

<p>6. Survey and Research on Improving the Physical Stamina of Children Leader: SASAI Hiromi, Senior Researcher, Department for Lifelong Learning Policy Research</p>

(1) Purpose and Aim of Study

[Purpose and Aims of Policy Formation]

Changes in the social environment and living conditions have in recent years reduced opportunities for physical exercise and have generated changes in lifestyle habits that have impacted the physical and mental development of children in many ways. In particular, children's physical stamina and ability to exercise have followed a long-term downward trend. As social conditions continue to change, declining physical stamina has become a source of serious concern for the future because stamina provides a foundation for children, who will shoulder the future of this country, to lead fulfilling personal lives and to create a cheerful and dynamic society. With this in mind, this study will implement projects for promoting the improvement of children's physical stamina and will seek to encourage the improvement of stamina and the formation of desirable lifestyle habits in children.

[Purpose and Aim of Survey and Research]

The survey is repeated annually over three consecutive years to observe changes and trends in results to determine (a) the level of improvement in children's physical stamina and ability to exercise, (b) the level of improvement in children's lifestyle habits, (c) the level of improvement of guardians' awareness of exercise and lifestyle habits, and (d) the level of improvement in teachers' awareness.

(2) Outline of Research Results

Quantitative information was collected on the following matters.

[Research Results Pertaining to Children]

- Conditions related to physical stamina of children
- Conditions related to exercise habits and lifestyle habits of children
- Impact of exercise on general living conditions of children

[Research Results Pertaining to Guardians]

- Guardians' awareness of physical stamina and health
- Interaction of guardians and children through sports, etc.
- Impact of exercise on general living conditions of guardians

[Research Results Pertaining to Teachers]

- Teachers' awareness of physical stamina and health
- Teachers' observations of changes in children

[Research Results on Changes over Time in Children's and Guardians' Awareness of Physical Stamina and Health]

- The above studies were conducted in a total of 42 designated "implementation sites" located throughout Japan over a three-year period to measure changes over time in results for children, guardians, and teachers and to observe the impact of exercise.

[Research Results on Differences Attributable to Program Implementation]

- The study involves "participating schools" where the stamina improvement programs are implemented and "pilot schools" where the programs are not implemented. The effects of program implementation were gauged by comparing stamina and ability to exercise in the two sets of schools.