

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Newsletter No.2

Edited and published by the International Relations Office. City of Kyoto

The second council meeting of FY 2010 was held.

<Time and Date>

10:00 A.M. to Noon, Tue. Sep. 7th, 2010

<Venue>

International Community House

<Agenda>

Multicultural symbiosis from the view point of communication and parenting



To live in Japan comfortably, it is important for foreign residents to communicate smoothly (with locals) and to lower the language barrier. The issues of language barrier and parenting by foreign residents were taken up and discussed in the meeting. As a result, useful information and clues that could be proposed to the city for the betterment of the society were gained.

--Multicultural Childcare --

Utilizing actively the interaction between Japanese parents and foreign residents and those who have their roots in foreign countries in childcare arena.

--Medical care for foreign residents--

(including those who have their roots in foreign countries)

Language support related to receiving medical care with peace of mind for foreign residents and those who have their roots in foreign countries.

--Supporting foreign women and their children--

(including those having their roots in foreign countries)

How should we help those who raise children and have difficulty in communicating?

Report on the issue of nursery from multicultural symbiotic approach ~ Kibo-no-ie Catholic Hoikuen (nursery school) ~

Kibo-no-ie Catholic Hoikuen located in Minami Ward, Kyoto accepts many children having foreign nationalities or having their roots in foreign countries including Korean residents in Japan. They greet each other with in both Japanese and Korean. Korean rice and kimchi are served at lunch time.

The school holds events twice a month where games and dishes by the foreign residents are introduced. They also devote some time to “Nursery from multicultural symbiotic approach (point of view)” so that the children can get to know about various cultures. The children voluntarily acquire various cultures such as Korean, Thai, Philippine, Chinese, Russian, Indonesian, Finish through friendly visitors. At “Higashi-kujo Madan”, a local festival, and at the school recitals, children enjoy dancing clad (??) their ethnic costumes expressing joy of multiple cultures.

--Presenter's opinion--

- Elementary and junior-high schools are gradually introducing multicultural programs. Nursery schools also should pay more attention to it.
- We need more cooperation from local residents when we hold events at the parks and old schools in their neighborhood to spread multiple cultures.
- We would like to cooperate with the government to encourage many citizens to understand multiple cultures and to aim at building a comfortable society.

Kibo-no-ie Catholic Hoikuen (nursery school)

28 Iwamoto-cho Higashikujo, Minami-ku, Kyoto City 601-8006

TEL: 075 681-6881 HP: <http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/k-c-cho/index.html>

Column: Higashi-kujo Madan

“Higashi-kujo Madan” is a local festival held every autumn in Higashi-kujo, Minami-ku. It is a an event where not only Koreans and Japanese but also other people regardless of their ethnicity, nationality and physical status interact with each other.

This year, the festival was held on November 3, at Toka Elementary School Various performances including Korean instrumental music, dances and games; Indonesian Gamelan music; a big Nogakutai Korean instrument troupe and Japanese drums were carried out. Food stalls serving Korean dishes, Thai curry, takoyaki, etc. and shops selling products made at the facilities for retarded people were installed at the school ground. It served as Madan which in Korean means a plaza for people to interact with each other.



Report on medical care for foreign residents

~ Efforts by NPO Tabunka Kyosei Center Kyoto ~

Tabunka Kyosei Center Kyoto is working on a support program to help getting medical care with peace of mind in Japan for those foreign residents who have difficulty in speaking Japanese. Both Japanese language and culture are different from that of the mother countries' of these residents. Such people face several barriers in receiving medical services.

- Language and communication barriers. (Inability to express symptoms of their problems and not understand the instructions of the doctor in charge)
- Religious and cultural differences (e. g. Prohibited food items and unwillingness by patients being examined by a doctor of opposite sex.)
- Difference of treatment methods and the type of drugs (difference in prescription and sensitivity to drugs)
- Difference of medical practice and custom The number of diagnostic tests and the difference of other processes
- Financial problem (Hospitals tend to avoid foreign residents because of being worried that they might not be able to pay the medical bill.)

--Presenter's opinion--

- Medical Interpretation Service should be a paid job, not a volunteer service.
- In the case of childbirth, not only the hospital, but public health centers are also involved. Therefore the Medical Interpreter Service alone cannot deal with the situation, other supportive interpretation systems are needed.

NPO Tabunka Kyosei Center, Kyoto
6F Izutsu Bldg., 143 Manjuji-cho, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto, 600-8104
TEL: 075-353-7205 HP: <http://www.tabunka-kyoto.org/>

Medical Interpreter Service (Free of charge)

The City of Kyoto, NPO Tabunka Kyosei Center Kyoto, Kyoto City International Foundation and four hospitals in Kyoto collaborate in providing the service of dispatching medical interpreters to hospitals.

- Provided languages: English, Chinese, Korean
- Hospitals where medical interpreters are dispatched
 - Kyoto City Hospital (Nakagyo-ku) 075-311-5311
 - Koseikai Takeda Hospital (Shimogyo-ku) 075-361-1351
 - Ijinkai Takeda Sogo Hospital (Fushimi-ku) 075-572-6331
 - Kyoto Katsura Hospital (Nishikyo-ku) 075-391-5811
- How to apply: Apply beforehand at the hospital. The interpreter will be dispatched on the day of appointment. Service days differ from hospital to hospital.

Report on the support for foreign women including those having their roots in foreign countries and their children

~ The efforts by Kyoto YWCA · APT~

Kyoto YWCA · APT is conducting multi-lingual telephone consultation and other supportive services for foreign women. The consultation areas vary from “Japanese laws and welfare programs” and “marriage and divorce with Japanese” to “childrearing”. It also works on a multicultural programs including holding classes at elementary and junior-high schools, workshops, lectures, and research on educational materials so as to create a society where people of different culture and sense of value can be accepted.

--Presenter's opinions--

- Among foreign women who have been granted residential permit as “Japanese spouse”, there are some who have ended up with divorce due to domestic violence by their husbands and some who have failed to update their visas. As a result, they lost the right to stay in Japan and are regarded as illegal residents.
- A foreign residents community would have helped providing necessary information.
- Joint efforts by private sectors, government, communities and citizens are expected to cope with the problems confronting foreign women.
- It is very difficult to study Japanese while raising a child. Easily accessible Japanese classes for such mothers are needed.

Kyoto YMCA · APT

44 Konoe-cho, Muromachi-Demizu-agaru, Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto 602-8019

TEL: 075-431-0351 HP: <http://kyoto.ywca.or.jp/>

The council members have exchanged opinions with the members of Shizuoka City Foreign Residents Council.

Seven members of Shizuoka City Foreign Residents Council came to Kyoto to observe the meeting of Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy. After the meeting, the members have exchanged opinions with them about the situation of foreign residents in both cities. While 60 % of foreign residents in Kyoto are Korean, the so called “new comers” including 27% Chinese, 20% Korean, 15% Pilipino and 13% Brazilian comprise the largest number of foreign resident in Shizuoka.

As all the council members in Shizuoka are foreign residents, some members stated that some Japanese should also be included in the Shizuoka council.



We have hosted a section meeting on multicultural symbiosis at the “Japan Women’s Conference in Kyoto 2010”.

“Japan Women’s Conference in Kyoto 2010” was held from Fri. Oct. 1 to Sun. Oct. 3 focusing on gender equality. A section meeting with the theme of “Multicultural symbiosis from a view point of foreign women” was held on the first day, with the participation of five members of the council who made presentations and discussed the theme.

Three members made presentations on the theme “Aiming at the society where every woman can live easily” from view points of foreign residents and of those Japanese who supports these women.

<Time and date> 14:00~16:30, October 1st.

<Venue> International Conference Center

<Participants>

Chairman: Mr. Ogawa

Moderator: Mr. Tokura

Presenters: Ms. Kim Kwangmin, Ms. Mizutori, Ms. Yoshimura

Other participants: Mr. Kanzaki, Ms. Kim, Ms. Uliana

Report 1: Multicultural symbiosis in community and in child rearing by Ms. Kim.

Report 2: Women’s employment in France by Ms. Mizutori

Report 3: Support programs for foreign women by Ms. Yoshimura



All the 100 seats were occupied by the participants from other prefectures. Both those who are involved in the multicultural programs on daily basis and those who were not, actively discussed and exchanged opinions.

--Opinions from the council members--

- It is important for children to interact with people and have multicultural experience from early ages. Such experiences will make a society where various values and ways of thinking would be accepted.
- Foreign residents face language and social barriers and barrier in mentality. Isolated in the community, foreign women engaged in child rearing might feel much better if someone in the neighborhood spoke a few words to them. I want the community residents to positively talk to such women even to the extent that she might even feel a little annoyed.
- Japanese system is not developed well to raise children by the society as a whole because of the lack of day care centers. The idea that mothers should better have jobs has not yet permeated in the society.



--Questions and opinions from the audience--

- I am teaching Japanese in the community. The situation that foreign women are facing is very serious. Having children, many of them can only rely on their husbands. We try to help them. However, protection of privacy and individual information protection prevent us from doing so.
- A married foreign woman lives in my neighborhood. Since she has a child, I have invited her to a gathering for children and other events in the community. However she has not opened up yet. The reason might be inability to understand the language.
- I guess the information necessary for the foreign residents is not well communicated.
- Japanese think that breeding children is mother's job.



--Conclusion--

- We would like to create an energetic society where everyone can exercise his/her ability with the cooperation of local residents, private groups and the government.
- Abandoning the preconceptions that “Women must be so and so . . .” and “So and so country is this or that . . .” are closely related. A society where living for foreign residents is difficult, is also difficult for Japanese to live in.
- Although all members of the community are not Japanese, they all can be called members of Japanese society. All are the bearers of the Japanese society where multicultural symbiosis is achieved.

We have conducted a survey on the satellite meeting on multicultural symbiosis in “Japan Women’s Conference in Kyoto 2010”

Many people answered the questionnaire which was handed out after the meeting. Most of these were participants from outside Kyoto Prefecture. Almost a half of those who answered were in touch with foreign residents on daily basis such as those with international marriages and volunteers helping foreign residents.

--Result of the survey-- (75 people answered)

Place of residence

Kinki area: 26 Others: 49

Are you interacting with foreign residents and tourists in daily basis?

Yes: 30 No: 35

⇒ Have you ever felt (Do you feel) that you were (are) helped or benefited by your daily interactions with foreign residents and tourists from overseas?

Yes: 26 No: 4

(Example:

- There is a joy to know the cultural variety.
- To know a foreign country is to rediscover your own culture.
- Your food culture became rich by learning foreign cuisine.
- You have learned the obvious fact that even people of same nationality have variety of characters.)

⇒ Did you have difficulty in interaction with foreign residents in your daily life?

Yes: 13 No: 17

(Example: Communication difficulty, differences in money sense, food, talking style, traffic manners and sense of time. Not knowing if being easygoing and loose in keeping time is a national trait or individual characteristics.)

--Opinions from the participants--

- I have was reminded again of the importance of interaction with foreign residents in the community.
- I was lucky to have the opportunity to listen to the discussions on “multicultural symbiosis”, a topic that I didn’t expect at the Women’s Conference. I was quite impressed with City of Kyoto which has been deeply involved in this issue.
- I hope Japanese society will be transformed into a place where women rearing children can have jobs like in France. And a society where member should not ask women to choose between jobs and family chores, including parenting.
- The issue of foreign residents in Kyoto differ from other prefectures. Cities with many foreign laborers having arrived recently in Japan have different issues to be addressed.
- I was impressed with what had been discussed. Being a preparatory school teacher, I would like to impart to my pupils the efforts on multicultural symbiosis.

Colum: Open Day at Kyoto International Community House

“Open Day 2010” was successfully held at the Kyoto International Community House on Nov. 3rd attracting more than 10,000 visitors who enjoyed cuisines, music and dances from many countries. “Bankoku ECO Mura” or eco village with international food stalls had served dishes from 17 countries at 21 stalls.

At the Global Stage, world music and dances including those of South America and Africa were performed. Many other events including English Zen meditation class and world crafts making were held which were enjoyed by both Japanese and foreign residents both adults and children.



Notice

If you have any opinion regarding the newsletters and the council, please contact us at the following address. Anyone can take part in the meetings as an observer.

For the back numbers, please contact us below.

Secretariat for Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

International Relations Office, City of Kyoto

488 Kamihonnojimae-cho, Teramachi-dori, Oike-agaru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto

Tel: 075-222-3072, Fax: 075-222-3055

Website: http://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/sogo/soshiki/2-10-0-0-0__1.html

E-mail: kokusai@city.kyoto.jp