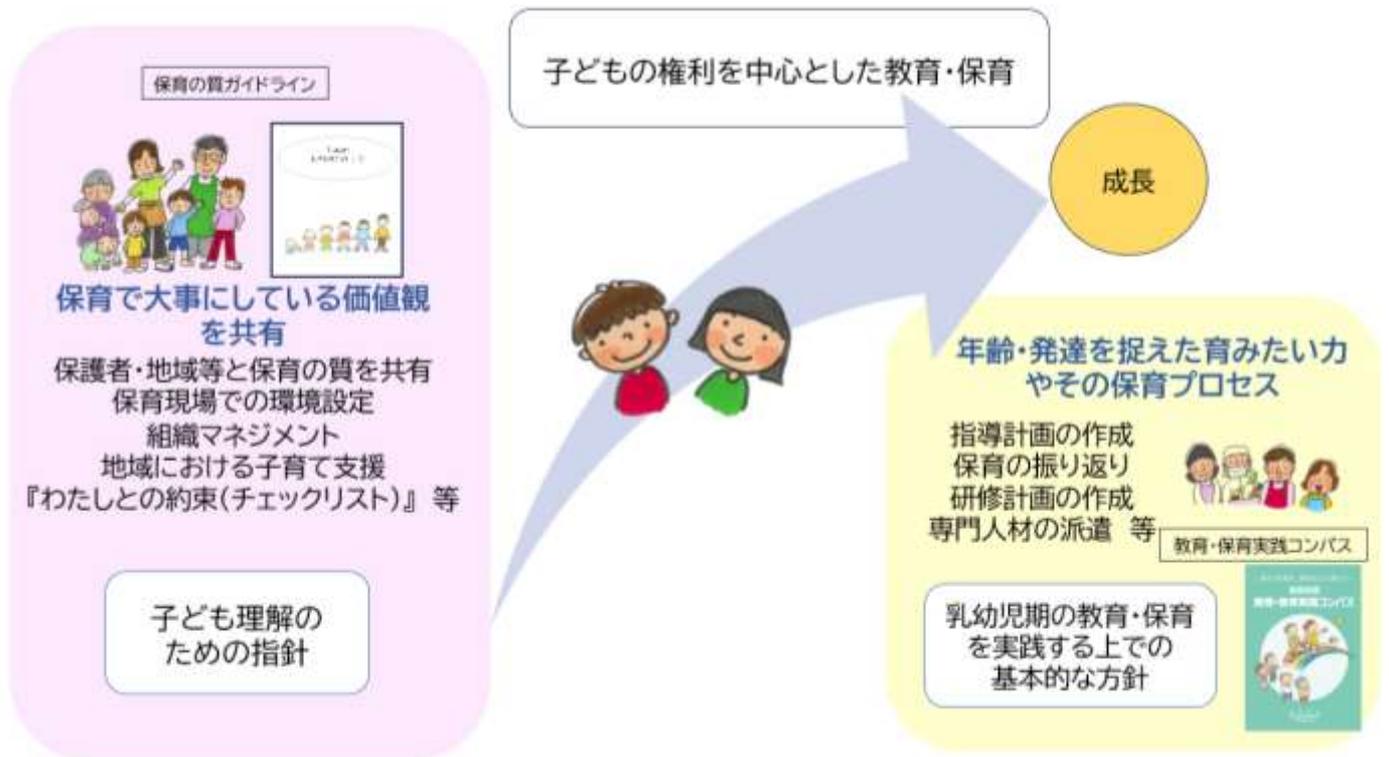
2 The status of the Guidelines

(1) Making use of the Guidelines and the Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare

The Ward has developed the Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare and the Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare, with a view to improving the quality of education and daycare during early childhood. These tools are expected to be used in combination to support education and daycare in multifaceted ways.

On the basis of the national Guidelines on Daycare in Daycare Centers, the Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare provide guidance for having better understanding of children, while focusing on each and every child, and practicing “child rights-centered daycare”. It was developed to enable the facilities and their staff to share the values considered to be important in daycare and put them into practice, with a view to promoting daycare which respects children’s feelings and views.

The Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare provides basic policies for education and daycare during early childhood that should be shared and sought for by those working in the facilities, etc. It was developed as a tool to enrich education and daycare with the prospects for children’s development in accordance with their age and practical awareness of the daily processes. In order to practice appropriate interactions suited to each and every child, the staff are encouraged to be regularly involved in co-learning and reflections among the staff.



Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare (in Japanese)



Child-rights centered education and daycare

Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare

Sharing the values considered to be important in daycare

Sharing the quality of daycare with parents, the community, etc.

Providing for the environment in daycare settings

Organizational management Parenting support in the community

Promises with Me (Checklist), etc.

[Guidance for understanding children]

Development

Capacities to be developed in accordance with children's age and development and daycare processes for the purpose

Preparing teaching plans Reflections on daycare practices

Preparing training plans Deploying experts, etc.

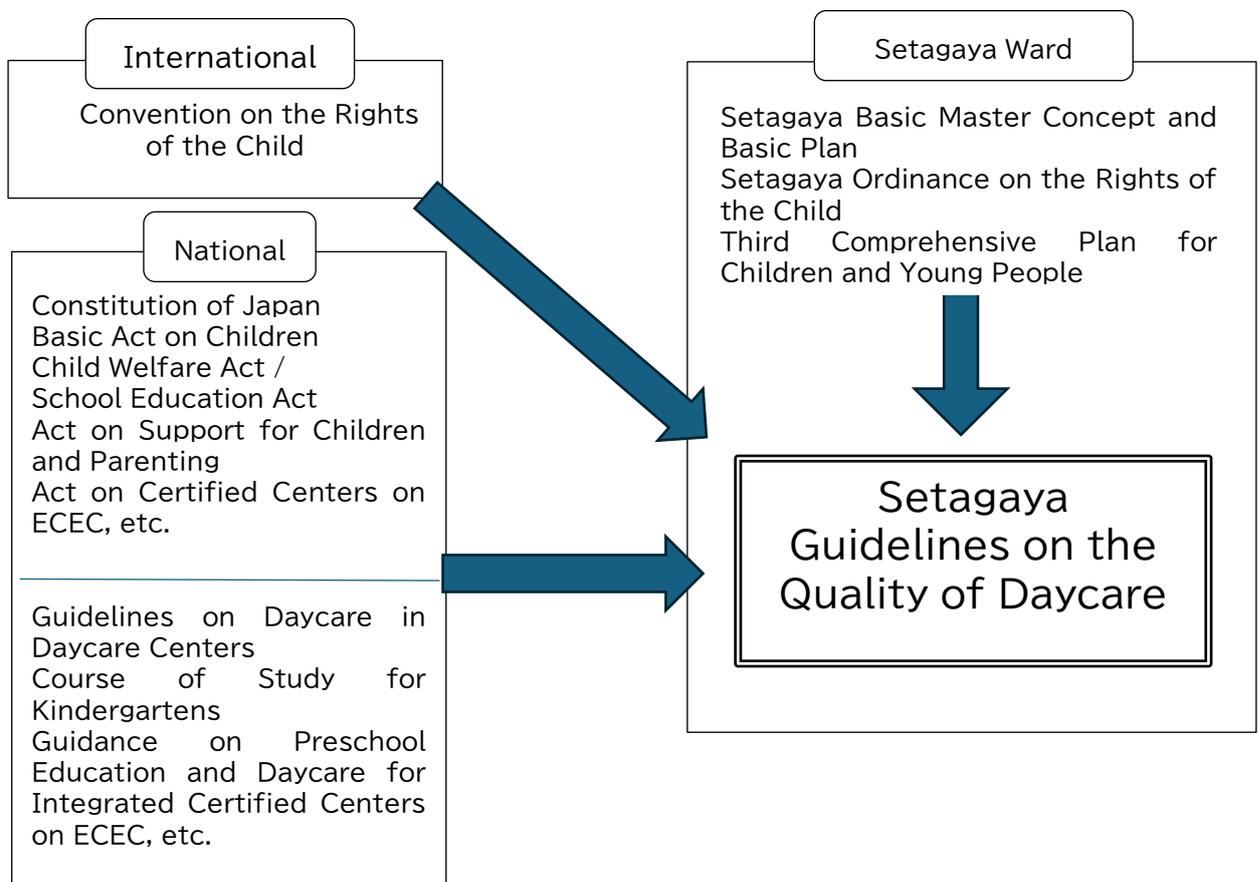
Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare

Basic policies for education and daycare during early childhood

(2) Relationship between the Guidelines and Laws, Plans, etc.

The Guidelines are intended to serve as the guidance for all the facilities, etc. to practice “child rights-centered daycare”, on the basis of the Basic Act on Children, the national Guidelines on Daycare in Daycare Centers and other materials.

The Guidelines will be updated regularly in accordance with the changes in the environment and situations surrounding children, reflecting what is stated in the Third Comprehensive Plan for Children and Young People and the Setagaya Ordinance on the Rights of the Child as well as in alignment with the Setagaya Basic Master Concept and Basic Plan, which serves as an upper-level plan in the Ward.



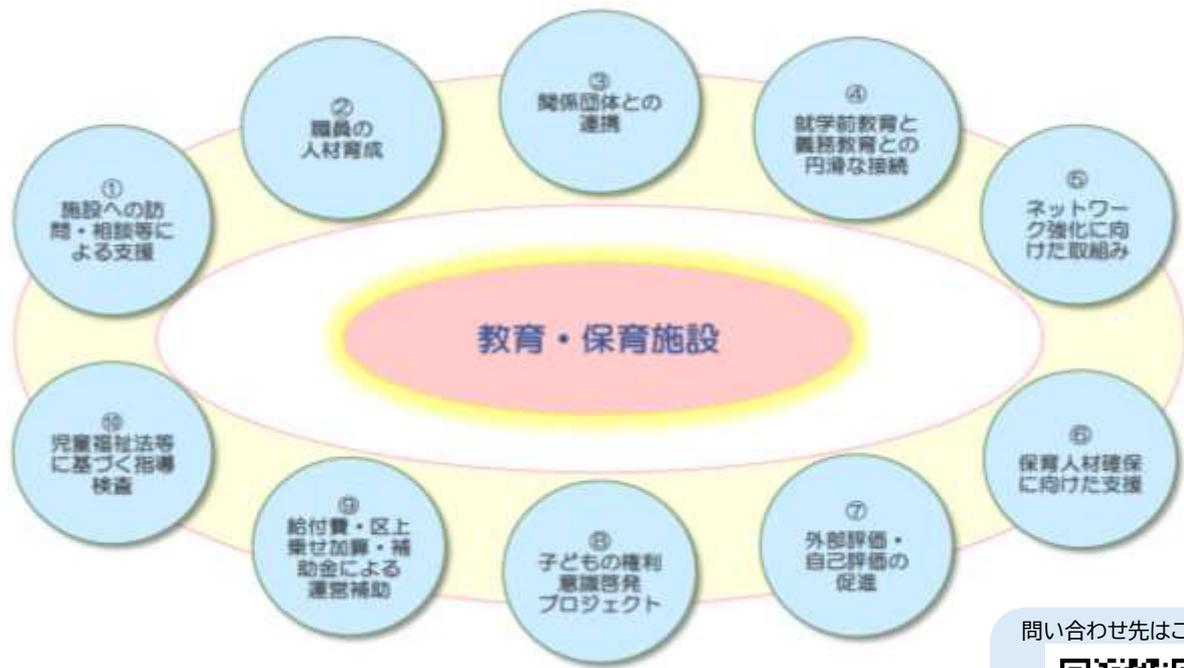
VIII Main Measures by the Ward to Improve the Quality of the Facilities

While there are various forms of facilities, etc., the Ward provides different kinds of support to them, irrespective of who established them and what kind of service they provide, consistently from their establishment through to their operation, on the basis of the perspectives embedded in the Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare and the Compass for the Practice of Education and Daycare. The purposes of such support are to protect and promote the rights of all children who use these services, to realize their well-being and to secure the environment where all families can raise their children with a sense of security. In order to ensure that all the facilities, etc. put “the management which guarantees children’s rights” into practice and to seek for the realization of “a city where each and every child can try what he/she wants to do in accordance with his/her unique personality with a happy face”, we will continue to make efforts, together with the management entities, the staff, parents and the community, to operate the facilities, etc. in a manner which protects children’s safety and security and to maintain and improve the quality.

<p>(1) Support through visits and advice to the facilities</p>	<p>Specialized professionals (nursery teachers, nurses and nutritionists) visit all the daycare centers in the Ward, confirming what kinds of daycare is provided, how hygiene is controlled, how children are doing and whether they are healthy or not, together with the facility concerned (Daycare Support Visit). In addition, “specialized supporters on daycare management”, who are ex-heads of the facilities and have rich knowledge and experience, provide advice and support; “regular visits” to the facilities are also conducted by the clerical and other staff of the Ward. In these ways, we seek to enrich the content of daycare and to build “in-person relationships” between the facilities and the administration.</p>
<p>(2) Human development of the staff</p>	<p>We plan and provide training sessions at the opening of the facilities as well as in different disciplines tailored to the staff’s career stages, including on necessary knowledge to protect children’s lives and in necessary fields for professionals (such as children’s rights and human rights), for public / private kindergartens and daycare facilities. By providing training for the staff from different facilities, we seek to bring about the improvement of the quality of daycare through information-sharing and co-learning among them, in addition to the enhancement of knowledge as professionals. Online training and training through archived videos are also provided so that more facilities can make use of these opportunities. We also send outside experts (such as coordinators) to public / private kindergartens and daycare centers, who work with the facilities from supportive and collaborative perspectives that take advantage of the facilities’ strength, with a view to improving the</p>

	quality of daycare and management capacities of the facilities by reinforcing the process (PDCA) of daycare focusing on children's development.
(3) Collaboration with the relevant bodies	By being involved in closer collaboration with the relevant bodies, including the Setagaya Private Nursery School Association and the Setagaya Association of Private Kindergartens, we provide explanation and information concerning the progress of the Ward's projects and other matters, including through regular meetings of the facilities' heads and administrative briefing meetings; we also provide support for the projects by these organizations, such as job fairs. In addition, we organize the Liaison Conference of Those Involved in Education and Daycare in Early Childhood, composed of public elementary and junior high schools, public / private kindergartens and daycare facilities and the Ward, and other forums where the representatives of the Ward and public / private daycare facilities can be involved frank discussion. Through these channels, we reflect the voices from the field in future policies and consider jointly how we can manage the facilities so that children's safety and security is secured and improve the quality of daycare.
(4) Smooth transition from pre-school to compulsory education	With a view to promoting smooth transition from pre-school to compulsory education, we organize exchanges between the facilities through "Manabiya" (educational institutions), a group of public elementary and junior high schools as well as public / private kindergartens and daycare facilities established in each junior high school district. We have also introduced "approach / start curriculum" for this purpose.
(5) Efforts to strengthen networks	The activities of "Hoiku Netto" (networks of those working in the field of daycare) are undertaken spontaneously and voluntarily in five areas within the Ward, with the shared understanding that it is important to work for the improvement of the quality of daycare through mutual support of different facilities. In addition to providing indirect support for their activities, the Ward promotes exchanges beyond the districts for the purpose of the development of mutually supportive relationships. All the children's center in the Ward are involved in information-sharing and exchange of opinions concerning parenting by providing opportunities for roundtables and other meetings, attended by different stakeholders in the community, as the parenting support centers. They promote the reinforcement of networks to keep an affectionate eye on and provide support to children and families with children regularly, including through collaboration with community parenting support coordinators and the local councils of social welfare.
(6) Support to secure daycare workers	In order to support the facilities in securing and retaining daycare workers, the Ward is involved in the administration of the portal site of information on daycare workers, the organization of job consultations and the development of the relationship with training schools for daycare workers by commissioning these works to the companies with expertise in staffing and through collaboration and cooperation with public employment security offices and other actors.

	<p>We also seek to create favorable conditions for the staff to work by supporting them to find housing through the subsidy schemes provided by the national and Tokyo governments and by improving their treatment on the Ward's own initiative.</p> <p>In temporary daycare facilities, we provide necessary training for parents to work as carers, with a view to developing "the cycle of support" in which parents would also become supporters.</p>
(7) Promotion of external and self- evaluation	<p>We promote that all the facilities, etc. receive independent evaluation regularly and be involved in third-party and self-evaluation, with a view to supporting them in working together to improve the quality of daycare across the Ward.</p>
(8) Awareness-Raising Project on Children's Rights (Holistic Children's Rights Project)	<p>On the basis of the Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare, we provide opportunities for all the adults around children to reflect on children's rights and development, with a view to realizing child-centered parenting. We are involved in the provision of information as well as dissemination and awareness-raising on the rights of young children, targeting the adults who are closest to children.</p>
(9) Subsidies for Operation through the provision of benefits, additional payments and grants	<p>In case of the certified daycare centers, the Ward gives additional payments to the managing entities which create good conditions for daycare, including for the additional deployment of nursery teachers, cooks and public health nurses in accordance with the Ward's criteria, by adding its own items to the national Standards Concerning the Facilities and Operation of Child Welfare Facilities.</p> <p>For private kindergartens, we provide subsidies for their projects for such purposes as the improvement of their educational conditions, with a view to supporting the creation of better conditions for education.</p>
(10) Guidance inspection of daycare facilities, etc. on the basis of the relevant legislation	<p>With a view to confirming that the facilities are operated in accordance with the standards established by the relevant laws, such as the Child Welfare Act and the Act on Support for Children and Parenting, we conduct guidance inspections (on-site inquiries) of the facilities in order to provide necessary advice and guidance or to take correctional measures, seeking to ensure appropriate operation of the facilities and the improvement of environment for users.</p> <p>The outcomes of guidance inspections are published on the website and through other means, both to pursue the improvement of the quality of the facilities and to help the residents to make choices among different facilities.</p>



問い合わせ先はこちら



Educational and Daycare Facilities

[訳者注／周りの 10 個のサークルは前掲表に対応]

Contact details (in Japanese):

Member List

Committee on the Revision of the Setagaya Guidelines on the Quality of Daycare

Chair	INOUE Mariko	Professor, Senshoku Junior College of Childhood Education
Vice-Chair	OKA Ken	Professor, Otsuma Women's University
Member	MORITA Akemi	Professor Emeritus, Toyo University
Member	UEDA Mika	Lecturer, Toyo University
Member	KOJIMA Taisuke	Head, Sakurashinmachi Nursery School
Member	KITAMURA Hideto	Head, Showa Certified Center for ECEC attached to Showa Women's University
Member	SHIMIZU Yayoi	Chief Director, Social Welfare Service Corporation Junseikihaku Kai
Member	MATSUDA Taeko	Representative Director, Specified Nonprofit Corporation Setagaya Parenting Net
Member	IZAWA Emiko	Chair, Setagaya Parents Association on Daycare
Member	MATSUMOTO Yukio	Director, Children and Youth Department, Setagaya Ward
Member	IKEGAMI Akemi	Head, Setagaya Nursery School

Daycare Division, Children and Youth Department, Setagaya Ward



