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Preface

In recent years international cooperation in education has come to emphasize early childhood development (ECD)—children’s development before they enter school and the role of education during that period. Along with greater recognition of the importance of early childhood development itself, this movement has been based on the idea that enhancing preschool education not only prepares children to be ready to learn but also leads to expanded access to primary and secondary education as well as better educational quality.

At present, it is unfortunately not possible to state that preschool education has become sufficiently widespread in developing countries. One report reveals that around 30% of children are enrolled in preschool education. In addition, preschool education supply is concentrated in urban areas; enrolment ratios in rural areas and among the poor are even lower. Internationally, preschool education has been recognized as a part of basic education both in the Jomtien Declaration of 1990 and the Dakar Framework for Action of 2000, and its importance is being increasingly acknowledged. International organization like UNICEF and the World Bank are starting to provide support for early childhood development, but on the whole, that assistance is not yet adequate. There is ample research supporting the importance of preschool education and it will likely be an important area of international educational cooperation into the future.

This report summarizes the development of early childhood education in Japan and the related knowledge and experience Japan has accumulated. At present, almost all children in Japan (around 95%) receive early childhood education and care at either kindergartens or day nurseries, but the process leading up to this achievement was not always smooth—it required both substantial effort and innovation. This report looks back at the development of early childhood education and care in Japan, beginning before World War II, to provide readers with a systematic understanding of the overall history of early childhood education and care in Japan, including government administration and financing, curriculums and teaching methods, and teacher training. It is our hope that this report will serve as a source of beneficial information for those directly involved in early childhood development in developing countries as well as those engaged in international cooperation in the field.

This Handbook is written as a part of the projects ‘Establishment of Cooperation Bases in Early Childhood Education’ and ‘21st Century COE Program: Studies of Human-Development from Birth to Death’ entrusted to Ochanomizu University by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology of Japan. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the preparation of this report.

May, 2006

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Introduction :

Thinking About Early Childhood Education and Care in Developing Nations

1. Issues in Early Childhood Education and Care in Developing Nations

Early childhood education and care has been gaining in prevalence in many developing nations as their systems of compulsory education have matured. As to the factors behind this trend, first of all, schooling is being conducted from an early age in order to prevent children from dropping out of the compulsory grades like elementary school and to improve students' academic ability. Secondly, because early childhood education and care is for the initial stage of a person's life, its significance as the start of an educational process leading to adulthood has come to be recognized. Thirdly, countries have come to acknowledge the necessity of adopting methods that are suited to young children and the fact that there are issues unique to young children.

There are many difficulties, however, that need to be overcome. Firstly, government finances in developing nations and society overall have not reached full maturity in economic terms, so the countries have not been able to commit resources to education to the full extent required. Next, there is a paucity of experience related to constructing buildings for kindergartens and enhancing their facilities and for making childcare activities meaningful. There is also inadequate expertise related to acquiring this experience. Furthermore, countries are unable to immediately improve the teaching ability of instructors. Finally, research infrastructure is not well-developed so it is difficult to incorporate knowledge from places like universities into the actual practice of childcare.

Early childhood education and care in Japan already has an over 120-year history. Japan devoted itself to early child education alongside compulsory schooling when it was still an impoverished nation. It faced many of the same problems facing developing countries today and worked to overcome them. It is our hope that looking back at Japan's history of overcoming these problems and identifying ideas and activities that worked despite the country's lack of economic development will serve as a reference for people in developing nations making concerted efforts to improve early childhood education and care.

2. Adapting Early Childhood Education to Japanese Culture

Over 120 years ago, Japan imported the Fröbel method from the West and began to faithfully disseminate it. However, over the course of a few decades, this method was transformed into a unique approach to early childhood education that reflected both Japanese culture and the influence of child-centered education in the U.S. and Europe. The new approach was the result of wisdom acquired from actual involvement in childcare. A Japanese model of early childhood education and care was created that combined the traditional culture and new ways of thinking about children. In addition, the scope of early childhood education was expanded as the necessity of providing welfare to Japan's poor was recognized. After World War II, Japanese society stabilized and the country welcomed a period of cultural equanimity. During this time, early childhood education and care matured into an established educational stage in Japanese culture while growing more diverse. Japan's history, though, is one of constant influence by international trends. Current thought at the time on early childhood education in the West, including Soviet Russia at that time, was translated by researchers in Japan and incorporated into Japan's model. Ideas from overseas were positioned as elements in the existing system.

3. Noteworthy Characteristics of Early Childhood Education and Care in Japan

The mature form of the Japanese model of early childhood education and care can be organized

as follows.

First, on the development side, emphasis is given to both intellectual development and emotional/social development. Moreover, both these types of development are understood to be closely related. Activities with other children are cultivated while giving priority to the children's emotional stability. This encourages intellectual development in a kind of embedded form. For example, being able to teach the basics of Japanese characters through play activities is aided by the right societal structures being in place, like the widespread use of picture books in Japanese homes. Also, the Japanese language has a phonetic alphabet that makes it easier to introduce children to the written characters.

Second, the Japanese system emphasizes independence in basic and necessary life habits and holds that children will develop through playing at kindergarten and engaging in the activities of daily life. Teachers provide instruction not only for specific activities but during the children's playtime and for other aspects of their lives. However, instruction is not provided in the form of orders from above; rather, suggestions and advice for activities are given in order to foster the children's initiative, and things are placed in the room that children naturally want to play with.

Third, teacher expertise is considered to reside in the cycle of planning, carrying out, recording, reflecting on, and again planning the content of instruction. Teachers directly involved in teaching children have a great deal of discretion in what is taught—they do not simply faithfully carry out activities that have been decided on in detail by the central government or school administrators. Government regulations are limited to setting the basic direction, while actualization of this direction is up to individual kindergartens and individual teachers. Teachers however do not instruct the children entirely on their own; rather, they base their instruction on the spirit of governmental regulations. They have a duty to keep track of their instructional activities and improve their teaching plans based on self-scrutiny.

Fourth, the primary roles of the national and local governments are to set standards for facilities, facilitate teacher careers, and determine the direction of educational and care activities. Government bodies also provide support and advice in a variety of forms. People close to the frontlines of early childhood education or with experience as teachers frequently play an instructional role within the government. The government identifies exceptional education and care practices and works to disseminate their essential points.

Finally, there is a close connection between the practice of early childhood education and care and research on it. Of course, practice is oftentimes fairly removed from research and professors at training institutions, but at the same time there are more than a few researchers doing research at sites directly involved in educating and caring for young children. There are also many instructors at training institutions who used to be kindergarten and day nursery teachers. Some researchers in instructional positions are fairly well-versed in actual teaching practices while also espousing Western theory. Others are versed in psychology or another academic discipline and try to incorporate them into education and childcare as it is actually practiced. These efforts have supported the establishment and development of a Japanese model of early childhood education and care.

Chapter 1

History of Early Childhood Education and Care in Japan: An Overview

1-1 Establishment and Development of Kindergarten

There are two institutions in Japan involved in the preschool education of young children, kindergartens and day nurseries. Historically, kindergartens and day nurseries have existed under separate systems, fulfilling different functions and goals.

The first kindergarten in Japan was established in 1876 and affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls (present day Ochanomizu University). This school was subsequently used as a model for the establishment of kindergartens in various regions around the country. In the 1890's, kindergartens gained the support of the upper-middle class, which included government officials and merchants who expected preparatory education for elementary school. This allowed kindergartens to flourish as institutions for preschool education. By 1895 there were over 200 kindergartens nationwide. In light of this quantitative growth in kindergartens, the Ministry of Education established a legal standard for them by drawing up the Regulations on Kindergarten Education and Facilities. These regulations established kindergartens as institutions for educating young children age three and above before they entered elementary school. The school day was to last five hours and consisted of four subjects, play, singing, listening and talking, and occupations.

Beginning in the 1910's, the pace of growth in kindergartens accelerated. In 1916, there were 665 kindergartens, 1,870 kindergarten teachers and 5,611 pupils, while ten years later these figures had increased to 1,066 schools, 3,274 teachers and 94,421 pupils. There was dramatic growth in private kindergartens in particular, and they exceeded the number of public kindergartens. Educational curriculums and methods were also improved, having been influenced by educational philosophies in the United States and Europe, particularly with child-centered education methods, such as the Montessori Method. People involved in kindergarten education began to call for the establishment of new laws and ordinances for kindergarten, which prompted the Ministry of Education to take up the establishment of a new ordinance. In 1926 the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten was promulgated, establishing a place for kindergartens within the country's educational system.

After World War II, the School Education Law was enacted in 1947. This law codified kindergarten as a type of school. Article 77 of this declared that kindergartens shall provide a suitable environment that helps young children grow and develop their minds and bodies. Article 80 prescribed that kindergarten was to be for young children from three years of age until they entered elementary schools.

Although kindergarten is not compulsory education and enrollment is completely up to a child's parent or guardian, kindergarten has rapidly gained in popularity starting since the 1960's. The enrollment rate of five-year olds increased annually, from 28.7% in 1960 to 53.7% in 1970. This resulted in the Ministry of Education announcing a plan for promoting kindergarten education in 1971. This plan entailed developing a kindergarten system that would provide kindergarten education to all four- and five-year olds with a desire to go to kindergarten over the next ten years. As a result of this program, the average enrollment rate for five-year olds nationwide increased to 64.4%, and the ratio of five-year olds attending either a kindergarten or a day nursery came to exceed 90%. However, as Japan's birthrate decreases, kindergartens have been substantially impacted. Because of falling numbers of pupils, kindergartens experiencing financial difficulties increased. Given these developments, some private kindergartens have responded by expanding education for three-year olds, arranging buses to transport the children and providing lunches. Writing, math and English instruction have been introduced into the kindergarten curriculum. There are also increasing numbers of kindergartens providing daycare services after the legally allotted time for kindergarten education, which is four hours. Today, 80% of private kindergartens also offer daycare services after

kindergarten hours.

1-2 Establishment and Development of Day Nurseries

Day nurseries are facilities that provide childcare for infants and young children who lack it. Day nurseries were established around 1900 as childcare facilities for impoverished children. Greater numbers of women in the labor force accompanying the rise of capitalism increased demand for day nurseries. In the midst of these developments, the Home Ministry promoted the establishment of day nurseries by developing child protection activities as a part of its social services program. Public day nurseries were set up in urban areas, and some factories established nurseries in order to attract female laborers. Day nurseries were established for public safety, to help the poor, and to attract female workers as a cheap source of labor. With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, social services came to play a part in war policy. In 1938 the Ministry of Health and Welfare was established and the Social Work Law was enacted. Under the law, day nurseries were legally positioned as a child protection activity.

After the end of World War II, day nurseries were codified as child welfare institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and Welfare with the enactment in December 1947 of the Child Welfare Law. Article 39 of the law defined day nurseries as institutions for the purpose of caring for infants and young children on the basis of daily contracts from the parent or guardian. In Article 24, it clarified the responsibility of city mayors in placing children in need of childcare in day nurseries. The provisions in Article 39 were later amended to limit the coverage of day nurseries to infants and children lacking of early childhood care. "Lacking of early childhood care" was defined as cases in which parents or guardians could not look after infants or young children due to work, illness, etc. In 1948, the "Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions" was established, which prescribed the minimum standards related to day nursery facilities and operations.

From the 1960's to the 1970's, day nurseries multiplied at a remarkable rate due to increased demand for childcare in conjunction with sharp economic growth and societal changes. Since that time, day nurseries have come to play a greater role as the number of working women has increased and Japan's family unit has shifted toward the nuclear family model. This has meant not only growth in numbers, but also a greater demand for childcare services and institution management formats that can accommodate the increasingly diverse childcare needs, including the need for infant daycare, extended hours daycare, nighttime childcare, and local activities in support of child-rearing.

1-3 Historical Development of Nursery and Kindergarten Teacher Training

Nursery and kindergarten teachers in Japan are either licensed as kindergarten teachers, or nursery teachers, who provide childcare at day nurseries or other child welfare facilities. Prior to World War II, a training system for both the teachers had not been established. The certification to teach elementary school served as the kindergarten teacher certification. However, the fact that any teacher at an elementary school could also serve as a kindergarten teacher meant that the uniqueness and the expertise for early childhood education were devalued.

Before World War II, training institutions for kindergarten teachers consisted of state-run facilities and a variety of schools. Training at a majority of the institutions lasted one year. According to an overview of kindergarten teacher training facilities reported in October 1941, there were 33 such facilities in all, of which, there were two state-run institutions connected with higher normal schools for girls in Tokyo and Nara and one public institution, the kindergarten teacher training department of the Chiba Normal School. The remaining were private institutions.

After the war, there were no special regulations before the war related to nursery teacher certification. Rather, people with kindergarten teaching credentials worked as nursery teachers. However, kindergarten teacher training alone was not sufficient for being an effective nursery teacher, so there were calls for the establishment of a training institute with a unique curriculum for them. Beginning around 1940, the training of nursery teachers came to consist of courses and training conducted at rented kindergartens and daycare facilities. No training institutions, though,

had their own independent schools, which meant training was somewhat impromptu and limited to what was expedient.

After World War II, kindergartens were positioned as a part of schooling by the School Education Law. The Japanese title for kindergarten teacher was also revised. With the enactment in 1949 of the Educational Personnel Certification Law and the law pertaining to its enforcement, the training of kindergarten teachers was prescribed to be conducted at universities, as was currently done for teacher training for elementary school and higher grades. Because it was not a simple matter, however, to create a university for the purpose of educating kindergarten teachers and most existing normal schools did not have affiliated kindergartens, an expedient method was adopted for training kindergarten teachers in which a teacher could acquire a kindergarten teacher's license as a secondary certification at a university whose primary purpose was training elementary school teachers.

Thereafter the number of people acquiring kindergarten teacher certification increased dramatically as more and more universities began to offer kindergarten teacher training. The majority graduated from junior colleges and two-year training institutes designated by the Minister of Education.

Nursery teacher certification was prescribed by the Child Welfare Law Enforcement Ordinance. It established certification for people graduating from a school or other institution that offered nursery teacher training and was designated by the Minister of Health and Welfare and for people passing a nursery teacher examination. People acquiring nursery teacher certification via the exam accounted for over 90% of those certified by 1953. The ratio declined as the training system was enhanced, so that by the 1980's around 10% earned certification through the exam. The prerequisites to take the exam changed in 1991. With the changes, a person is required to spend at least two years in college and earn at least 62 credits, or possess the equivalent qualifications.

As touched on thus far, postwar systems for training kindergarten and nursery teachers were developed and came to be implemented at universities and training institutions. However, almost all the training took place at two-year junior colleges and nursery teacher training centers, so the training lagged behind that offered teachers going on to teach elementary school and higher grades, which was largely conducted at four-year universities.

1-4 Curricular Changes

The curriculum for kindergarten is established by the Minister of Education based on regulations related to the purpose and objectives of kindergarten in Article 79 of the School Education Law. The National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens has been created in accordance with this.

The Ministry of Education published Nursing Guidelines: Handbook of Early Childhood Education and Care in 1948 to serve as a standard for kindergarten education. The guidelines were created as a manual for early childhood education and were intended to be applicable at kindergartens, day nurseries and the home. While they were considered standards, they were not binding. Subsequently, based on the belief that standards were needed at kindergartens to serve as educational indicators like those used at elementary schools, the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens was created in 1956 to replace the Nursing Guidelines. With regard to the curriculum, six educational areas were established—health, society, language, nature, music rhythm, and drawing—handicrafts—in order to maintain consistency with the elementary school curriculum. In 1964, the curriculum for kindergarten was made pursuant to the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, which was revised and promulgated by the Minister of Education as a curricular standard. Through this, the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens became the national standard for kindergarten curriculums. As for the content, there were no changes made to the makeup of the six educational areas, but the uniqueness of kindergarten education was emphasized, and it was made clear that kindergarten education was to provide an environment suited to young children and comprehensive instruction in line with their experience. It was also made clear that the items in each educational area were closely connected with one another and that they were to be achieved through the children's concrete and comprehensive experiences and activities.

Later on, in 1989, the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens underwent major

revisions. The six educational areas were reduced to five areas that reflected a human development perspective—health, human relationships, environment, language, and expression. The current Course of Study for Kindergarten was most recently revised in 1999. It provides a basic foundation for kindergarten education and lays out its objective, which is to educate young children through their environment in accordance with developmental tasks and the individual attributes of each child while taking into consideration the special characteristics of early childhood.

With regard to day nurseries, the Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions was enacted in 1948, with Article 35 prescribing that activities at the nurseries were to include health observation, clothing inspection, free play, afternoon nap, and health checkups. Later, in 1965, the Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nursery was issued. They provided specific instruction on childcare based on the functions and characteristics of day nurseries. According to the guidelines, childcare at day nurseries should be conducted based on a unity between care and education. For children four years and older, the guidelines also established that care was to be provided in the six educational areas—health, society, nature, language, music rhythm, art and craft—in accordance with National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens. The Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nursery was revised in 1990 to prohibit the educational area-based curriculum from being applied to children less than three years of age, given the characteristics of their development, and instituted the five area curriculum—health, human relationships, environment, language, expression—for children at least three years of age in accordance with the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens. Further revisions were made in 1999 in order to respond to the changing times. They gave consideration to health and safety and addressed the problem of child abuse. The revisions also provided a role for day nurseries as local child-rearing centers, which were to provide childcare support for families and respond to diverse childcare needs.

1-5 Present State of Early Childhood Education and Related Issues

Stated above, Japan's kindergartens and day nurseries have developed as systematically distinct from one another. At present, enrollment in either kindergarten or a day nursery among five year olds is at 95%. However, childcare needs have diversified as the birthrate has continued to decline and households with two working parents have become commonplace. Given these changes, there is a need to reconsider the way kindergartens and day nurseries are structured. Additionally, depending on the region, some kindergartens and day nurseries are not filled to capacity, which is contributing to financial difficulties in some municipalities. In light of this situation, in March 1998, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare put out guidelines related to the dual use of facilities as kindergartens and day nurseries. And, since 1997, the Ministry of Education has promoted day care service after kindergarten hours in an attempt to meet increasingly diversified childcare needs. As these developments have taken place, the actual differences between kindergartens and day nurseries have diminished.

At the same time, local governments have worked to not only establish shared use of facilities but to unify the managements of kindergartens and day nurseries as a part of administrative streamlining efforts. The trend toward systematically unifying kindergartens and day nurseries is expected to continue to accelerate (see appendix Figure C General integrated facilities that provide preschool education and childcare).

The situation surrounding early childhood education has changed with the times, and the problems are both complex and wide-ranging. The integration of kindergartens and day nursery is currently drawing attention as an issue of government policy, but many other issues remain as well, including collaboration between kindergartens and elementary schools and expanding the functions of kindergartens and day nurseries so that they serve as local support centers for child-rearing. What kind of educational programs would be desirable for kids in early childhood? This question needs to be considered once again from the perspective of both education and welfare.

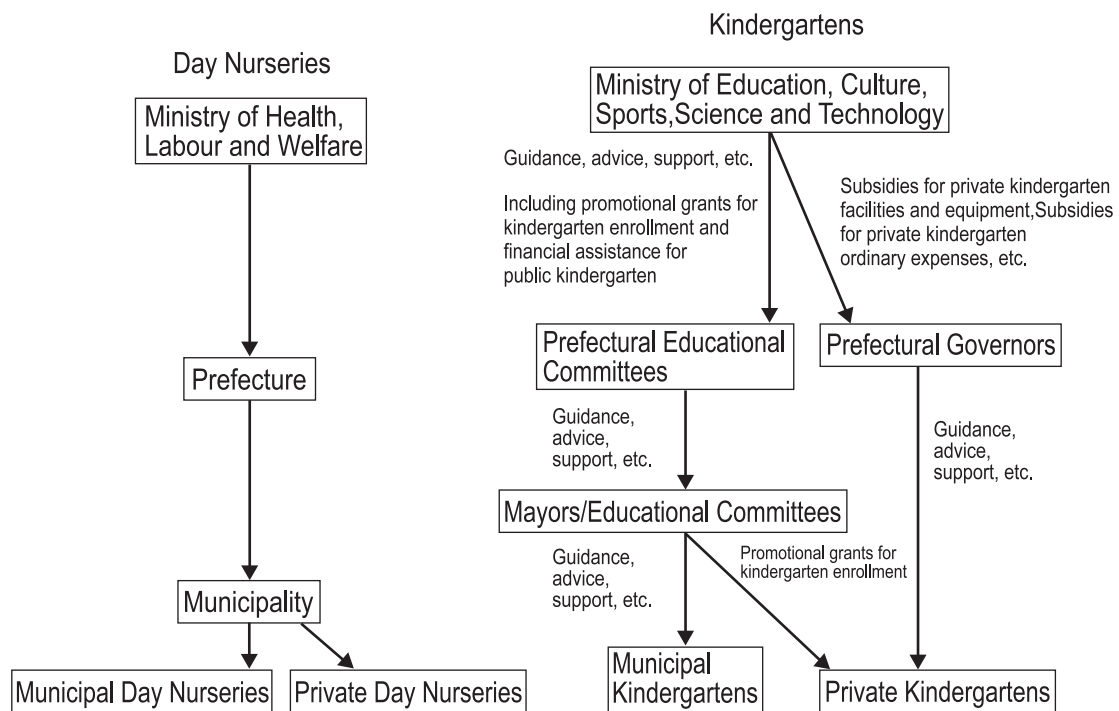


Figure 1-1 Administrative Structure for Day Nurseries and Kindergartens

Source: *Latest Information on the Childcare in Japan 2005*, MINERVA Publishing

Table 1-1 Comparison of Day Nursery and Kindergarten

Category	Day Nursery	Kindergarten
1. Legal Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Welfare Law, Article 39 <p>① Day nurseries are facilities for the purpose of providing education and care to infants and young children lacking in childcare on the basis of daily commissions from parents/guardians.</p> <p>② Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, when it is necessary, day nurseries may provide education and care to children other than those lacking in childcare on the basis of daily commissions from parents/guardians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Education Law, Article 77 <p>Kindergartens are for the purpose of providing education and care to young children, providing an appropriate environment for them, and assisting in their mental and physical development.</p>
2. Governing Authority	<p>Ministry of Health and Welfare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipalities 	<p>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National kindergartens - Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Public kindergartens - Educational committees Private kindergartens - Prefectural governments
3. Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infants (less than one year old), young children (one year old to six years old) and children (from elementary school age to less than 18 years old) lacking in childcare (Child Welfare Law, Articles 4, 39) When there is a request from a parent or guardian, municipalities have an obligation to provide education and care to infants and young children lacking in childcare (Child Welfare Law, Article 24) 	<p>Young children from age three to six (Child Education Law, Article 80)</p>
4. Founding Body	<p>Local public bodies, social welfare organizations, etc. (Child Welfare Law, Article 35); (including religious organizations, educational corporations, non-profit organizations, and other corporations)</p> <p>Necessary to have the governor's approval to establish a day nursery (this does not apply when the founding body is the prefectural government) (Child Welfare Law, Article 35)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National government, local public bodies, educational corporations, etc. (School Education Law, Articles 2, 102), social welfare organizations (including religious organizations, etc.) Necessary to have the approval of the prefectural educational committee to establish a municipal kindergarten, and the approval of the governor to establish a private kindergarten (School Education Law, Articles 4, 106)
5. Standards for Establishment and Operation	<p>Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions (Ministry of Health and Welfare Ordinance)</p> <p>(Child Welfare Law, Article 45)</p>	<p>Regulations for Carrying Out the School Education Law, Articles 74-77, Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports Science and Technology Ordinance)</p> <p>(School Education Law, Article 3)</p>
6. Enrollment Requirements and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with standards established by government ordinances, municipalities determine the enrollment of children that have been deemed to be lacking in childcare based on provisions in municipal bylaws (Municipalities look into the child's home situation) Parents/guardians of infants and young children lacking in childcare select a day nursery and apply to the municipality. 	<p>When parents/guardians decide their children should be given early childhood education (family decision)</p>
7. Timing of Enrollment and Withdrawal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a situation arises in which a child lacks childcare When that situation no longer exists (Enrollment and withdrawal as necessary throughout the year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning (April) and end (March) of the school year is standard Children may enroll starting on their third birthday Based on a contract between the parent/guardian wishing to enroll their child and the kindergarten's founding body
8. Childcare (Education) Time and Number of Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight hours per day, in principle; determined by the day nursery director depending on the working hours of the parents / guardians of the infants and young children and other familial conditions (Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions, Article 34) Extended hours daycare and nighttime childcare also conducted. There are no summer or spring breaks. 	<p>The number of teaching weeks per school year must not be less than 39 weeks. (School Education Law, Article 75) The standard number of educational hours per day is four. However, considerations may appropriately be made for early childhood mental and physical development, seasonal, and other factors. (National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens)</p>

9. Care and Education Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health observation, inspections for abnormalities in clothing, free play, naptime, and health diagnoses (Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions, Article 35) • Specific description provided in Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries • There are five educational areas for children age three and up, the same as in the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens. Day nurseries are characterized by giving consideration to nursing aspects (for children three years and up, "basic areas" are indicated apart from the five educational areas) (April 1990) • There are no special regulations on class composition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of education and care at kindergartens is decided by the regulatory authorities in accordance with Articles 77 and 78 of the School Education Law on the purpose and objectives of kindergarten. (School Education Law, Article 79) • The kindergarten curriculum is in accordance with the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens. (Regulations for Carrying Out the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, Article 76) • Five educational areas are indicated from the perspective of early childhood development: health, human relationships, environment, language, and expression. (April 1989) • In principle, classes should be composed of children the same age. (Official Requirement for the Establishment of a Kindergarten, Article 4)
10. Nursery Teacher and Kindergarten Teacher Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation from a designated nursery teacher training facility • Nursery teacher exam (covers eight subjects; equivalent to graduation from junior college) • Individuals with the above nursery teacher qualifications (Child Welfare Article 18.6) apply to be registered and certified as nursery teachers (Child Welfare Law, Article 18.18) 	<p>Regular kindergarten teaching license</p> <p>Specialty (completed graduate school), First class (graduated from four-year university), Second class (graduated from junior college)</p> <p>(Educational Personnel Certification Law)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty License - Possesses Master's degree and has acquired six credits in school subjects, 35 credits in pedagogy, and at least 34 credits in classes related to school subjects or pedagogy (Completion of graduate school) • First class License - Possesses Bachelor's degree and has acquired six credits in school subjects, 35 credits in pedagogy, and at least 10 credits in classes related to school subjects or pedagogy (Graduation from four-year university) • Second class License - Possesses Associate degree and has acquired four credits in school subjects and at least 27 credits in pedagogy (Graduation from junior (two-year) college)
11. Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types • Student-Teacher Ratios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery teachers, commissioned doctor, cooks* (*May be contracted out) • Newborns - 3:1 • 1-2 yr. olds - 6:1 • 3 yr. olds - 20:1 • 4-5 yr. olds - 30:1 <p>(Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Facilities, Article 33) (As of April 1, 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal, head teacher, teachers, assistant teachers, special needs teachers, assistant special needs teachers, instructors, educational assistants • Maximum of 35 children per class (Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens, Article 3) (As of May 1, 1994) • At least one teacher assigned exclusively to each class (Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens, Article 5)
12. Standards for Facilities and Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mandatory Facilities and Equipment b) Strongly Recommended Facilities and Equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day nurseries that admit infants and children under two years old must have an infant's room or crawling room, nurse's office, kitchen, and lavatory • Day nurseries that admit children age two and above must have a nursery room or playroom, an outdoor playground, kitchen and lavatory (Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions, Article 32) • No regulations 	<p>Staff room, classrooms, playroom, health room, lavatory, drinking water facilities, hand-washing facilities, foot-washing facilities (Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens, Article 9)</p> <p>Broadcast reception equipment, projectors, wading pool, cleaning equipment, facilities for providing school lunches, library, meeting room (Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens, Article 11)</p>
13. Public Financing	Of the costs incurred by the municipality, the national government bears half, the prefectural government, one-quarter and the municipality, one quarter, after deducting the amount assumed by day nursery users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial assistance for kindergarten enrollment provided based on the child's age to families that fall below a certain income level (one-third from national government, two-thirds from municipality) • Operating costs are covered by the founding body, in principle. The national government provides assistance to prefectures that subsidize private kindergartens and municipalities that conduct programs to promote enrollment.
14. Other Subsidies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidies for special childcare programs (public and private) (Extended hours & temporary childcare, etc.) • Subsidies for new additions and remodeling (public and welfare organizations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national government provides fixed subsidies to prefectures subsidizing ordinary expenses at private kindergartens (Public kindergartens financed with tax revenue allocated to local governments) • Subsidies for new additions and remodeling

Source: *Latest Information on the Childcare in Japan 2005*, MINERVA Publishing

Chapter 2

Development and Quantitative Expansion of the System for Early Childhood Education and Care

2-1 Educational Administration System for Early Childhood Education and Care

2-1-1 Japan's Early Childhood Educational Administration

As explained in Chapter 1, the history of kindergartens and day nurseries in Japan is marked by differences in the objective, target and managing body. The dividing of early childhood educational institutions into two branches in Japan follows a historical sequence: it first came about as a result of administrative policy and was later legitimized by the legal system. In the case of kindergarten, it gradually developed independently in the absence of government financial assistance and against a backdrop of doubt regarding its legitimacy as an educational institution. Compared with primary and secondary schools, there was little government interference. And, because the bifurcated system continued, there really has not been any change in this situation with respect to the system as a whole since the beginning, even when considering the problem of integration and the process of articulating roles. As to why this has been the case, the government did not recognize the significance of the direct connection between early childhood education and the wealth, strength and development of the nation; and kindergarten was constantly marginalized in the government's spending priorities, which were geared to building a modern system of public education.

2-1-2 Early Childhood Educational Administration before World War II

When the institution of kindergarten began in 1876, kindergartens were recognized as instructional facilities but they were not initially part of the government's aggressive educational policy. As a consequence, the kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls, the first to be established in Japan, became the model in all regards for kindergartens set up thereafter, including for rules, methods of early childhood education and care, and curriculum. Its distinct educational character was also emulated.

Beginning in 1880 the Ministry of Education encouraged the establishment of kindergartens for lower income citizens, but what actually led to a gradual increase in the schools was simplification of the elementary school curriculum and the establishment of simple kindergartens affiliated with elementary schools. Entering the 1890's, public kindergartens increased primarily in urban areas, but with regard to the purpose and nature of kindergarten, there were broadly differing understandings within the Ministry of Education and among the prefectures. Some looked at kindergarten as preparatory education for entering elementary school while others saw it as promoting school attendance among young children who had the responsibility of monitoring even younger children.

In 1895 there were over 200 kindergartens, and in 1899 the Ministry of Education, rather than encouraging the establishment of more, codified kindergarten as an institution outside the school system for the purpose of educating and caring for children of middle and upper class families. This positioning basically did not change even after enactment of the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten in 1926, which was as an independent ordinance on par with those for other types of schools.

2-1-3 Postwar Early Childhood Educational Administration and Legal System Development

In constructing a democratic educational system after the war, the decisions by the Educational Reform Committee (which deliberated on basic educational reform policies under the Allied Occupation) to make kindergarten a part of the educational system and to seek to make education compulsory for children five years and older potentially served as an major opportunity to move in the direction of a unified system of early childhood education and care. However, the country's financial administration, which faced the challenge of instituting a six years-three years-three years system of public education, could not come up with the resources to develop early childhood

education. There was also a lack of recognition regarding the intimate connection between education and care during early childhood, except among those directly involved in providing early childhood education and care. Moreover, the focus for some time was placed solely on quantitative expansion of kindergartens and day nurseries in terms of numbers of facilities and numbers of pupils because of differences of opinion between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

As a result, kindergarten was cataloged as an official school by Article 1 of the School Education Law promulgated in March 1947. Article 77 declared that kindergartens shall provide a suitable environment that helps young children grow and develop their minds and bodies.

Day nurseries, on the other hand, were codified as child welfare institutions under Article 7 of the Child Welfare Law, which was enacted in December 1947. Article 24 stated that if a young child or infant fulfilled certain requirements (when it was judged that the household was not in a position to provide adequate childcare) and early childhood care was determined to be lacking, city mayors would take the necessary steps to place those children in day nurseries. "Take the necessary steps" was changed to "provide childcare" in amendments made in 1997, as the sense of administrative interference was dropped from the law.

The two-branched system of kindergartens and day nurseries, which was the actual situation created by the prewar administrative system, was given further legitimacy by postwar legal developments. However, with respect to the actual situation after the war, there remains the problem of uneven geographical distribution that has no relation to regional differences in educational awareness and percentages of working mothers—it is simply the case that historically kindergartens have been strong in certain regions and day nurseries strong in others. This has led to the interfusing of kindergartens and day nurseries from a management standpoint (weakening the actual distinction between kindergartens and day nurseries due to kindergartens becoming like day nurseries and day nurseries becoming like kindergartens). Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare have recognized this situation and it has been a longstanding issue, but the appropriate distribution of kindergartens and day nurseries has not been realized. While efforts have been made to quantitatively expand the number of facilities, it has been exceedingly difficult to muster the financial resources for appropriate redistribution.

2-1-4 Administrative Bodies and Responsible Authorities

With respect to the postwar administrative system for early childhood education and care at the national level, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare (Minister of Education and Minister of Health and Welfare until 2001), who are appointed by the Prime Minister to serve as the highest ranking officials at their respective ministries, oversee the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare until 2001).

In fiscal 1972, the Kindergarten Education Division was established in the Ministry of Education's Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau to provide a comprehensive administrative system offering 1) instruction and advice on the management and curriculum of kindergarten education, 2) planning, instruction and advice on promoting kindergarten education, and 3) assistance related to promoting kindergarten education.

With regard to the system for administering early childhood education and care at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Day Care Division (Family Welfare Division until 2001) of the Children and Families Bureau plays a central role in health, disease prevention, nutrition, culture, and early childhood care as well as in sponsoring, supervising and publishing surveys and statistical reports.

Kindergartens, which are officially recognized as schools, can be established under the law by the national government, local public bodies and educational corporations. Facilities established by these three types of entities are called national kindergartens, public kindergartens and private kindergartens, respectively. With regard to the establishment of public kindergartens by municipalities, approval must be received from the prefectural education committee. Private kindergartens must receive the governor's permission to be established. In addition, in order to respond to postwar demand for kindergarten education, exceptions to the rules have allowed private

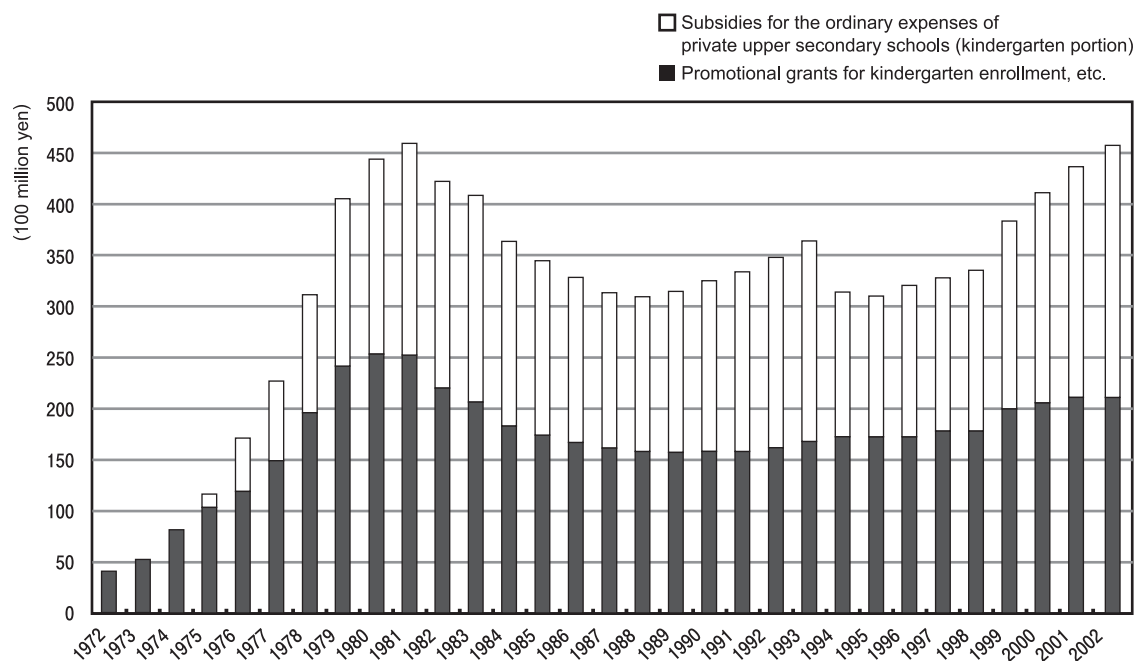


Figure 2-1 Trends in Early Childhood Education-Related Budgets

Source: *Documents from the Early Childhood Education Subcommittee* (2003), the Central Education Council, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

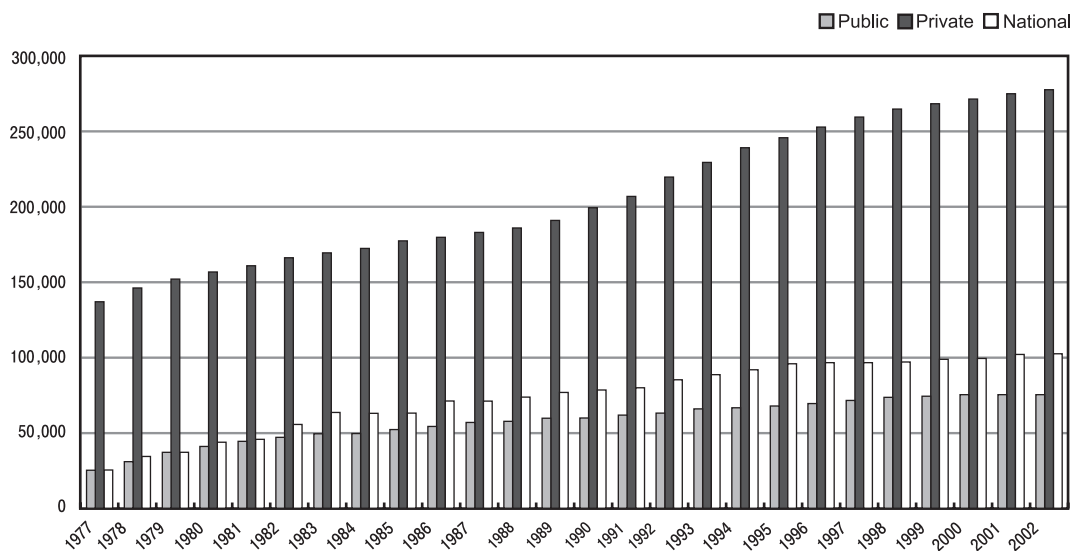


Figure 2-2 Trends in Kindergarten Tuition

Source: *Documents from the Early Childhood Education Subcommittee* (2003), the Central Education Council, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

- Notes: 1. Total of annual tuition and enrollment fees
 2. Information on public and private from MEXT study
 Information on national kindergartens from the stipulations in the Ordinance Concerning National School Tuition and Fees

kindergartens to include some founded by religious corporations and some by individuals (commonly known as Article 102 kindergartens).

In addition to 49 national kindergartens under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, administration of early childhood education and care at the local level is handled by educational committees for public kindergartens and governors for private kindergartens (actual administration is handled by departments in charge of private kindergartens).

2-1-5 System Development

Against a backdrop of high economic growth and momentum for enhancing public education, the Diet began deliberating in 1961 on the issue of making kindergarten compulsory, and in September 1963, the Ministry of Education announced a seven-year plan for promoting kindergarten education. In October of that same year a report on the relationship between kindergarten and day nurseries was jointly announced by the director of the Ministry of Education's Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau and the director of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's Children and Families Bureau.

As an extension of this development that had implications for moving to a unified system, in 1971 the Central Education Council (an advisory body for the Minister of Education) issued a report (consisting of basic policy proposals for the Ministry of Education) proposing an early childhood schooling system that aimed to raise the educational benefits of early childhood through providing integrated education at the same institution from age four or five to the lower grades of elementary school. It was a progressive experiment. Under this proposal, kindergartens, as preschool educational institutions, would be connected to elementary schools and repositioned as a part of the school education system. Day nurseries with kindergarten education functions would also be incorporated into the system in an effort toward integration.

Responding to these developments, in 1977 the Ministries of Education and of Health and Welfare set up a commission on kindergarten and day nurseries, which ended up acknowledging the dual branching in purpose and function between the two but indicated that that situation was not amenable to straightforward integration. Moreover, with regard to the relationship between kindergarten and day nurseries, in a 1987 report by an ad hoc educational council (an educational advisory body directly under the Prime Minister), opinion converged on having kindergartens and day nurseries move forward with development under their respective systems while ensuring some flexibility, depending on regional characteristics and the presence of exceptional circumstances.

2-2 Financing for Early Childhood Education and Care

2-2-1 Kindergarten Self-Sufficiency

Kindergarten education before World War II spread and developed on its own accord without financial support from the government. Even at the beginning of the Showa period, a time in which the legal regime had taken a major step forward with the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten, kindergartens relied on donations and funding drives from benefactors and benefit societies for their establishment. In the case of public kindergartens as well, although establishment subsidies might have been available depending on the prefecture, most schools struggled with raising funds—petitions would be made for establishment by contributing donations that had been collected to the establishment entity, for example. Private kindergartens, which supported the development of early education in Japan and had outnumbered public kindergartens since 1909, had no choice but to rely on childcare fees because they were self-sufficient in terms of their operating costs as well. Some were even forced to close their doors due to financial difficulties.

2-2-2 Postwar Financial Measures for Early Childhood Education and Care

As provided in Article 5 of the School Education Law, costs for operating and maintaining schools after the war were to be borne by the school's proprietor. That is to say, national kindergartens had to be financed out of the national budget and municipal (or public) kindergartens out of municipal budgets. Costs for establishing and operating private kindergartens had to be borne by the party responsible for establishment. At the same time, because kindergarten was not compulsory education, schools were allowed to collect tuition (childcare fees), so proprietors would

charge students tuition and allocate that money to operating expenses.

Starting in the 1950's, there was a gradual increase in the number of children wanting to enroll in kindergarten, and it became difficult for local governments and private kindergarten proprietors to raise funds in response to this trend. As a result, there were requests for a system of national subsidies to help defray kindergarten operating costs, postwar reconstruction expenses and new facilities costs in order to promote kindergarten education.

The Council for Educational Reform took up the issue and in February 1951 proposed that financial measures be taken for kindergarten education. Upon this recommendation, the Ministry of Education conducted a fact-finding survey of kindergartens and based on the results acknowledged the necessity of governmental subsidies for the purpose of promoting kindergarten education. Beginning in 1953, the government established budgets for building new public kindergartens, promoting improvements in facilities, constructing model kindergarten facilities, and establishing designated facilities for private kindergartens. Government subsidies commenced with funding for public kindergartens (see Figure 2-1).

Regarding funds for postwar reconstruction, national subsidies were provided for one-third of the costs of reconstructing buildings only, but following the passage of the Law Concerning the National Treasury's Share of Local Public School Construction in August 1953, national subsidies were given for two-thirds of the cost of both land and structures, except for minor damage. Thereafter when the Law Concerning Special Financial Assistance for Addressing Serious Damage was promulgated in 1962, the scope of national subsidies was extended to private kindergartens as well.

2-2-3 Financing of Public Kindergartens and Public-Private Gap in Parent/Guardian Contribution

Methods for financing kindergarten education in Japan differ depending on what party established the school (see appendix Figure D Flow of Kindergarten and Day Nursery's Financial Assistance). The system for providing subsidies through national, prefectural and municipal governments took shape beginning in the 1980's.

Ninety-percent of the operating costs of public kindergartens are assumed by the municipality. Municipal funds for this purpose come from taxes allocated to local governments, which is a general source of financing for them. These tax revenues differ in character from earmarked revenue sources, which must be used for specific purposes like national subsidies and contributions for day nurseries, because they put priority on local autonomy and leave decisions on how to use the money up to local bodies. Standard financial need, which is used as a yardstick for calculating tax revenues allocated to local governments, is derived in the case of kindergartens by calculating measurement units for the standard group (10,000 people) for each item—number of schools, number of children, number of grades, number of teachers, size of workforce—then, with those basic figures as measurement units, the final sum is calculated by multiplying each unit cost by a correction coefficient.

However, municipalities with less financial strength would sometimes hold back from establishing a public kindergarten and instead establish a day nursery with substantial government subsidies because they would not be able to keep up with kindergarten education costs, which increase alongside increases in personnel expenditures for teacher salaries.

Comparing public kindergartens and private kindergartens, the former is marked by increasing local government expenditure and a decreasing monetary burden on parents and guardians, while the latter is characterized by over 80% corporate expenditure by the proprietor and a parent/guardian burden that is three times higher than public kindergartens (see Figure 2-2). In spite of this, looking at per-student educational costs, spending on public kindergartens, which are fewer in number and have fewer numbers of students, was much higher than spending on private kindergartens when considering national subsidies, prefectural subsidies and municipal expenditures. For this reason, private kindergartens were forced to charge higher childcare fees than public kindergartens and there was a tendency for large numbers of private kindergartens to be established in areas where parents/guardians capable of paying the higher fees lived. Local governments are working to close this gap by instituting and enhancing programs by which assistance is provided to parents and guardians of children in private kindergartens (see Table 2-1).

Table 2-1 Differences in National/Public/Private Kindergarten Tuition

(Amount per child; Unit: Yen)

Category Year	National			Public			Private			Public/Private Difference (B-A)
	Tuition	Enrollment fees	Total	Tuition	Enrollment fees	Total(A)	Tuition	Enrollment fees	Total(B)	
1980	33,600	9,600	43,200	38,840	817	39,657	121,494	34,552	156,046	116,389
1985	48,000	15,000	63,000	50,387	916	51,303	140,316	36,837	177,153	125,850
1990	54,600	23,700	78,300	58,463	1,025	59,488	160,278	38,946	199,224	139,736
1995	66,000	29,000	95,000	65,713	1,171	66,884	200,212	46,277	246,489	179,605
2000	68,400	30,700	99,100	72,451	1,237	73,688	222,934	48,911	271,845	198,157
2003	70,800	31,300	102,100	74,572	1,237	75,809	229,991	49,902	279,893	204,084

Note: Private school tuition figures are national averages.

Source: All Japan Private Kindergarten Federation directory (2004)

2-2-4 Enhancing Public Assistance through the Progressive-Planning for Kindergarten

Through the first Progressive-Planning for Kindergarten launched in 1963 and the Program of Progressive-Planning for Kindergarten announced in August 1971, the scope of subsidies was widened to include bounty for kindergarten entry, which was designed to reduce the economic burden on parents and guardians with children attending kindergarten, as well as grants to cover operating costs at private kindergartens. With this, the government's financial assistance program took a major step forward. Bounty for kindergarten entry was intended to lessen the economic burden faced by parents and guardians and was provided on the basis of the child's age to households with income below a given threshold. In the case of local governments, this aid was provided in the form of exemptions from paying childcare fees at public kindergartens, and in the case of private kindergartens it was given to parents and guardians in the form of grants. The government and municipalities assume 0.1% of the total operating costs of public kindergartens and 10% of private kindergartens. The national government covers one-third of the total cost of bounty for kindergarten entry while municipalities cover two-thirds.

2-2-5 Financing of Private Kindergartens

National government assistance for private kindergartens consists of bounty for kindergarten entry described in 2-2-4 above as well as the kindergarten allotment of an operating expenses assistance program for private schools, which was enhanced in fiscal 1975. This is made up of general grants for operating expenses and special grants for the promotion of daycare services, child-rearing support activities, childcare internships for high school students, and special education programs at kindergartens.

As explained above, operating costs are borne by the proprietor in principle, but in 1975 the Private School Law was partially amended to provide public assistance for operating costs at private kindergartens not established as an educational corporation on the condition that such schools change their legal format to educational corporation within five years of receiving the subsidies. However, existing kindergartens established under Article 102 (see 2-1 above) did not convert to educational corporations as initially envisioned by the Ministry of Education; rather, assistance for private school operating costs did not end up going to non-educational-corporation kindergartens, which accounted for over 60% of all private kindergartens.

As of 2003, 90% of private kindergartens are educational corporations. One-twentieth of their total operating costs are borne by the national government in the form of subsidies and one-fourth by the prefectural government.

2-2-6 Searching for a New Direction

The declining birthrate in Japan since 1990 has had a direct impact on kindergarten education (see appendix Figure A Number of Births and Total Fertility Rate), so proprietors have been forced to rethink the relationship between kindergartens and day nurseries in order to keep operating. Against a backdrop of reforms in the educational system overall, new operating formats are being

explored and implemented, such as facilities sharing and schemes involving establishment by the public sector and operation by the private sector. As these changes occur new financing issues are being taken up.

2-3 Quantitative Expansion of Kindergarten

2-3-1 Establishment of Kindergarten

The very first kindergarten in Japan was established in 1876 and affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls. However, kindergarten did not immediately take off—there were only seven nationwide kindergartens by 1882. The government's top priority at the time was establishing more elementary schools, so establishing more kindergartens was put off.

In the 1890's, kindergartens increased in number primarily in urban areas with the support of government officials and merchants, who expected them to provide preparatory education for their children before entering school. By 1895 the number of kindergartens had increased to over 200. During this time meetings and associations of people involved in kindergarten were organized in an effort to facilitate communication and cooperation among kindergartens. The Fröbel Society of Japan, which was founded in 1896, actively conducted research on early childhood education and care, lobbied for the establishment of a kindergarten system, and requested that the Ministry of Education enact an ordinance pertaining to kindergarten education.

Prompted by these activities, the Ministry of Education enacted the Regulations on Kindergarten Education and Facilities in 1899, thereby establishing a legal foundation for kindergarten. The regulations established kindergarten as an institution for educating young children from the age of three until they entered elementary school for five hours a day in four subjects: play, singing, listening and talking, and handwork. Accompanying amendments in 1900 to the Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools, the regulations were incorporated into the Regulations for Carrying Out the Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools. This served as the foundation of Japan's kindergarten system until enactment of the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten in 1926.

2-3-2 Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten and Subsequent Developments

In the 1910's, kindergartens were increasing at a rapid pace—they nearly doubled between 1916 and 1926, increasing from 665 to 1,066. Growth in private kindergartens was especially significant. Child-centered education, which was introduced to Japan and practiced with the rise of democracy in the Taisho period, had an influence on kindergartens as well. The Montessori Method was also introduced, and this helped the contents and methods of early childhood education and care reformed.

Amid these developments, the movement started to push for establishment of new laws pertaining to kindergarten. People directly involved in kindergarten frequently held national conferences and lobbied for the establishment of an ordinance on kindergarten and improved certification for teachers. This prompted the Ministry of Education to work toward establishment of an ordinance. In 1926 the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten was enacted and Japan's kindergarten system was established by this. The ordinance showed the purposes of kindergarten were helping further the mental and physical development of young children, cultivating good character, and supplementing education at home. The ordinance was additionally intended to facilitate the spread of kindergartens that also provided daycare by allowing childcare for more than five hours and attendance by children less than three years of age. On enactment of the ordinance, interest in kindergarten mounted and the kindergartens grew more widespread as their scope expanded to include children from middle and lower classes.

The Education Council, which was established at the end of 1937, deliberated on reforming the educational system to adapt it to the wartime regime. With regard to kindergartens as well, it emphasized the establishment of simple kindergartens, prioritizing health and discipline, and the social educational roles played by kindergarten. At the same time, people directly involved in kindergartens requested that the government make kindergarten education compulsory and that kindergartens and day nurseries be unified in order to realize a system of National Kindergartens that covered every citizen. However, the war intensified, which made it exceedingly difficult to carry out kindergarten education and led to the closure of some schools.

2-3-3 Postwar Reforms to Early Childhood Education and Subsequent Developments

Immediately after the end of World War II, Japan's kindergartens were in wretched shape. Many had been destroyed by fire caused by bombing and there were many obstacles to recovery. In the midst of these conditions, people involved in kindergarten submitted requests to the Ministry of Education in 1945 to amend laws and regulations pertaining to kindergarten, to integrate kindergarten and day nursery facilities and to make kindergarten education compulsory.

The Educational Reform Committee established in 1946 deliberated on policies for reforming Japan's system of education after the war. The committee also took up the issue of reforming early childhood education and care. It was proposed that the education of five year olds be made compulsory. At the General Assembly in January 1947 a policy was adopted that made kindergarten a part of the school system and amended the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten accordingly. It also expressed an intention to make education compulsory for all children five years and older. Based on this policy, kindergarten was codified as a type of school by the School Education Law of 1947. Article 77 of the law declared that kindergartens shall provide a suitable environment that helps young children grow and develop their minds and bodies. Article 80 established that kindergarten was to be for children from the time they turned three years of age until they entered elementary school. Under the Educational Personnel Certification Law, which went into force in 1949, kindergarten teacher training became subject to the same requirements as teacher training for elementary and middle schools. However, whereas elementary school teachers were primarily trained at four-year universities, most kindergarten teachers were trained at junior colleges and kindergarten teacher training institutes.

Table 2-2 Trends in Number of Kindergartens,
Number of Students and Enrollment Ratio

Year	Numbers of Kindergartens				Numbers of Enrolled Children				Enrollment Ratios
	Total	National	Public	Private	Total	National	Public	Private	
1950	2,100	33	841	1,226	224,653	2,952	107,606	114,095	8.9
1955	5,426	32	1,893	3,501	643,683	2,961	237,994	402,728	20.1
1960	7,207	35	2,573	4,559	742,367	3,400	228,045	510,922	28.7
1965	8,551	35	3,134	5,382	1,137,733	3,472	297,308	836,953	41.3
1970	10,796	45	3,904	6,844	1,674,699	4,210	397,836	1,272,653	53.7
1975	13,108	47	5,263	7,798	2,292,180	5,575	564,145	1,721,460	63.5
1977	13,854	47	5,576	8,231	2,453,687	5,939	627,283	1,820,165	64.2
1979	14,622	47	5,951	8,624	2,486,506	6,227	653,847	1,826,432	64.4
1981	15,059	48	6,149	8,862	2,292,811	6,512	596,060	1,690,239	64.4
1983	15,190	48	6,227	8,915	2,192,853	6,568	551,851	1,634,434	63.8
1985	15,220	48	6,269	8,903	2,067,991	6,609	504,461	1,565,921	63.7
1987	15,156	48	6,263	8,845	2,016,225	6,600	470,454	1,539,171	63.6
1989	15,080	48	6,239	8,793	2,037,618	6,557	454,148	1,576,913	63.9
1991	15,040	48	6,244	8,768	1,977,580	6,630	410,708	1,560,242	64.1
1993	14,958	49	6,205	8,704	1,907,167	6,740	379,856	1,520,571	63.8
1995	14,856	49	6,169	8,638	1,808,433	6,778	361,811	1,439,844	63.2
1997	14,690	49	6,085	8,556	1,789,457	6,803	360,632	1,422,022	62.5
1999	14,527	49	5,981	8,497	1,778,298	6,911	360,559	1,410,828	61.6
2001	14,374	49	5,883	8,442	1,753,423	6,819	360,963	1,385,641	60.6
2003	14,174	49	5,736	8,389	1,760,442	6,718	361,136	1,392,588	59.3
2004	14,061	49	5,649	8,363	1,753,393	6,626	356,770	1,389,997	58.9
2005	13,949	49	5,546	8,354	1,738,766	6,572	348,945	1,383,249	58.4

Source: 2005 General Survey of Schools, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

The kindergarten curriculum since 1964 has been in accordance with the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, which was promulgated by the Minister of Education to serve as a curricular standard. The current National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens were last revised in 1999. Article 1, General Provisions, declares that the basic ideal of kindergarten education is to educate young children through their environment, taking into consideration the special characteristic of early childhood. It states that children are to be instructed through play and in accordance with the developmental tasks and individual attributes of each individual child.

Kindergarten education is not compulsory and the decision to enroll a child is up to the parent or guardian. Beginning in the 1960's, however, kindergarten enrollment grew rapidly and the enrollment rate for five year olds increased every year, going from 28.7% in 1960 to 53.7% in 1970 (see Table 2-2). In June 1971 the Central Educational Council put out the report on basic policies for comprehensively developing and expanding school education in the future. With regard to early childhood education and care, it indicated that efforts should be made 1) to raise the educational benefits of early childhood by providing integrated education at the same educational institution for children from the time they are four or five through the lower grades of elementary school, 2) to distribute public and private kindergartens appropriately and to provide financial assistance for lessening the economic burden placed on families, and 3) to establish additional kindergartens and bolster public financial assistance in order to ensure attendance by all five year olds who wish to enroll.

In August 1971 the Ministry of Education announced the plan for the promotion of kindergarten education based on the Central Educational Council's report. The plan was intended to ensure kindergarten attendance by all four and five year olds wishing to attend for a ten-year period starting in fiscal 1972. The plan worked to further develop kindergarten by increasing the amount of national subsidies, implementing a program to remit childcare fees for low-income families, and instituting a system of financial assistance for private kindergartens. As a result, the enrollment rate among five-year olds nationwide reached 64.4% in 1981.

In the 1990's, the need arose to reconsider how kindergarten should be structured due to diversification in childcare-related needs caused by a falling birthrate and the increasing prevalence of dual-income families. There were also more kindergartens having management difficulties caused by fewer children enrolling. Given these circumstances, some kindergartens began experimenting with various educational formats (see appendix Table A Number of Kindergartens and Enrolled Children by Age). In addition to providing distinctive education and care programs like the Montessori Method, eurhythmics, English lessons, and kanji instruction, some kindergartens began offering early childhood education and care for three-year olds, bus transportation, and lunches. Since 1997, the Ministry of Education has promoted daycare services at kindergartens after regular kindergarten hours, and as of 2002, 1,711 public kindergartens (30.2%) and 6,762 private kindergartens (82.1%) provide this service. Actually, the substantive differences between kindergartens and day nurseries have diminished, as over 80% of private kindergartens provide daycare services for several hours following the end of the prescribed time for educational activities (four hours) (see appendix Table B State of Daycare After Kindergarten Hours).

2-4 Development and Quantitative Expansion of Day Nurseries¹⁾

2-4-1 Started as a Form of Charity

In the 1890's major cities developed due to the influx of population from rural areas, and

1) In Japan, both kindergartens and day nurseries provide preschool education. Both have educational curriculums and both carry out educational activities everyday. Moreover, kindergartens and day nurseries are not divided by age. The system in Japan is unlike the typical European system in which early childhood education consists of day nurseries for 0-2 year olds and kindergarten for 3-5 year olds. In Japan, 3-5 year old children also go to day nurseries.

However, there are systematic differences. Today, the line that divides kindergartens from day nurseries is the working status of the parents or guardians (Actually, whether the mother is present or absent during the day.) Under the system, newborns to two-year old infants can receive daycare at day nurseries. Dividing the two by age group, day nurseries provide education and care to infants and young children while kindergartens provide education and care only to young children.

enclaves of the poor and lower classes formed there. In the city, people were not able to rely on the mutual aid of village collectives, and profound poverty existed in the lower strata of society. In response, largely motivated by Christianity, philanthropists, volunteers and missionaries began childcare services as a form for charity so that 1) parents and guardians could focus exclusively on work during the day and 2) children would receive appropriate care and education while their parents were at work.

In 1908 a Central Charity Association was organized by the business community (Chairman Eiichi Shibusawa), and the Department of Interior began providing grants to charitable organizations. Childcare services would come to be organized under a different system than kindergartens, which were administered by the Ministry of Education. Day nurseries and kindergartens were developed into a two-branched system that reflected the class differences in the children they catered to. Charitable childcare services were institutions that received governmental grants while kindergarten education sought to supplement educational activities at home.

2-4-2 Demands from Industry

Factory-based industry became full-fledged in the 1910's with the industrial revolution. With this development, female workers, especially in the textile industry, worked under harsh conditions. They worked the nightshift and performed dangerous jobs for half the wages of male workers and were not allowed to take vacation days before or after childbirth. This kind of harsh labor by young women supported the dawn of industrialized society in Japan. In response, some companies began creating day nurseries within factories as a means of maintaining their workers' meager lifestyles while at the same time keeping wages at a low enough level to ensure that they could not subsist without both parents working. The reason why companies set up day nurseries in their factories was less in consideration of female workers who would have to bring their young children to work and raise them in a horrible environment in which they risked their children getting hurt by the machinery, but rather to keep female workers with children from leaving the factory to nurse their children during their breaks. Of course, these company day nurseries would be shut down immediately if no profit from managing them could be anticipated.

In short, childcare services in Japan were initially begun by philanthropists in order to protect the right to live of children and the right to work of parents. At the same time, they were developed as a reproduction device that underpinned the capitalist economy for companies whose number one priority was the pursuit of profit.

2-4-3 A Social Service for Maintaining the Public Order

Childcare services at the beginning of Japan's modern period were managed as private concerns for philanthropy or corporate profits. However, prompted by riots over the price of rice in 1918 childcare was transformed into a public social service.

The government, which was concerned about the Russian Revolution and criticism by lower class laborers in the cities, started childcare services as a measure for maintaining the public order.

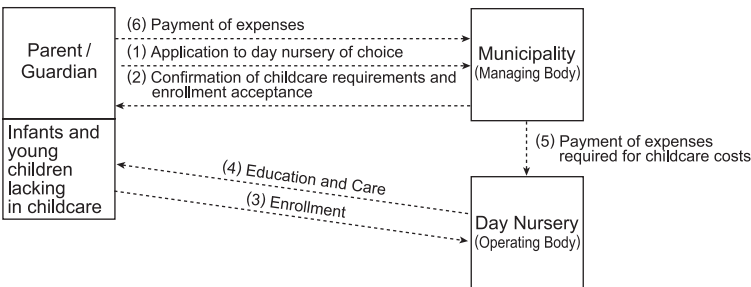


Figure 2-3 Day Nursery Enrollment Process

Note: Adjustment made if the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available based on mandated ratios.

Source: Materials from the Meeting of Child Welfare Supervisors, September 1997.

Childcare was established as an institution for infants and young children that was distinct from kindergarten. In rural areas as well, there were problems in various regions involving disputes between landowners and tenant farmers, so day nurseries were established during the busy season for farmers (seasonal day nurseries) in an effort to eliminate agrarian disputes. Social affairs departments were established in city governments nationwide, with the Home Ministry's Social Affairs Bureau (Preventative Assistance Department) supervising the expansion of childcare services.

Although these services were nominally for maintenance of the public order and reconciliation of social classes, many of the children and their parents or guardians who attended them ended up being saved from a desperate situation by the devoted efforts of nursery teachers. In the traditional child-rearing environment, mothers had no choice but to put their babies in baskets²⁾ or tether them to poles while they were working.

There was a widespread practice in Japan's rural areas to perform farm labor as a collective, but there are hardly any examples of mechanisms that served to collectively raise children under seven years old.³⁾ At the time public day nurseries first started to be established, children's lives were exposed to danger on a daily basis—the infant mortality rate was high and parents committing suicide would sometimes take the lives of their children as well. The practice of having children gather together in one place and receive care collectively by caregivers with specialized knowledge and techniques was a revolutionary development that rescued many parents and children from serious hardship.

Around this time programs for the poor shifted to poverty relief and prevention. Antipoverty programs, which at one time primarily consisted of charitable giving motivated by the belief that the well-off should support those in need, started to become for the purpose of providing laborers with the ability to earn a regular livelihood and prevent them from falling into poverty. These efforts prioritized education aimed at empowering workers to help themselves. In addition to occupational placement assistance and the dissemination of public health concepts, the issues at the time included: 1) acknowledging children as the next generation of citizens and educating them so that they did not fall into poverty, and 2) educating families already in the clutches of poverty so that they would be able to escape it. Activities based on the conviction that education was a means of preventing poverty started by municipal bodies in the form of public childcare services.

2-4-4 Expansion of Childcare Services under the Wartime Regime

In the 1930's poverty became a problem of increasing severity due to the worldwide economic depression, and the number of day nurseries increased. When World War II broke out, wartime policy held that female labor had to try to fill the gap left by men conscripted into the military, so many young children ended up being deprived of care. The population growth rate slowed, and physical exams at conscription made it clear that the standing and strength of Japan's citizens were in decline. In order then to secure a fighting force and a labor force for the future, the government took up the agenda of promoting health starting with infants and young children. Raising healthy children while mobilizing female labor for the wartime regime became an urgent task. The Ministry of Health and Welfare was established in conjunction with the enactment of the National

2) When mothers were busy with farm labor and could not look after their babies they would be placed in baskets so they would stay in one place and not be endangered by moving about. These baskets were widespread throughout Japan. The baskets would be lined with charcoal and straw to absorb excrement. In cold regions, the baskets would be placed inside the home, while in warmer areas, they would be put on the paths that ran between the rice paddies where work was being done. The babies would spend their entire day inside the baskets except when taken out for nursing. The baskets functioned in a similar way to swaddling, which appears in various regions throughout the world.

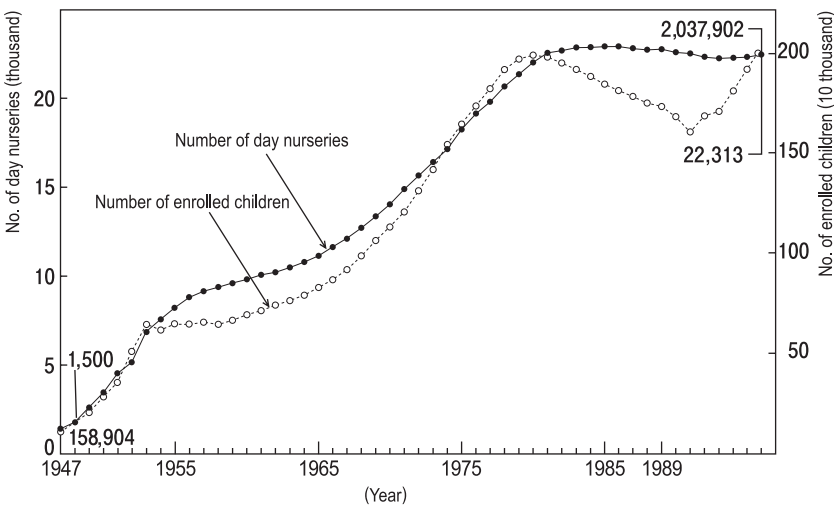
3) As an exception, it is known that in matrilineal cooperative bodies like Shirakawa Village there were mechanisms for collectively caring for infants. However, most village collectives in Japan were patrilineal (patriarchal), and there were few cases in which infants were raised collectively. It is well known among folklorists that with respect to child-rearing customs in Japan's farming cooperatives there were parents other than the actual parents in the local community who functioned as godparents or nannies, and children were raised as the children of particular villages. However, it is difficult to imagine that the daily duties of caring for infants were divided among villagers. There were no institutions for gathering children together in one location and providing them care.

Mobilization Law, and day nurseries, which had been given a legal basis in the Social Work Law of 1938, were made part of the wartime health and welfare effort. Even when kindergartens were closed due to intensified air raids, childcare services continued in the form of wartime nurseries.

2-4-5 Day Nurseries as Child Welfare Institutions

Japan lost the war in 1945 and some 120 thousand war orphans and 610 thousand fatherless households were forced to face the burnt aftermath of the ravages of war. Childcare services, which had primarily targeted the poor, were incorporated into the Child Welfare Law (1947), which covered children in all social classes. The Child Welfare Law was groundbreaking in the sense that it clearly declared that society had responsibilities with respect to raising children. That is, child-rearing was to be the responsibility not only of parents and guardians but also of the national government and local municipal bodies. It eliminated the prewar approach to child welfare, which primarily targeted the poor, juvenile delinquents, and homeless children, and established the right of all children to welfare services.

In addition, the Ministry of Education's Nursing Guidelines were created in 1948 to clarify the substance of education and care at kindergartens and day nurseries, from which it can be concluded that the people directly involved in preschool education envisioned a unified system of kindergartens and day nurseries. Formally, however, the two were codified into a two-branched system, with kindergartens under the School Education Law (Ministry of Education) and day nurseries under the Child Welfare Law (Ministry of Health and Welfare). Day nurseries were subject to minimum standards as institutions licensed by the Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions (1948). Standards for establishment and other aspects were created in accordance with living standards in



Year	Number of day nurseries	Number of enrolled children	Year	Number of day nurseries	Number of enrolled children
1947	1,500	158,904	1993	22,585	1,604,824
1950	3,684	292,504	1995	22,529	1,696,234
1955	8,321	653,727	1997	22,439	1,726,223
1960	9,782	689,242	1999	22,332	1,809,623
1965	11,199	829,740	2001	22,218	1,937,132
1970	14,101	1,131,361	2003	22,313	2,037,902
1975	18,238	1,631,025			
1980	22,036	1,996,082			
1985	22,899	1,843,550			

Figure 2-4 Number of Day Nurseries and Enrolled Children

Note: Day nurseries as facilities for children's welfare
Source: *Survey on Social Welfare Facilities*, Ministry of Health and Welfare
(as of March 1, each year except 2003)
2003-*Report on Social Welfare Administration*, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

the postwar period of social upheaval, but they are still basically being followed today (although there has been some improvement in staffing standards).

2-4-6 Home Care Centered Childcare Policy-Solidifying the Two-Branched system

From 1955 until the oil shock in 1972 Japan experienced high economic growth. During that period, the number of day nurseries continued to increase, but the number of children lacking in early childhood care⁴⁾ also steadily rose due to the nuclear family rapidly becoming the basic social unit and an increase in households with two working parents. In response to this lag in developing more day nurseries, the national government's childcare policy attempted to reduce waitlists by adjusting enrollment requirements (to strictly limit enrollment by children not lacking in early childhood care).

Childcare fees at day nurseries have been adjusted according to individual need up through the present day. That is, there is a mechanism for determining childcare fees based on household income. However, throughout the postwar period, the government's contribution rate has been decreasing while a greater burden is being placed on the beneficiary. Departing from the principle espoused by the Child Welfare Law immediately after the end of the war, which recognized the public's responsibility in child-rearing, early childhood educational administration in reality ended up being saddled with the problem of children who wanted to attend day nurseries but could not due to the policy of advocating appropriate enrollment requirements (which meant strictly observing the rule that only children lacking in care could attend).

During this period, the principle of centering early childhood education and care on childcare at home, which put ultimate priority on loving childcare by two parents at home, was drawn up in a report put out by the Central Child Welfare Council's Special Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education and Care. With the penetration of John Bowlby's attachment theory and the increasing popularization of stay-at-home mothers, the belief that mothers needed to raise their children themselves gained widespread prominence, and this underpinned the notion that day nurseries were a necessary evil. The quantitative expansion of kindergartens was in response to this view of early childhood education and care.

Table 2-3 Summary of Childcare Services

	Format	Service Name		Operating Body
Childcare conducted in the home	Childcare provided by parent/guardian			
	Childcare by outside provider: Home childcare services	Baby sitters		Private companies
		Family support centers (Community Support Service)		Community organizations Municipalities Social welfare council
Childcare conducted outside the home	Childcare provided in a group: Center-based childcare services	Day Nurseries	Authorized	Municipalities Social welfare corporation
			Non-registered Baby hotels, etc. inside business offices	Private companies etc.
		Daycare rooms		Individuals Financial support from municipalities
	Childcare provided in a small group: Home-based childcare services	Home welfare workers (childcare giver)		Individuals Financial support from municipalities

Source: *Final report of the Committee for the Promotion of the Childcare Environment*, Tokyo Bureau of Social Welfare and Public Health

4) From the point of view of the system, only children lacking in early childhood care could enroll in day nurseries. Specifically, children that could not receive care at home due to both parents working, illness, childbirth, or the need for elderly nursing care were considered to be lacking in care. However, in actual practice, day nurseries also provided education. Moreover, if early childhood care is interpreted as group education in early childhood, then it may be possible to say that even children from households in which the mother does not work and is able to care for her children are lacking in early childhood care.

Opponents of this theory widely touted the track record of the model of care in which children develop in a healthy manner by being cared for in a group environment where they can interact with friends. A movement to build more day nurseries was developed, led by working women. The movement's stated goal was to have as many day nurseries as mailboxes, and it attempted to communicate the real state of children raised in day nurseries. The practices of unlicensed joint daycare centers, which supported this movement, actually did prompt the establishment of many public day nurseries (see Figure 2-4).

2-4-7 Spread of Day Nurseries and Rise of Daycare Utilization Theory

Preschool education became increasingly widespread, to the point that by 1969 a total of 85.2% of five-year old children were receiving early childhood education and care at a kindergarten or day nursery (51.8% of five-year olds were enrolled at kindergartens and 33.4% at day nurseries). By 1976 approximately 90% of five-year olds and around 76% of four-year olds attended either a kindergarten or day nursery. The negative images associated with day nurseries that arose in the first half of the 1960's had been diminished and access to early childhood educational facilities was starting to become conceived of as a civil right.

The number of day nurseries continued to increase through the 1960's and into the 1970's, and quantitatively, at least, enhancements were made throughout the country (see appendix Figure B Numbers of Public/Private Day Nursery Facilities). This process should have progressed to the stage of making qualitative improvements in the 1980's, but with the rise of Japanese social welfare theory, which was rooted in a Neo-Liberalism, the entire field of welfare was reorganized based on families helping themselves. Day nursery enhancements in the eighties lagged as a result.

However, beginning in the second half of the 1970's the problem of children on waiting lists for day nurseries grew increasingly serious (see appendix Figure F children on Waiting Lists). Childcare needs arose due to changes in parents' working conditions that could not be accommodated with normal daycare hours and formats, like the need for infant care and nighttime hours. In response to these needs, companies started daycare services in environments that did not meet the minimum standards, like one-room condominiums, and numerous incidents occurred. Poor childcare conditions, accidents involving the death of children and other serious problems came to be recognized as the "baby hotel" problem, which prompted a rethinking of regular childcare at day nurseries.

Entering the 1990's, the declining birthrate and aging population had come to be recognized as a problem, and there was a shift from restricting use of day nurseries, the approach that predominated in the eighties, to encouraging their utilization. Child-rearing grew increasingly difficult in a modern Japan that had seen the rise of the nuclear family unit and the necessity of raising children alone without help from the community, and this manifested itself in incidences of child abuse and other problems. Child-rearing assistance, especially for stay-at-home mothers, became a pressing issue of childcare policy, which oriented itself toward developing environments that would facilitate having and raising children. In light of the difficulties families were having raising children under three, the philosophy that mothers need to care for their children by themselves until the age of three was publicly declared to be a myth. Today, people have come to expect day nurseries to provide regular education and care for children lacking in childcare but at the same time also to function as local child-rearing centers and provide assistance for raising children.

Chapter 3

Early Childhood Education and Care: Method and Substance

3-1 Child-Centered Educational Theory and Method

3-1-1 Play in Kindergarten Education

Kindergarten education in Japan was initially modeled after Freidrich Fröbel's approach to education, which centered on the formal operation of Fröbel Gaben.¹⁾ Fröbel invented these educational toys and an instructional method for them in order to teach play to kindergarten children in a pedagogical manner. In Japan, when it was time for Gaben, the children would be sat down at their desks to handle the toys. Led by the teacher, the entire class would conduct the Gaben activities together. This activity therefore was not really voluntary play, but rather consisted largely of children carrying out predetermined tasks.

Around the end of the 19th century, the child-centered approach, a progressive educational philosophy that originated in the United States, was brought to Japan and it transformed people's thinking regarding children's play. The child-centered approach was a philosophy that sought to liberate children in education and stimulate experience, thought and expression in them based on their own interests, voluntary activities and development. This philosophy underpinned new criticism of the formal use of Fröbel Gaben and of activities limited only to use of the hands indoors. Instead, the educational value of children playing voluntarily and freely came to be acknowledged, and it was recommended that in addition to indoor activities children play outdoors while engaging their entire bodies.

3-1-2 Child-Centered Education and Kindergarten

At the beginning of the 20th century, pedagogical methods based on the child-centered approach were sought and new practices emerged.

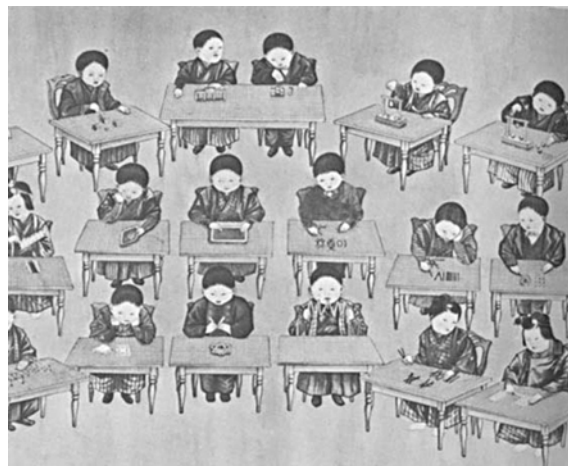


Figure 3-1 Time for Fröbel Gaben

Source: Kindergarten affiliated with Ochanomizu University, 1976,
Chronological Table: 100 Years of Kindergarten, Kokudoshia.

1) Gaben are educational toys or tools invented by Fröbel to teach children. Fröbel made children play using Gaben that symbolically expressed natural forms he considered to be created by God in order to make the children aware of the presence of God.

These educational methods were based on the principle of alignment with childhood development, valuing child-centered activity over teacher-oriented child care and education. That is to say, they put less priority on teachers infusing children with knowledge and more on encouraging and supporting their voluntary activities. The methods were characterized more by indirect, tacit supervision of the children by teachers than by direct, explicit supervision. At the kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls, education involved teachers supporting the children's activities in line with their intentions in an environment and facilities set up based on educational considerations. In addition, subjects were chosen that matched children's interests, and the teachers tried to support the children in such a way that their activities ended up naturally involving those subjects.

Child-centered thinking was accepted by both parents and kindergarten professionals, but the educational activities that actually took place in classrooms were varied. Children's free play was the activity particularly emphasized by child-centered education. For this reason, most kindergartens incorporated free play into their educational practices, but this alone did not necessarily provide sufficient concrete instruction. At the same time, in response to demands from parents expecting preparatory training for elementary school or early education, time for group reading, piano, art and other activities was also incorporated into the curriculum.

3-1-3 Codification of Child-Centered Education

Child-centered education was codified by the government following World War II, but at the same time many practical problems also presented themselves. In 1948, the Ministry of Education published *Nursing Guidelines: Handbook of Early Childhood Education and Care* as a manual for kindergarten education. It was created based on the method and substance of progressive education in the United States. However, at actual kindergartens and day nurseries, instruction was provided by dividing activities into five areas based on the categories already delineated in the *Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten*. As a result, while most teachers sympathized with the intent of the *Nursing Guidelines*, which was to facilitate experience by supporting children's voluntary activities, they were confused about how to actually provide instruction.

Even with revisions to the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten in 1956, the basic principles of the child-centered approach were maintained, but in actual teaching, the curriculum was conceived of and taught in the same way as elementary school subjects. One of the reasons for this was that the standards were designed for consistency with elementary school and were systematic and organizational in character. Another reason was that the educational committee supervisors who instructed kindergarten teachers were almost always chosen from staff members at elementary, middle and high schools and hardly any had kindergarten experience. In the 1960's and 1970's when kindergartens, primarily private kindergartens, were increasing rapidly and parents' interest in education and academic credentials was mounting, teaching often became oriented toward



Figure 3-2 Guided Curriculum in the Kindergarten Affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls (in the 1930's)

Source: Sozo Kurahashi, 1934, *Ultimate Truth of the Method for Kindergarten Education and Care*, Toyo Toshokan.

preparatory education for elementary school or early education.

When the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens were revised in 1989 following critical reflection on education, child-centered education was again debated. It was concluded that play, as the voluntary activity of children, was an important form of learning that cultivated the foundation for the balanced development of body and mind. The basis of kindergarten education was to educate young children through their environment allowing them to develop their own plays and activities. In conjunction with the new standards, progress was made in understanding the position of teachers through holding workshops sponsored by the Ministry of Education and research seminars put on by teacher groups as well as by enhancing teacher training and in-service education. In recent years, the concept of collaborative learning has emerged in regard to kindergarten education in order to ensure kindergarten and elementary school are linked together in the learning process.

3-2 Curriculum

3-2-1 Pedagogical Aspects of the First Kindergarten Curriculum

Early childhood education in Japan started by way of studying the theories and methods of education and childcare in the West, particularly the Fröbel Gaben, educational toys developed by Friedrich Fröbel. The kindergarten of the Tokyo Normal School for Girls, known as the country's first kindergarten, was established in 1876, four years after Japan's school system was created. At a time when it was rare to send children in later childhood to elementary school, only the

Table 3-1 Timetable for Early Childhood Education and Care (Kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls, ca. 1877)

Group One - Children Age 5

Mon	30 mins Assemble in classroom	30 mins Parables	45 mins Placing geometric forms (Boxes No.7 to No.9)	45 mins Drawing and combining paper	90 mins Play
Tue	Same	Counting (1-100)	Piling up geometric forms (No.5) and storytime	Painting	Same
Wed	Same	Working with sticks (Break sticks into fractions of 1/4 or smaller, or create letters and numbers)	Paper pasting	Historical stories	Same
Thu	Same	Singing	Placing geometric forms (No. 9 to No. 11)	Wrapping paper	Same
Fri	Same	Working with sticks (Use beans to create hexagons or the form of daily articles)	Piling up geometric forms (No. 5 to No. 6)	Origami	Same
Sat	Same	Combine wood blocks and clay crafts	Placing rings	Stitching	Same

Also do exercises during this time

Group Two - Children Age 4

Mon	30 mins Assemble in classroom	30 mins Physical exercises	45 mins Placing geometric forms	45 mins Drawing (triangles, etc.)	90 mins Play
Tue	Same	Same	Parables and drawing diagrams	Painting	Same
Wed	Same	Same	Piling up geometric forms (No. 3 to No. 4)	Stitching pictures (triple line, etc.)	Same
Thu	Same	Singing	Counting (1-20) and exercises	Origami (up to No. 12)	Same
Fri	Same	Physical exercises	Placing sticks (from 6 to 20)	Wrapping paper	Same
Sat	Same	Same	Historical stories	Piling up geometric forms (No. 4)	Same

Group Three - Children Age 3

Mon	30 mins Assemble in classroom	30 mins Physical exercises	45 mins Playing with toy balls (No. 1)	45 mins Diagram drawing (right angles of triple lines, etc.)	90 mins Play
Tue	Same	Same	Short stories	Playing with shells	Same
Wed	Same	Same	Objects (balls, columns, hexagons)	Wrapping paper (No. 1 to No 4, or in an easy form)	Same
Thu	Same	Singing	Counting (1-12) and exercises	Linking chains	Same
Fri	Same	Physical exercises	Piling up geometric forms (Up to No. 3)	Painting	Same
Sat	Same	Same	Screen drawing	Placing sticks (up to 6)	Same

Source: *100 years of kindergarten Education*, Ministry of Education (Hikarino kuni co.,Ltd. 1979)

intellectual elite and upper-middle classes, who were few in number, sent their children to kindergarten. These families expected kindergartens to prepare their children for entry into elementary school by providing knowledge-oriented instruction.

At kindergartens before World War II, the concept of a curriculum was not clearly developed; rather, pedagogical subjects meant the curriculum. Subjects at the time kindergartens were first founded consisted of forms of utility, which involved teaching the names of things, artistic forms, which consisted of cutting paper and similar activities, and forms of recognition, which was made up of Fröbel Gaben, singing and narrative. Songs in the classical Japanese Gagaku style were also sung. A typical day at initial Japanese kindergartens lasted four hours, from about ten in the morning to two in the afternoon; activities were divided into 30-45 minute blocks, and the teacher would instruct the children together in a group. In other words, activities were divided up and education took place in a format similar to an elementary school. Kindergartens affiliated with a particular religion would also include time focused on religion among the subjects it taught.

Fröbel Gaben were gradually eliminated due to experience with them at actual kindergartens— young children had a hard time handling them in accordance with the correct, prescribed sequences. For example, around 1881, several of Fröbel’s educational toys were eliminated from the educational subjects taught and play started to be given more value. However, for a time, in response to strong demand from parents for elementary school reading and writing, these subjects were added.

3-2-2 Moving Away from Fröbel Gaben to a Focus on Children’s Play and Everyday Activities
In the latter half of the 19th century, Japan was introduced to criticism of Fröbel Gaben from the United States as well as to the liberal pedagogical theories of G. Stanley Hall, John Dewey and others, which breathed new life into Japanese early childhood education and care. The Fröbel Society of Japan was born in 1896 and the following year saw the establishment of another early childhood research organization, the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe Education Society. Magazines focusing on early childhood education were also starting to be published, and interest in early childhood education and care grew.

Amid the flourishing of experiential education, which organizes activity around children’s natural everyday activities, the Regulations on Kindergarten Education and Facilities were enacted in 1899. The regulations strongly reflected a view of education that emphasized activities suited to children’s mental and physical development. There were four pedagogical areas: play, singing,

Table 3–2 Typical Daily Kindergarten Schedule

	8 am	noon	2 pm	Total (%)	Public (%)	Private (%)
A	Arrive → Free play → Assembly → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Free play → Leave			39.7	53.7	31.0
B	Arrive → Free play → Assembly → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			36.9	18.5	48.3
C	Arrive → Free play → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Free play → Leave			7.8	18.5	1.1
D	Arrive → Free play → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			—	—	—
E	Arrive → Free play → Assembly → Free play → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			0.7	—	1.1
F	Arrive → Free play → Fixed lesson → Assembly → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			1.4	3.7	—
G	Arrive → Free play → Lunch → Free play → Leave			0.7	1.9	—
H	Arrive → Free play → Assembly → Fixed lesson → Free play → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Free play → Leave			7.1	3.7	9.2
I	Arrive → Free play → Assembly → Fixed lesson → Free play → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			3.5	—	3.7
J	Arrive → Free play → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			1.4	—	2.3
K	Arrive → Free play → Lunch → Free play → Leave			0.7	—	1.1
L	Arrive → Free play → Fixed lesson → Free play → Fixed lesson → Lunch → Fixed lesson → Leave			—	—	—
Total (No. of kindergartens)				141	54	87

Sources: *Survey on Japanese Childcare Facilities* (1942), Nursing Research Center, Children's Nursing Society
100 Years of Kindergarten Education, Ministry of Education (Hikarinokuni Co., Ltd. 1979)

listening and talking, and handwork, and they were all characterized by their emphasis on play. Highest priority was placed on free play and rhythmic exercises, a form of play involving moving the body to music as a group. Fröbel Gaben were incorporated into handwork, which was similar to drawing and construction art, as efforts were made to move away from them.

In 1926, the first independent ordinance relating to kindergarten was promulgated, the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten. In the Regulations for Carrying Out the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten, the stated subjects were play, singing, observation, listening and talking, handwork, etc. The addition of “etc.” to the five areas meant that teachers were allowed to design flexible education programs at their discretion. At most kindergartens, programs were planned that ensured a good balance of the five areas, and at some kindergartens other activities were added to the curriculum, like drawing and outings.

Sozo Kurahashi, who provided much of the impetus behind early childhood education during this period, actively introduced the project method, which was practiced in the United States, and advocated the practice of early child education and care that was systematic and planned.

Early childhood education and care was gradually developing, primarily at kindergartens, but in the lead up to the Pacific War in 1941, it was demanded that kindergartens also participate in creating physically strong bodies and instilling group discipline.

3-2-3 Postwar Kindergarten Curriculum–Positioning Within the School System

After the war, the School Education Law was established in 1947 under the Allied General Headquarters, and kindergarten was positioned within the school system. The following year saw the establishment of Nursing Guidelines: Handbook of Early Childhood Education and Care. The handbook was intended to be applied to kindergartens, day nurseries and the home. It was a breakthrough document that reflected the emphasis on freedom that was prevalent at the time.

The curriculum was based on experiences children wanted to have and experiences that would be fun and fulfilling for them. The areas listed were observation, rhythmic exercises, rest, free play, music, storytelling, pictures, handcrafts, nature study, pretend play, dramatic play, puppet plays, healthcare and annual events. The tendency to treat the five areas delineated in 1926’s Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten pedagogically almost like elementary school was avoided; rather, the handbook was created based on respect for children’s natural activities and the belief that children’s everyday activities should be rooted in their interests and desires.

This period was marked by an overall strong stance toward promoting children’s independence and self-initiative. At the same time, active efforts were underway to create a core curriculum for elementary and secondary education, and compared to this there was less planning and systemization for early childhood education, so there was also a strong drive toward establishing an early childhood curriculum. Additionally, in the midst of the postwar recovery, as kindergartens grew in number and demand mounted for establishing day nurseries, there were bloated expectations that the curriculum approach could improve the quality of early childhood education and care. In the 1950’s, there were actually loud calls for collaboration between kindergarten and elementary school, and many kindergartens were built as annexes on the sites of elementary schools. The influence of the elementary school curriculum was substantial.

With growing demand for early childhood education, the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens were established in 1956 with the view to improving the quality of early childhood education and care. The previous Nursing Standards were revised and renamed, and the new standards were intended to form the basis of the kindergarten curriculum. The substance of early childhood education was thought of in terms of the five goals stated in the School Education Law, and its objective was to have educational activities implemented on a systematic and planned basis. The curriculum was divided into six areas: health, society, nature, language, music rhythm, and drawing-handicrafts, and for each area, the special nature of early childhood development was indicated along with desirable experiences. The National Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten were revised in 1964 for the sake of clarifying that, under the 1961 revised Government Guidelines for Teaching, kindergartens were considered to be members of the school system and that kindergarten education was to be consistent with the school system’s curriculum.

3-2-4 General Instruction through Play and Everyday Activities Appropriate to Early Childhood

The National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens were revised in 1989. It was the first set of revisions to the standards in 25 years. The 1989 standards clearly affirmed the independence of early childhood education. They were oriented toward deepening early childhood education, stating that, based on an understanding of early childhood and the development of each individual child, children's daily activities should be appropriate to early childhood and that play should therefore be the central activity. The modified standards clearly stated that the curriculum should provide everyday activities appropriate to early childhood, general instruction centered around play, and support for the development of each individual child. Learning was divided into five areas instead of the previous six: health, human relationships, environment, language, and expression.

In the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens revised in 1998, there were no changes to the contents of early childhood education and care, but an attempt was made to organize the curriculum to be responsive to changes in the environment surrounding children. Specifically, it aimed to organize the curriculum by incorporating children's mental and physical development combined with actual local conditions, premised on increasing numbers of working women, the shift to the nuclear family unit, the breakdown of local communities, and the problem of a decreasing birthrate. Current discussions center around how to organize a curriculum that precisely gauges child development and environmental changes and that is acutely aware of the close cooperation with parents and guardians. Another issue is to clearly affirm the independence of kindergarten while keeping the collaboration between kindergarten and elementary school in view. There is a need to organize the curriculum while constantly making improvements and revisions.

With regard to the present state of the kindergarten curriculum, there are some private kindergartens that provide education and care based on the national standards while also accommodating the various needs of parents and guardians by including English lessons, kanji instruction or other specialized activities.

Table 3-3 History of Guidelines for Kindergarten Education

Regulation on Contents and Equipment of Kindergarten 1899	Play • Singing • Listening and Talking • Handwork
Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten 1926	Play • Singing • Observation • Listening and Talking • Handwork, etc.
Nursing Guidelines: Handbook of early childhood education and care 1948	Observation • Rhythmic exercises • Rest • Free play • Music • Storytelling • Pictures • Handcrafts • Nature study • Pretend play/Dramatic play/Puppet plays • Health care • an annual calendar of events
National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens 1956	Health • Society • Nature • Language • Drawing-Handicrafts • Music Rhythm
National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens 1964	Health • Society • Nature • Language • Drawing-Handicrafts • Music Rhythm
National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens 1989	Health • Human Relationships • Environment • Language • Expression
National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens 1998	Health • Human Relationships • Environment • Language • Expression

Table 3-4 History of Guidelines for Nursery-care at Day Nursery

Age	Guidelines for Nursery-care at Day Nursery 1965	Guidelines for Nursery-care at Day Nursery 1990	Guidelines for Nursery-care at Day Nursery 1999
6 months	Life • Play Health • Society • Play Health • Society • Language • Play	N/A	N/A
6 months - 2 years			
2 years			
3 years			
4 years 5 years 6 years	Health • Society • Language Nature • Music • Art and Craft	Health • Human Relationships Environment Language • Expression	Health • Human Relationships • Environment • Language • Expression

3-3 Teaching Plans

3-3-1 What is a Teaching Plan?

In Japan's elementary and secondary school system, systematic instruction is provided based on academic subjects. Kindergarten, however, aims to educate children through their environment, which is necessary to their development. General instruction is provided through play and other everyday activities. In order to raise children from the time they enter kindergarten or a day nursery until they leave and in accordance with the curriculum, teachers need to have a concrete plan that considers the type and timing of various activities. A teaching plan is a specific plan for providing education and care with an outlook on the children's development while they are attending kindergartens or day nurseries.

3-3-2 Prewar Teaching Plans—Necessity of a Planned Education

When kindergartens were first established, education and care was not necessarily provided based on adequate teaching plans. Care was provided on the basis of Western caregiving-related literature and in imitation of the practices of the few Western teachers and caregivers in Japan. The overall framework for providing education and care was the contents of the curriculum. Teaching time was centered around the use of Fröbel Gaben, and instruction was provided to all the children at once. There was no clear distinction between the curriculum and teaching plans.

Awareness of teaching plans first came about beginning in 1890 in conjunction with kindergarten reforms in the United States. At that time, teachers in America were critical of formal Fröbel educational practices and held that it was important for education and care practices to be rooted in the necessities of young children's daily lives. In addition, with the rise of scientific research on children, there was movement toward providing education and care based on a plan that was suitable to children.

Free play and planning, which has been emphasized in Japan's educational and care practices since the second half of the 19th century, may at first glance seem to be contradictory. However, Sozo Kurahashi, who advocated education and care centered on play—which could be called spontaneous expression by children—and who had a major influence on early childhood education in Japan, said that while spontaneous play and educational planning appear to be contradictory, educational planning is still necessary. Kurahashi criticized the fact that up to that time early childhood education only consisted of imposing Fröbel traditions onto children without alteration or, on the other side, unthinkingly obliging children's transitory interests while accommodating them in the name of prioritizing their voluntary activity. Kurahashi thought that if teachers had a detailed plan then children's play activities would be more productive and comprehensive. He criticized practice without planning and held that planning was preparation for teachers. He thought that appropriate locations, teaching materials and ways of playing needed to be planned out.

Kurahashi had studied William H. Kilpatrick's project method, which systematized educational methods discussed in the U.S. state of Massachusetts at the time. The project method avoided direct instruction like that used in elementary school and higher grades; rather it emphasized voluntary activities for children and held that children learn while being actively involved in play. For this reason, Kurahashi advocated a guided curriculum for kindergarten in line with children's play, not one-sided planning by teachers. His method suggested that plans should be created that allow children to acquire experience and knowledge in an integrated manner. His educational theory featured a sequential process: goal-setting, planning, practice and critical reflection.

Interest in instructional planning among teachers deepened thereafter. At the first session in 1936 of Society for the Research of Childcare and Education, an independent research society dedicated to issues in early childhood education and care, the topic for consideration was teaching plans at kindergartens and day nurseries. The society was very concerned about the fact that many nurseries would allow children to play unthinkingly during the week or would ignore the children's environment and conduct childcare that closely imitated kindergarten, and were equally concerned that kindergartens were prone to neglecting fresh, new activities due to an overemphasis on formal structures. The society discussed the conduct curriculum used at the kindergarten affiliated with Columbia University, the systematic teaching plans used at the kindergarten affiliated with the

Tokyo Normal School for Girls, and Minoru Wada's *Experimental Pedagogy for Kindergarten*.

3-3-3 Postwar Teaching Plans-Putting Priority on Planning

Interest in systematic, planned educational practices, which had been continuously present from the beginning of the 20th century, was immediately taken up again after the war as a central issue in early childhood education and care. The zeal people put into the postwar recovery extended to early education and care, and under the influence of the flourishing core curriculum movement, various teaching plans were created through the leadership of a number of early childhood education and care groups. Kindergartens debated the necessity of teaching plans based on the normal activities of children and the characteristics of each stage of their development, while day nurseries were pressed to establish plans that emphasized social practices and were scientifically founded.

Beginning in 1958, the elementary school curriculum was organized on the basis of the Government Guidelines for Teaching, and the practice of creating teaching plans became firmly entrenched. For kindergartens as well, the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, curriculums, and teaching plans and formats were established in a manner that matched this.

Under instructions from the Ministry of Education to conduct early childhood education and care based on teaching plans, local educational committees joined together to propose a curriculum and teaching plan model. The model that was presented resembled an elementary school teaching plan, and all kindergartens ended up conducting education and care practices under a unified plan in accordance with this model.

3-3-4 Creating Teaching Plans Appropriate to Kindergarten

The 1989 revisions to the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens clarified the differences between kindergarten and elementary school and post-kindergarten, and strongly provided for the independence of kindergarten education. The six curriculum areas were treated like elementary school subjects and teaching plans were often created for each area. In response to this, under the 1989 revisions, integrated instruction centering on play activities was put at the core of the kindergarten curriculum and the five areas were conceived of only as a way of viewing children's development. The National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens stated that teaching plans were to be created specifically to ensure that each and every child acquires necessary experiences from the perspective of early childhood development by participating in daily activities that are appropriate to early childhood. The standards also provided procedures for creating teaching plans for this purpose.

Based on the goals of the curriculum, the actual nature of children and their development was to be understood first, then consideration was to be given to how children's play and other everyday activities develop, after which concrete objectives and activities were to be determined. The environment was to be structured in order to bring about the objectives, and concrete assistance by teachers was to be planned by anticipating how the children's activities would develop. The process of reflecting critically on and revising the teaching plan in light of how the children actually responded was also included in the sequence.

Teaching plans were also to consist of long-term aspects and short-term aspects. The standards stated that it was necessary to come up with specific teaching methods from both long- and short-term perspectives. Long-term teaching plans were to consist of annual, term and monthly plans, while short-term plans were to consist of weekly and daily plans.

Today, as a curriculum is developed for teacher training schools, guidance related to drawing up teaching plans is becoming more thorough and there are now many teachers capable of creating detailed plans that accord with the actual nature of children and their course of development.

3-3-5 Relationship Between Teaching Plans, Practice, Critical Reflection and Evaluation

Teachers have made efforts since the Taisho period to leave records of children's play and other activities. The passionate teachers of the postwar period continued to take an interest in keeping records, and based on these records, a process for creating teaching plans has been clarified. This process consists of first understanding the actual nature of children and their development, then determining the substance and goals of children's play and other everyday activities, after which comes structuring of an environment in order to realize these goals, and finally offering concrete assistance as teachers that anticipates how the children's activities will develop.

Since establishment of the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens in 1956, the process of education and care has become more systemized thanks to thinking that affords importance to the entire process of first establishing what is the essence of children's education, forming a curriculum based on it, and then planning specific teaching methods. And a framework of practice has been developed that proceeds from practice to critical reflection to evaluation to restructuring the environment.

With regard to evaluations, making the creation of teaching records (cumulative records) mandatory had a major impact. In 1951 the Ministry of Education informed prefectural educational committees, governors and other officials that early childhood cumulative records needed to be created. Early childhood cumulative records served as a record of attendance as well as a register for comprehensively and continuously recording the details of early childhood growth and development and for ensuring more appropriate teaching of young children at kindergartens. At the time, the emphasis of enrollment records was placed on adequately considering the connection with elementary school education. In 1955 revisions to the early childhood cumulative records for kindergarten as well, the intent was to seek consistency with childhood cumulative records for elementary school.

However, under revisions that were made in 1989, improvements had teachers keep records that reflected the nature of kindergarten education; they therefore differed from the teaching records modeled after those used in elementary school. The revisions were made to make the records relevant to educational practice by putting the focus on the process of teaching and ensuring that children's development could be reassessed in connection with the teacher's teaching activities; the records did not involve recording the characteristics of early childhood development from a normative standpoint. At present, cumulative records are kept as enrollment records and for the purpose of describing childhood development and related teaching practices. When a child enrolls in elementary school, a copy or summary of that child's cumulative record is sent to his or her school.

3-4 Early Childhood Education and Care at Day Nurseries: Method and Substance

3-4-1 Educational Aspects—Substance Follows Kindergarten

The substance of education and care at the first day nurseries varied depending on the nursery and the region because there was not an integrated set of regulations that applied nationwide. With regard to the pedagogical aspects of day nurseries, activities were often modeled after the educational areas of kindergartens. When prices spiked after the end of World War I, many working families were gradually reduced to poverty. As a result, ensuring that mothers had the opportunity to work and establishing day nurseries became social policy agendas, and starting at the end of the 1910's, public day nurseries began to be established in Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo. According to regulations for public day nurseries established in Tokyo, education and care at the nurseries were to be based on the kindergarten curriculum and include play, singing, listening and talking, and handwork. These areas were identical to the four areas of education and care laid out in the Regulations on Kindergarten Education and Facilities, which was enacted in 1899. The reason kindergarten practices were adopted by day nurseries was largely because kindergarten education was ahead of day nurseries both in the legal code and in practice.

3-4-2 Daycare Aspects—Prioritized at Day Nurseries

With regard to the daycare, or nursing side of day nurseries, which concerns children's health and their basic everyday activities, day nurseries were actually further developed than kindergartens. Through introducing Western medicine and hygiene practices, the outbreak of communicable diseases, and increasing attention to school hygiene, hygiene and health related activities and issues were also gradually incorporated into kindergartens as well. However, day nurseries were forced to look after the health and lifestyles of the children more so than kindergartens because the children came from impoverished families. Many children at day nurseries would often wear dirty clothing, their faces would be smeared with dirt or mud, their hair would be disheveled and their nails uncut. They might have mucus from their nose or eyes stuck to their face or even be suffering from skin diseases, trachoma, or conjunctivitis. For children such as these, day nurseries established time for cleaning up and medical treatment. Teachers or school nurses would wash the children's faces and



Figure 3-3 Time for Dressing Properly in the Morning (in the 1920's)

Source: Tokyo Public Day Nursery Society, 1983, *Pictorial History of Early Childhood Education and Care in Tokyo Public Day Nursery*.

hands, comb their hair, clip their nails, get rid of lice and address any slight injuries. The nurseries would also give snacks to the children to supplement their nutritional intake and provide school lunches to those that were not able to bring one from home. Knowledge and practices related to health and everyday living were communicated to the children through the actual act of cleaning the children's bodies, treating their illnesses and providing them meals.

Entering the 1930's, research on education and care at day nurseries progressed, and there was movement toward organizing childcare at day nurseries in a way that differed from kindergarten. For example, the words "follow the kindergarten curriculum" were deleted from the regulations for public day nurseries in Tokyo, and childcare became practicing everyday activities, cultivating character, promoting health, and conducting other activities necessary for children's healthy mental and physical development. Practicing everyday activities referred to obeying rules for group living and cooperating with others as well as acquiring basic life skills like cleanliness and proper eating habits. Promoting health consisted of conducting various physical exams, cleanliness (hand washing, gargling, teeth brushing, ear cleaning, etc.), disease prevention, physical exercise, naps, mid-meal snacks, lunches and medical treatment. Physical exercise involved such activities as radio calisthenics, which was popular at the time, outings, open-air educational experiences, sunbathing, and dry skin brushing. These kinds of childcare activities came to be officially emphasized in regulations for day nurseries, and the day nurseries themselves worked to further enhance them.

3-4-3 Educating Mothers

Since before the war, some day nurseries have provided parental education primarily for mothers in addition to education and care for children. This was for the purpose of ensuring the healthy growth of the children by improving the low levels of knowledge and skills related to childcare and daily living among mothers and improving the children's home life. Day nurseries encouraged the creation of parental organizations, called mothers' associations, and provided opportunities to learn about childhood activities and development, acquire knowledge and skills related to daily living, socialize with other parents, and communicate with the nurseries.

For example, at monthly meetings, there would be lectures by specialists on the health, nutrition and psychology of infants and young children, workshops on cooking and children's clothing, classes on how to manage household finances, and discussion sessions with nursery teachers. In this sense, day nurseries played the role of supplementing home childcare through educating mothers and helping to stabilize home life in local communities. Day nurseries continued to educate mothers in the period following the war when there was very little leeway in people's day-to-day living. Quality of home life, though, improved with high economic growth in the 1960's, as did the educational level of mothers. As this occurred, educating mothers at day nurseries gradually became less necessary. Parental education came to be conducted more by local governments than by

day nurseries.

Despite this development, though, day nurseries have continued to provide instruction and advice to parents and guardians on health and living up through the present, and providing education and care in partnership with the children's families has continued to be demanded. Since before the war, day nurseries have published newsletters, had teachers visit children's homes, kept family contact records, and used other means to communicate with families and provide guidance. Today, teachers do not often visit children's homes, but day nurseries are required to have a system for keeping in close contact with families regarding the children's day-to-day activities and health status as well as inform them of any accidents that occur. In recent years, the declining influence of home life in the educational process and the growing sense of child-rearing as a burden have become societal problems. The recipients of instruction and advice from day nurseries have expanded from parents of children enrolled to all parents in the local community looking after children at home.

3-4-4 Encouraging Peer Group Formation Among Children

Led by Society for the Research of Childcare and Education Issues, which spearheaded research on education and care at day nurseries, methods of providing childcare that would encourage children to form peer group started to be considered in the 1930's. Whereas members of the prewar Fröbel Society largely consisted of people involved in kindergarten, Society for the Research of Childcare and Education Issues was actively attended by nursery teachers as well. Research began on methods of childcare that would help children overcome their squabbles and form more desirable relationships. In addition, the importance was recognized of devising care plans with activities that followed the rules of group living and social drills leading to the establishment of good relationships.

Education and care methods connected to peer group formation among children developed after the war as well, as a distinguishing characteristic of childcare at day nurseries. As an example, an approach was practiced in the 1950's and 1960's involving having children organize and share their own experiences and needs and solve problems through talking about them with the other children. These practices were only conducted at some leading day nurseries—regular nurseries had their hands full with day-to-day childcare. Despite this, a great deal of attention was paid at day nurseries to improving the quality of the children's behavior in groups. In contrast to the approach to childcare that emphasized spontaneous play and other activities, this newly emergent group approach put a value on peer group formation and encouraged children through groups.

3-4-5 Enhancing Childcare at Day Nurseries

As we have seen up to this point, day nurseries made efforts to structure education and care in line with the actual daily experiences of children attending them while incorporating some curriculum from kindergarten education. At the same time some of the practices and methods used



Figure 3-4 Lunch Provided by LARA Goods Shortly After World War II

Source: Tokyo Public Day Nursery Society, 1983, *Pictorial History of Early Childhood Education and Care in Tokyo Public Day Nursery*.

at day nurseries were incorporated by kindergartens as well, and the practices of early childhood education and care grew more diverse over time.

After the war, the establishment of childcare practices based on the principles of child welfare was demanded against a backdrop of the enactment of the Child Welfare Law in 1947 and increasing numbers of day nurseries. At the same time, policies were formulated that positioned aspects of kindergarten education as a part of childcare at day nurseries. Under 1948's Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions, childcare at day nurseries was to consist of health observation, individual exams, free play, afternoon naps and health checkups. Music, rhythmic exercises, drawing, handicrafts, storytelling, nature study, social observation, and group play were indicated as examples of free play. The descriptions were lacking in specificity from an instructional point of view, so the Ministry of Health and Welfare frequently put out childcare guidelines for actual activities to serve as reference for day nurseries. There was a fair amount of confusion at day nurseries however with respect to initiatives that had not been a part of the awareness of most day nurseries up to that point, like guiding free play and creating teaching plans. At the same time, with the distribution of LARA goods,²⁾ in 1948 around 300 day nurseries in six major cities started providing lunches. Supplying lunches at day nurseries became a common practice entering the 1960's.

In 1963 the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare jointly announced that the educational aspects of childcare at day nurseries would follow the kindergarten curriculum. This was in an effort to integrate education at kindergartens and day nurseries and to help ensure the educational level of day nurseries did not fall too far below kindergarten. Influenced by the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, the 1965 Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries was issued by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in order to enhance education and care at day nurseries based on their functions and characteristics. The guidelines indicated that the fundamental feature of childcare at day nurseries was the unity of nursing and education. With regard to substance, following the kindergarten curriculum, six areas were established for children ages four and up: health, society, nature, language, music rhythm, and art and craft.

Education and care at day nurseries was intended to respond to the needs of the times and to precisely accommodate children's development. The 1965 Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries even established two to four educational areas for infants up to age three. In the 1990 revisions, however, the areas were eliminated for children under three due to a number of difficulties from a developmental standpoint, and the five areas—health, human relationships, environment, language, and expression—which followed the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten, were applied only to children age three and up.

How to handle meals, going to the bathroom, sleep, rest and other physiological needs were also indicated for different age groups. In addition, as daycare for infants just a few months old became more commonplace, childcare programs for infants under six months were added, as efforts were made to enhance nursery care for infants. The 1999 revisions reflected further health and safety considerations by adding: countermeasures to sudden infant death syndrome and atopic dermatitis (skin rash); how to respond to cases of abuse; as well as further content regarding nursery care for infants. Providing support for child-rearing at day nurseries was put forth as a new issue, and techniques for accommodating diverse childcare needs and child-rearing support initiatives for local communities were presented.

3-5 Development of Environments for Childcare and Education

3-5-1 Prewar Childcare and Education Environment

1) Establishment of Buildings and Playgrounds

The kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls established in 1876 represented the full-fledged start of kindergarten in Japan. It was established by the Ministry of

2) LARA goods is a collective designation for food provisions, clothing, daily articles and other supplies provided by the Licensed Agency for Relief of Asia in order to provide relief for people facing hardship in the aftermath of World War II. LARA was formed by American religious, educational and labor organizations to provide relief for the impoverished in Asia.

Education to serve as a model for kindergartens in Japan in response to the fact that kindergartens were not being built despite being provided for in the Education Ordinance, which had been laid out a few years earlier in 1872. This kindergarten was built on a section of the normal school grounds. Its building was newly constructed in a form that resembled the adjacent normal school; a Japanese garden was also established. The kindergarten was blessed with an outstanding building and playgrounds.

The building had a cross-shaped inner hallway and a rectangular floor plan that was long on the east-west axis. On the south side of the hall that ran east to west were classrooms, and at the eastern end there was a playroom that was long on the north-south axis. The playground was put on the south side of the building. Western methods were used for the building's floor plan and design, and in addition to being in the latest style, it was built to visually symbolize education at the time, which sought to introduce Western culture. Education in Japan since the Meiji period was entirely different from traditional pedagogical methods used since the Edo period and the structures used at the time, such as conducting educational activities at private residences. Western designs and floor plans were actively implemented for the buildings of public educational facilities.

In Japan at the beginning of the Meiji period, there were two major trends in school construction overall, not just kindergartens. The first was to build schools by remodeling existing residences and public offices, and this method was actually used a vast majority of the time. At the same time, some communities constructed new educational facility buildings as places for learning that served as symbols of Westernization where new educational methods and curriculums were implemented. While there was not a large number of such facilities and grounds, prominent community members would donate large sums of money and they would be built with zeal. Many of these buildings possessed excellent design features and functions, and some have kept their appearance up through the present day (Figure 3-5).

Various discussions took place on whether to construct Japanese schools with the hall placed to the north or south, but in the end it was concluded that it would better for the basic layout to be classrooms on the south side of the building and the hall on the north side. This became the prototypical layout for school buildings in Japan and it was used for quite some time through the Heisei period. School construction and athletic fields were increasingly standardized as many legal regulations were put into place beginning in the Meiji period.

Kindergarten buildings, however, underwent a transition that differed from regular school buildings despite being branches of them. A number of new buildings were built even in the Meiji period, and from the Taisho to Showa periods, many new buildings were constructed. Most were these though were for kindergartens affiliated with regional normal schools, although some were built with donations from local residents. Many kindergartens affiliated with regional normal schools were designed on the model of the kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls, so their form and appearance resembled that school, meaning that there were many built with a Western-style design. However, depending on the locality, kindergarten buildings incorporated



Figure 3-5 Iwashina School (Shizuoka Prefecture); completed in 1880; designated an Important Cultural Property of Japan; photo of the building at present (by the author)

Western design principles as symbols of Westernization (Figure 3-6), but there were also many built following Japanese designs.

With respect to floor plans as well, kindergarten buildings followed a path that differed from regular school buildings. In the case of kindergarten, the hall also became an important part of the building for activity because people would enter and leave the building and playgrounds many times due to the nature of childcare activities and methods and because free play had gained in prominence in early Japanese childhood education and care. This meant that halls were not mere passageways, but needed good lighting and ventilation as places where young children were active. For this reason, kindergarten buildings came to be designed with a hall on the southside, classrooms on the north side and immediate access to the playground. There were very few legal regulations related to kindergarten buildings, so they were developed without being restricted by the law. By the first half of the Showa period, classrooms on the north side and a hall of the south side (playground side) had become the main format for Japanese kindergarten buildings (Figure 3-7).

The mainstream design of Japanese kindergarten buildings consisted of direct access from the classrooms to the playground. Entering and exiting the building was also done via the playground. There was a long hall that faced the playground, and the classrooms were entered through this hall. The hall faced the playground and was open to it, but it had a roof and was a space that could not be clearly defined as either indoors or outdoors. Lighting and ventilation were excellent, and it functioned as both passageway and play area. It was a functional space that was perfectly



Figure 3-6 Kyokuto Kindergarten (Okayama Prefecture); completed in 1908; designated an Important Cultural Property of Okayama.

Source: photo of the building at present from the Okayama city archives

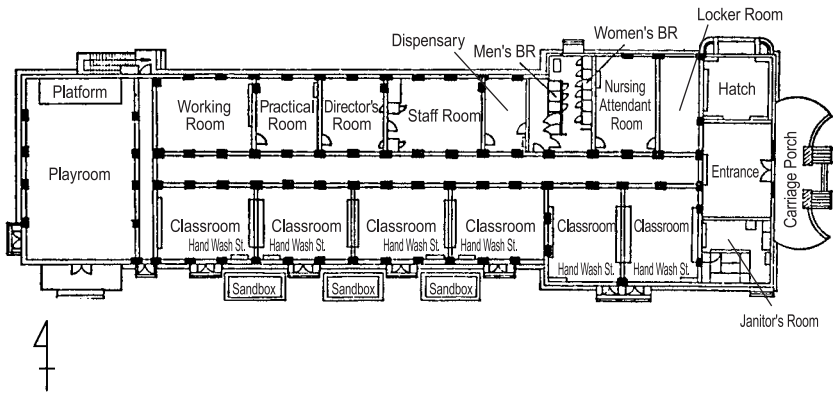


Figure 3-7 Building for the Kindergarten Affiliated with the Tokyo Higher Normal School for Women; 1932

Source: Makoto Kanno, et al., Japanese School Architecture, 1983, p. 825

suited to Japan's weather and climate and was convenient for activities that used water or for handling rain gear on rainy days. In addition, because it is also exceptional from an economic point of view, this floor plan has been used up through the present and many examples of it can be seen today.

The buildings used for day nurseries before the war were almost all converted buildings or leased spaces. The majority either used private residences or sections of regular schools or schools for children in charge of younger children. Day nurseries were an extension of childcare at home, so they were clearly distinguished from kindergartens in the legal and administrative system, especially before the war. With regard to their buildings as well, there were major differences with kindergartens in the establishment process.

The playgrounds of some day nurseries were modeled after Japanese gardens and featured representations of mountains, rivers and ponds, but the majority were like the athletic grounds of regular schools-wide-open spaces with nothing in them. At prewar kindergartens, which were strongly colored by the school system, there were often areas similar to the athletic grounds of schools, and they were actively used for exercise and playing games. Playground equipment like slides, chin-up bars, and swings, which became mandatory for kindergartens after the war, were almost entirely non-existent before the war; they were present only at select kindergartens affiliated with normal schools.

Playgrounds at day nurseries were not adequately developed before the war. Many nurseries had the children go play at nearly public parks or on the grounds of shrines. This situation continued after the war, and even in the minimum standards that were enacted for the establishment of day nurseries after the war, having a playground was not an absolute requirement.

2) Play Equipment, Desks, Chairs and Other Facilities

Desks and chairs at the beginning of the Meiji period during the time kindergartens were first established in Japan were either for one child or two children. There were lines running horizontally and vertically three centimeters apart forming a grid on the top of the desks, which was convenient for conducting activities with Fröbel Gaben. Educational practices at kindergartens in the Meiji period largely consisted of conducting Gaben activities in a group format led by the teacher, which is why this type of desk was used. All the children would sit at their desks facing the front of the room.

Hanging scrolls, bonsai, pictures, and stuffed animals were placed in the classrooms to aid learning (Figure 3-8). In the second half of the Meiji period and the Taisho period, the elementary school-like activities and methods that had been practiced up to that point were stopped and the emphasis came to be placed on free play and cooperative play activities. For this reason, the shape of desks and chairs changed. While group instruction was conducted in kindergartens at the time,

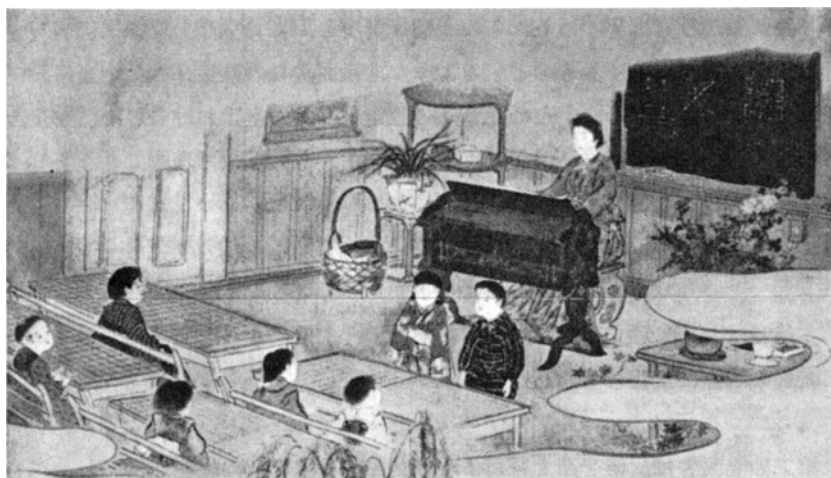


Figure 3-8 Kindergarten Affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls; 1890; drawing by Koai Takemura

Source: Ochanomizu University archives



Figure 3-9 Kindergarten Affiliated with the Tokyo Higher Normal School for Women in the Taisho Period; Photo of Children at the Kindergarten; Group Desk

Source: Kindergarten affiliated with Ochanomizu University archives

priority was put on children forming relationships with one another and engaging in activities, not on children playing on their own. The desks therefore were shaped so that a number of children could sit and face one another in a fan-like shape or like a donut divided into four sections. There were also square desks that allowed children to sit together as a group (Figure 3-9).

Chairs became for one child only so that the children had more freedom to move about. Play toys and equipment also underwent changes. For example, the blocks included in Fröbel Gaben increased in size. Play using large wooden blocks was an activity in which a number of children, not just one, could build one thing together, so they were thought to help facilitate cooperative play activities.

3-5-2 Postwar Childcare and Education Environment

1) Legal System for Buildings and Playgrounds and Actual Conditions

Beginning in the early 1950's, societal requirements with respect to kindergarten mounted, and it became necessary to rapidly develop buildings and playgrounds. Reflecting these needs, the government began considering enacting laws for kindergarten buildings because it considered the establishment standards enacted after the war to be inadequate. This led to the promulgation of the Official Requirements for Kindergarten Establishment in 1957. While undergoing some sets of revisions, these regulations for kindergarten buildings and playgrounds have basically continued to be used through the present day. The Official Requirements for Kindergarten Establishment made single-story construction the standard, but if classrooms were going to be placed on the second floor of a two-story building, the building was required to be fire- and earthquake-resistant. Kindergartens were required to have a staff room, classrooms, a playroom, a dispensary, bathrooms, and a plumbing system. Sharing of non-classroom space with other institutions was allowed. In addition, the dimensions of the building and playgrounds were prescribed based on the number of grade levels. Kindergarten buildings constructed from the Showa to Heisei periods were created based on original designs while skillfully fulfilling these requirements.

With regard to floor plans, most of the floor plans of model kindergartens designated by the Ministry of Education had an outdoor hallway on the south side of the building like prewar kindergartens. This format was especially prevalent in the 1960's. However, beginning in the second half of the 1970's, many school buildings for elementary and secondary school were built that had distinctive designs and allowed classrooms to be combined to accommodate team teaching, which involved multiple teachers working together to provide instruction to multiple classes. Kindergarten buildings were subject to even fewer legal restrictions than school buildings, so many had very unique designs.

Day nursery buildings underwent major developments after the war. Growing societal need for day nurseries engendered changes in the structure of the buildings. After World War II, the methods of education and care became pursuant to the National Curriculum Standards for

Kindergarten. In the 1980's, day nurseries became places with both pedagogical aspects and daycare aspects, and entering the 21st century, they have come to be expected to function as child-rearing support centers. Given this, day nursery buildings need to function in manifold ways.

The facilities required of day nurseries were stated in the Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions, which was enacted in 1948. It was mandatory to have a crawling room, dispensary, kitchen, bathroom, and a nursery room or playroom. In addition, even though there are no legal requirements, today's day nurseries need a multipurpose room for workshops and social gatherings and a counseling room for consultations regarding child-rearing, given their recent function as local child-rearing centers. Another important issue is designing entrances that are open to the outside but also safely protecting children from societal dangers.

In present day Japan, building formats are being sought that can accommodate new societal needs and conditions in addition to matters already widely considered in the history of kindergarten and nursery building design, like dealing with a climate marked by high temperatures and high humidity and developing structures that facilitate educational and childcare practices. This means that for both kindergartens and day nurseries, their buildings need to adequately encourage the development of play activities initiated by the children themselves, be safe both socially and physically, and facilitate communication with the local community.

Looking forward, it will be expected that kindergarten and day nursery buildings in Japan be created with exceptional functionality and design while incorporating a message that concretely expresses educational principles, based on full discussions among designers who create distinctive designs, professionals in early childhood education and care, and the people involved in the facility.

2) Indoor and Outdoor Play Equipment, Desks and Chairs, and Other Facilities

Minimum standards for play equipment and other facilities at kindergartens were established under the Official Requirements for Kindergarten Establishment. The requirements specified the necessity of having desks, seats, a blackboard, a slide, swings, a sandbox, wooden blocks, toys, implements for picture-card shows, children's and other books, a piano or organ, simple musical instruments, a phonograph and records, health and hygiene implements, tools for keeping animals and growing plants, and drawing implements.

At actual kindergartens, a variety of toys and implements are used depending on the facility's educational practices. Among kindergartens that emphasize playground activities, some have pens or sheds for animals, plots for raising flowers and vegetables, or paddies for cultivating rice. Kindergartens that emphasize art education have implements like painting supplies and clay for handicrafts. Kindergartens that prioritize continuity with elementary school education sometimes use keyboards or number flashcards. Reflecting the current emphasis on environmental education, some kindergartens devote energy to construction art activities that use a variety of discarded materials. With regard to the shape of desks since the war, the most common at both kindergartens and day nurseries has been a rectangle that seats four to six children. Almost all kindergartens use this type of desk. Most chairs are intended for one person. It can be concluded that this shape has become firmly entrenched at Japanese early childhood education and care.

Outdoor play equipment has included the classic equipment—swings, chin-up bars, and slides. Large playsets are also popular. Although these sets are purchased from playground equipment companies, their penetration rate is high. They are made of steel pipe and other materials that have been painted and modeled after cars and other objects. Children climb up and play on them. Some kindergartens also have large unique playsets made of wood. Up until the 1990's, the surface of playgrounds was often covered in a specialty material that was suited to playground activities, but today, a renewed appreciation of nature has meant that many playgrounds now have natural surfaces.

Other than items for infants, the play equipment, teaching tools and other facilities at day nurseries do not differ substantially from kindergartens.

Chapter 4

Teacher Education and Training

4-1 Teacher Training and Compensation

In Japan today there are two types of teachers involved in early childhood education and care. Kindergarten teachers serve at kindergartens under the School Education Law while nursery teachers provide education and childcare services at day nurseries and other child welfare facilities under the Child Welfare Law.

4-1-1 Prewar Teacher Training in Japan

In Japan before World War II, people involved in education and care at kindergartens and day nurseries were called childcare teachers. At the time kindergartens were first established in Japan, there were no certification requirements for childcare teachers and no training system had been developed. For this reason, training took place by apprenticing at model kindergartens to acquire knowledge and learn skills related to education and care. People that trained at model kindergartens contributed to the development of early childhood education and care in Japan by opening kindergartens around the country.

When kindergartens subsequently began to increase in number, childcare teachers were required to have an elementary school teaching license. But because the social status of childcare teachers was lower than elementary school teachers and their compensation was worse, there were few elementary school teachers who wished to become childcare teachers. It became necessary therefore to recruit people other than elementary school teachers who wanted to become childcare teachers.

Before the war, there were many uncertified childcare teachers, which prevented the profession of nursery teacher from developing. For this reason recruiting certified teachers and improving their expertise were the largest issues involved in furthering the development of early childhood education and care. To become a certified childcare teacher, a person could either get licensed by passing an examination or attending a teacher training institute. The number of these schools however was limited and it was not possible to recruit elementary school teachers, who were certified by virtue of their teaching license. Given this situation, some prefectures started a childcare teacher certification system to increase the number of certified teachers. Certification was conferred either through passing an examination to receive a license or through an assessment of the person's work history and licenses held, which did not require taking the exam. This certification system was not implemented by every prefecture; some prefectures that needed childcare teachers established their own requirements. For this reason, the qualifications of childcare teachers licensed by a certification system differed depending on the prefecture.

Since kindergarten education was first established in the Meiji period, kindergarten teacher qualifications were limited, their compensation low, and their training taken lightly for some time. As to the reasons for this, childcare teachers in Japan were traditionally regarded as high-class nannies and kindergarten education at the time was not actively included in the government's educational policy. Therefore, in contrast to elementary school teachers, who were trained at prefectural normal schools under normal school regulations, the private-sector was forced to take the lead in developing teachers for kindergartens and day nurseries. According to a survey of childcare teacher training facilities issued by the Ministry of Education in 1941, there were 34 schools that were confirmed at the time as childcare teacher training institutes (33 of which were active), of which there were two government-run institutes associated with higher normal schools for girls in Tokyo and Osaka and one public facility affiliated with the Chiba Normal School. All the rest were private.

In short, childcare teacher training in Japan before the war was characterized by private training facilities bearing the burden of educating teachers—these facilities being treated as miscellaneous

schools. Because training was conducted at miscellaneous schools, there were no standards regarding enrollment requirements, training periods or curriculum, and each school conducted their own brand of training. Training institutes based on Christianity were relatively well-developed because they utilized experience and expertise accumulated overseas in early childhood education and childcare teacher training. The training period was generally over one year and a long, well-developed curriculum was used compared to other childcare teacher training institutes in Japan.

At the same time, there were also training schools that offered an accelerated six-month course. They provided the minimum knowledge necessary and conducted childcare onsite. Additionally, short courses were held to help people prepare for childcare teaching certification exams that were administered by the prefectures. It could be said, then, that childcare teacher training in Japan was highly diverse. The qualifications of childcare teachers improved somewhat following the enactment of the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten in 1926. But the fact that an elementary school teacher could as such automatically become a childcare teacher remained unchanged, and specialization in early childhood education and care was not treated with the respect it deserved. Enactment of the Ordinance Relating to Kindergarten resulted in some progress being made in childcare teacher training as well.

While somewhat lacking in substance, especially compared to regulations for normal schools whose purpose is to train elementary school teachers, the first regulations for childcare teacher training institutions were established. In order to be accredited as a childcare teacher training institution, the school had to make graduation from the equivalent of middle school a prerequisite for enrollment and had to have conducted professional education related to childcare for at least one year. Schools that met these two requirements were further required to include the following subjects: ethics, education and care, music, and physical education.

There were no qualification requirements for day nursery teachers before the war. Childcare was carried out by certified kindergarten teachers and people who studied at training institutes for nursery teachers. There were some short courses held for the purpose of training nursery teachers, but they were few in number.

4-1-2 Training Kindergarten and Nursery Teachers After the War

1) Kindergarten Teacher Training

After the war, kindergartens were positioned by the School Education Law as part of the school system. In conjunction with this, the title “childcare teacher” was changed to “teacher” to match the title given to teachers at other stages of the school system. The 1949 Educational Personnel Certification Law and the official regulations for carrying out the law established that kindergarten teachers would be trained at universities just like teachers for elementary and secondary school. However, it was not actually a simple matter to establish universities for the primary purpose of training kindergarten teachers and there were many universities that did not have affiliated kindergartens, so universities that trained elementary school teachers started allowing students to acquire a kindergarten teaching license on a secondary basis. And, perhaps because most prewar childcare teacher training schools became vocational or junior colleges after the war, a two-year program at a junior college has been the main means by which kindergarten and nursery teachers are trained in Japan, up through the present.

For this reason, very few teachers working at kindergartens hold first class licenses acquired through a four-year university program compared to teachers at other levels of the school system (Table 4-1). Also, even though after the war both men and women were allowed to acquire kindergarten teaching licenses, as of the present, over 90% of kindergarten teachers are women. The problem of kindergarten teacher compensation lies in the background to why the percentage of kindergarten teachers working with a second class license (equivalent to graduation from a two-year junior college) and the percentage who are women are both higher than at other levels of the school system. As can be seen from Figure 4-1, kindergarten teachers’ salaries are lower than teachers at other levels, especially at private kindergartens; it would be exceedingly difficult to lead an independent life on a kindergarten teacher’s salary alone. This is reflected in Figure 4-2 as well, which depicts the average years of service by type of school. Kindergarten teachers’ being rather poorly compensated upon starting work is thought to contribute to the fact that training for kindergarten teachers lags behind training for teachers at other levels of the school system, which

Table 4-1 Licensing Status

	Specialist	first class	second class
Public Kindergarten	0.2%	19.7%	74.6%
Elementary School	1.4%	79.8%	16.5%
Middle School	2.7%	90.8%	6.2%

Source: *Report on School Teachers Survey 2001*, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Table 4-2 Teacher Gender Breakdown

	Male	Female
Public Kindergarten	6.6%	93.4%
Elementary School	38.4%	61.6%
Middle School	60.5%	39.5%

Source: *Report on School Teachers Survey 2001*, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

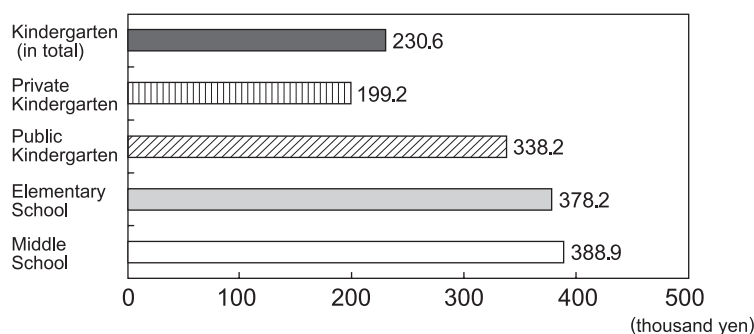


Figure 4-1 Average Monthly Salary

Source: *Report on School Teachers Survey 2001*, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

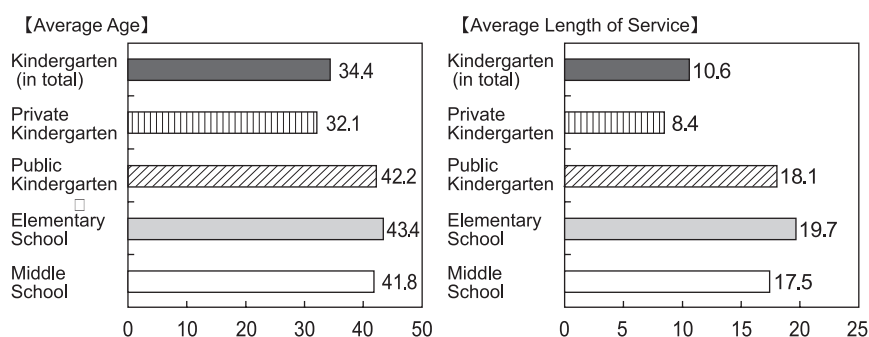


Figure 4-2 Status of Kindergarten Teachers (Compared to Elementary/Middle School Teachers), Average Age and Average Length of Service

Note: Including principals.

Source: *Report on School Teachers Survey 2001*, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

is done at four-year universities. Given this, in order to provide kindergartens with teachers with higher levels of expertise, it will likely be necessary to improve their treatment in this regard.

2) Nursery Teacher Training and the Nursery Teacher Examination

Whereas kindergartens were positioned as a part of the school system after the war, day nurseries were put under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and “nursery teacher” was established as a professional certification for teachers working at day nurseries and other child welfare facilities. There are two ways to acquire nursery teacher certification.

One way is to undergo training at a training institute that has been accredited by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, while the other is to pass a nursery teacher licensing exam. At present, 90% of licensed nursery teachers acquired certification via designated training institutes. The

designated institutes include four-year universities, junior colleges and vocational schools, but the overwhelming majority of teachers train at junior colleges. In 2001, there were 359 designated training institutes, of which, 222 were junior colleges, 66 were vocational schools, 56 were four-year universities, and the remaining 15 were training facilities. Junior colleges are the primary venue for training nursery teachers. Many of these training institutes' programs allow students to acquire a kindergarten teaching license in conjunction with nursery teacher certification.

The nursery teacher exam covers the following subjects. The written exam includes social welfare, child welfare, developmental psychology and mental health, children's health, children's nutrition, childcare principles, education and nursing principles, and childcare practice and theory. People that pass the written exam also take an examination that tests their practical childcare skills. Scores of 60% or higher are required on each subject in order to pass, and people that pass all sections of the exam are certified as nursery teachers. People already holding a kindergarten teaching license are exempted from the developmental psychology, educational principles and practical childcare skills portions of the exam.

Whether training at a designated training institute or acquiring certification via the nursery teacher exam, the licensing system has been designed to ensure that certified teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to accommodate the various social situations encountered by children.

4-2 In-Service Education for Kindergarten and Nursery Teachers

4-2-1 Prewar In-Service Education

1) In-Service Education Via Childcare Organizations

In-service education for childcare teachers before World War II was developed primarily in the form of voluntary workshops put on by childcare organizations. In-service education was necessary because of the inadequate training system for childcare teachers and in order to spread early childhood education and care, but the Ministry of Education did not involve itself. The Fröbel Society of Japan and other groups created opportunities to learn through lectures, courses and research conferences, which were for the purpose of furthering the understanding of early childhood education, teaching practical knowledge and skills, and introducing and disseminating new educational theories and practices. Entering the 1900's, large-scale gatherings were held, including national conferences. Childcare teachers honed their knowledge and skills by such means as participating in workshops and reading official publications.

After the war as well, a variety of childcare groups were organized and they have established various opportunities for in-service education. For example, the All Japan Private Kindergarten Federation holds workshops for teachers at private kindergartens and the National and Public Kindergarten's Principals Association promotes voluntary research and training related to early childhood education and care. In-service education administered by childcare organizations has played a major role in developing skilled kindergarten and nursery teachers up through the present day.

2) Start of In-Service Education by the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education first held in-service education courses for kindergarten teachers in 1910 because of increasing numbers of kindergartens and teachers and the flourishing of activities sponsored by childcare organizations. The ministry expressed the intention to promote kindergarten education in line with the proposals and activities of childcare organizations and created opportunities to consult with organizations at the national conference. At the same time, kindergartens were continuing to spread nationwide and there was a pressing need to ensure educational quality.

Kindergarten teacher workshops administered by the Ministry of Education at the time were essentially training sessions for leaders in kindergarten education from around the country. At the first workshop held in 1916, kindergarten principals and teachers were qualified to participate and three people were chosen by each prefectural governor. At the end of the workshop the participants would go back to convey the knowledge and skills they learned through local teacher's meetings and communication forums. The substance of the workshop was wide-ranging; it included the kindergarten system, actual knowledge and skills related to childcare methods and activities, early childhood development, and teacher development. The ministry held this workshop over seven to ten days in the summer every year until around 1938. During that period it came to be co-sponsored by

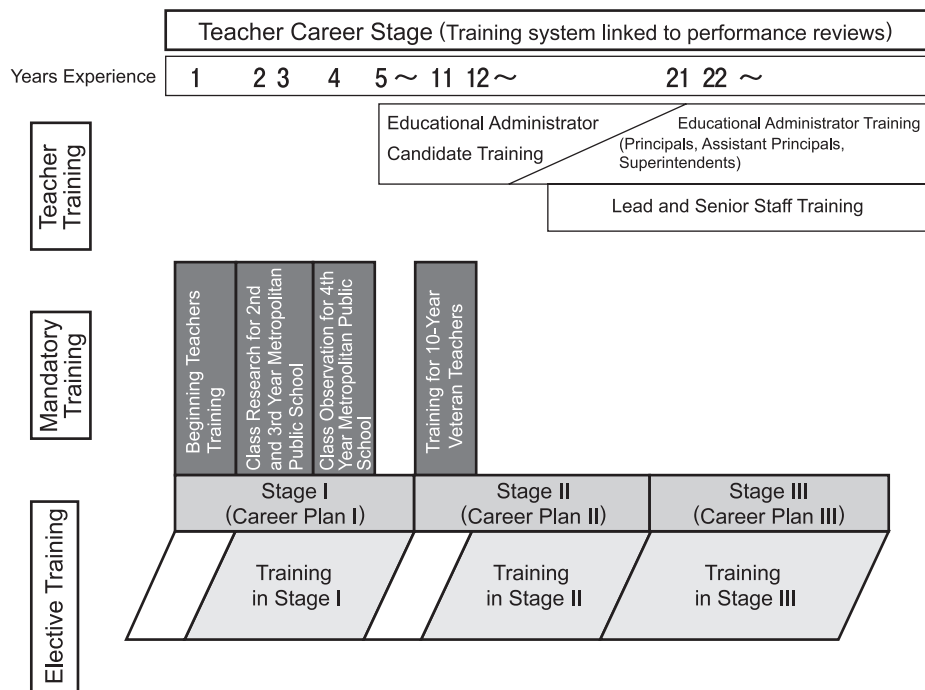


Figure 4-3 System of In-Service Teacher Training

Source: 2005 *In-Service Training Guide*, Tokyo Metropolitan School Personnel In-Service Training Center

Note: A career plan is a long-term teacher training plan consisting of training courses, etc. that is developed under the guidance of the teacher's principal based on his or her particular career stage and individual skills and aptitudes.

the Japan Kindergarten Association (formerly the Fröbel Society) and came to include practical training courses on children's play and dance.

4-2-2 Postwar Codification of In-Service Education

After the war, kindergarten was positioned as a part of the school system and "childcare teachers" became "kindergarten teachers". The Ministry of Education launched in-service education for kindergarten teachers on a full-fledged basis and developed a system for it. The in-service education administered by the ministry had three primary purposes.

The first was to grant kindergarten teaching licenses and further the licensing system. In conjunction with implementation of a new school system in 1947, childcare teaching licenses were made temporary kindergarten teaching licenses, so it was necessary to reeducate teachers and grant them official certification. With enactment of the new Educational Personnel Certification Law, the Ministry of Education made taking a ministry-approved reeducation course a condition for acquiring certification. In laws and regulations related to teacher certification in 1949, rules were made regarding administration of accredited courses, the subjects taught and credits received in order to advance the licensing system. At the time, a large percentage of teachers had temporary licenses or second class licenses, so there was demand for acquiring permanent and first class licenses. Courses accredited under the Educational Personnel Certification Law came to occupy a major portion of in-service education.

The second purpose of in-service education was to develop specialized skills required by kindergarten and nursery teachers, which had been an issue from before the war. Beginning in the 1950's, when the number of kindergartens had been growing rapidly, the Ministry of Education sought to enhance instructional skills by holding practical workshops targeted primarily at assistant teachers with temporary licenses, who worked in large numbers at kindergartens. The 1949 Law for Special Regulations Concerning Educational Public Service provided training opportunities for staff at public elementary schools and established that this training was to be planned and administered

by educational committees. Under revisions to the law ten years later, new teacher training was established for teachers that had worked one year since being hired and veteran teacher training for teachers whose length of service had reached 10 years. This training program based on years experience was intended to improve teacher quality.

The third purpose of in-service education was to disseminate and ensure the thorough penetration of new Ministry of Education policies on early childhood education and care. With enactment of revisions to the Nursery Guidelines and the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, courses were held by dividing the country into several regional blocks. Through the participation of principals, teachers and supervisors in leadership roles, the courses were intended to ensure full understanding of the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens, the essentials of its instructional manual, and the curriculum, childcare and education activities and methods contained in it. Similar research conferences are held today as well at the national and prefectural levels.

Appendix

Statistical Data

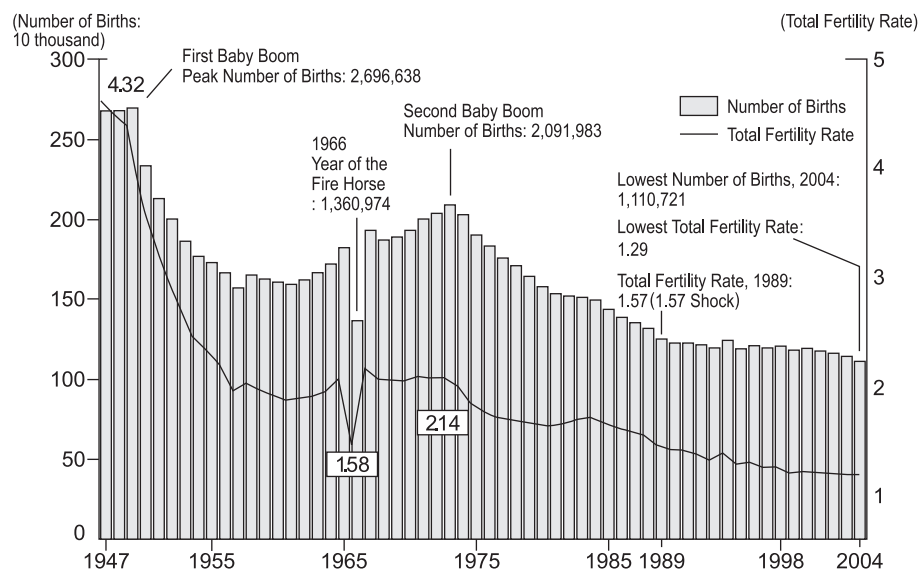


Figure A Number of Births and Total Fertility Rate

Source: 2004 Vital Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Health, Labour and

Table A Number of Kindergartens and Enrolled Children by Age

Category		Total	National	Public	Private
Number of Kindergartens		13,949	49	5,546	8,354
Number of Classes		73,616	229	16,754	56,633
Numbers of Enrolled Children	Total	1,738,766	6,572	348,945	1,383,249
	Age 3	420,343	1,217	42,800	376,326
	Age 4	637,554	2,680	133,475	501,399
	Age 5	680,869	2,675	172,670	505,524
Number of Teachers (full-time)		109,393	332	25,493	84,568

Source: 2005 General Survey of Schools, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

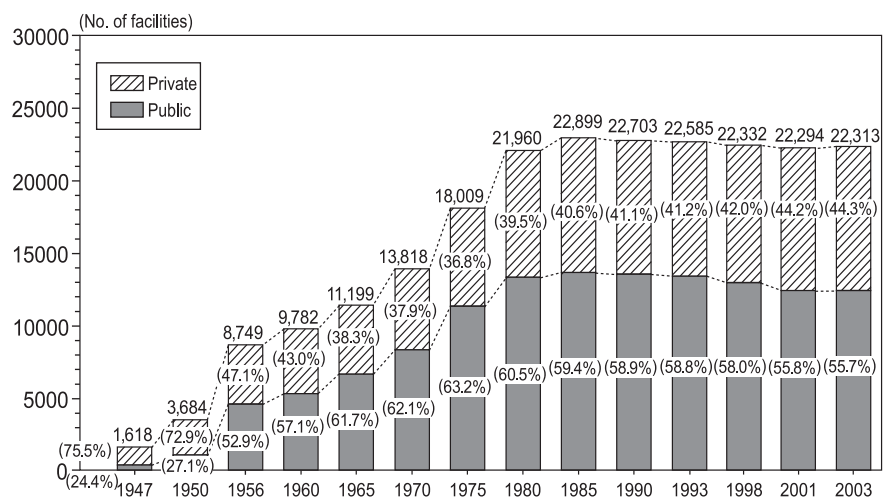


Figure B Numbers of Public/Private Day Nursery Facilities

Note: Figures in parentheses show percentages of the whole for public and private facilities.

Sources: 1947-*Materials connected to the establishment of the Child Welfare Law*; 1950-*Childcare Yearbook*; 1956, 1960, 1965-*Survey on Social Welfare Facilities*; Since 1970-*Report of the Ministry of Health and Welfare*

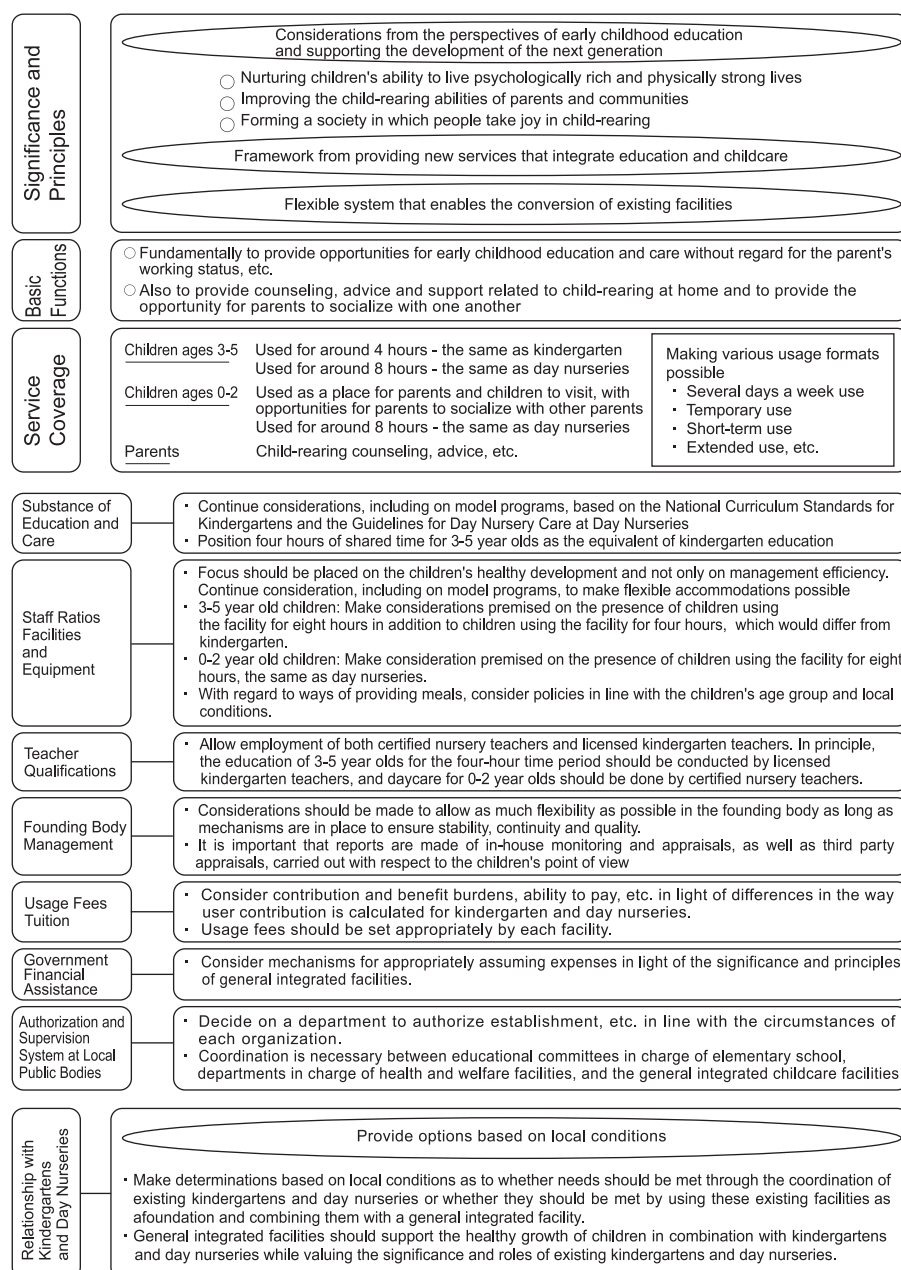


Figure C General integrated facilities that provide preschool education and childcare

Source: Documents (summarizing important points of discussion) of a joint review session of the Central Education Council's Early Childhood Education Subcommittee and the Social Security Council's Subcommittee for Children's Issues.

Table B State of Daycare After Kindergarten Hours

(as of June 1, 2004)

1.Number of kindergartens providing after hours daycare

Category	as of June 1, 2004	as of June 1, 2003	as of August 1, 1997	as of October 1, 1993
Public	2,328(41.9%)	2,044(37.0%)	330(5.5%)	318(5.2%)
Private	7,091(85.3%)	6,941(84.7%)	3,867(46.0%)	2,541(29.5%)
Total	9,419(67.9%)	8,985(65.5%)	4,197(29.2%)	2,859(19.4%)

2. Days provided each week (excluding long vacation periods)

Category	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days	other	Total
Public	63 (2.8%)	83 (3.6%)	46 (2.0%)	137 (6.0%)	1,055 (46.4%)	169 (7.4%)	17 (0.7%)	704 (31.0%)	2,274 (100%)
Private	22 (0.3%)	46 (0.7%)	44 (0.6%)	308 (4.4%)	4,714 (66.6%)	1,656 (23.4%)	107 (1.5%)	176 (2.5%)	7,073 (100%)
Total	85 (0.9%)	129 (1.4%)	90 (1.0%)	445 (4.8%)	5,769 (61.7%)	1,825 (19.5%)	124 (1.3%)	880 (9.4%)	9,347 (100%)

3.After hours daycare during long vacation periods (fiscal 2003)

Category	Summer only	Winter only	Spring only	Summer/Winter	Summer/Spring	Winter/Spring	Summer/Winter /Spring	Total
Public	239 (29.4%)	2 (0.2%)	2 (0.2%)	93 (11.4%)	8 (1.0%)	4 (0.5%)	465 (57.2%)	813 (100%)
Private	704 (15.3%)	12 (0.3%)	14 (0.3%)	327 (7.1%)	115 (2.5%)	15 (0.3%)	3,429 (74.3%)	4,616 (100%)
Total	943 (17.4%)	14 (0.3%)	16 (0.3%)	420 (7.7%)	123 (2.3%)	19 (0.3%)	3,894 (71.7%)	5,429 (100%)

Note: Figures in parentheses show percentages of the whole for public and private facilities.

Sources: *Latest Information on the Childcare in Japan 2005*, MINERVA Publishing

Table C Childcare Costs per Child

Category	Description
Administrative costs	1) Full-time staff salaries (1) Base salaries, special compensation improvement costs, special business allowances (2) Benefits (dependents, adjustments, term-end diligence, management, overtime, housing, commuting, etc.) (3) Employer's portion of social insurance (health insurance, employee pension fund, unemployment insurance, etc.)
	2) Costs for part-time staff (1) Commissioned doctor benefit (2) Costs for employing administrative staff (3) Costs for employing part-time staff (4) Costs for substitute staff
	Management costs Travel costs, general and administrative cost, clothing allowance, health management costs, costs to improve working conditions (labor-saving measures, etc.), staff training costs, health and hygiene costs, maintenance costs, special management costs
Business costs	General living expenses (school meal costs, childcare materials costs), heating costs

Method for determining childcare unit cost :

$$\text{Childcare unit cost} = \frac{\text{Day nursery operating costs}}{\text{Day nursery capacity}}$$

Notes:

1. Childcare unit cost includes the total of private facilities compensation and improvement expenses, cold region costs, snow removal costs, etc.
2. Childcare unit cost determined by region, capacity, age, and presence/absence of director.

Source: *Report on Childcare Issues* (1994), Ministry of Health and Welfare.

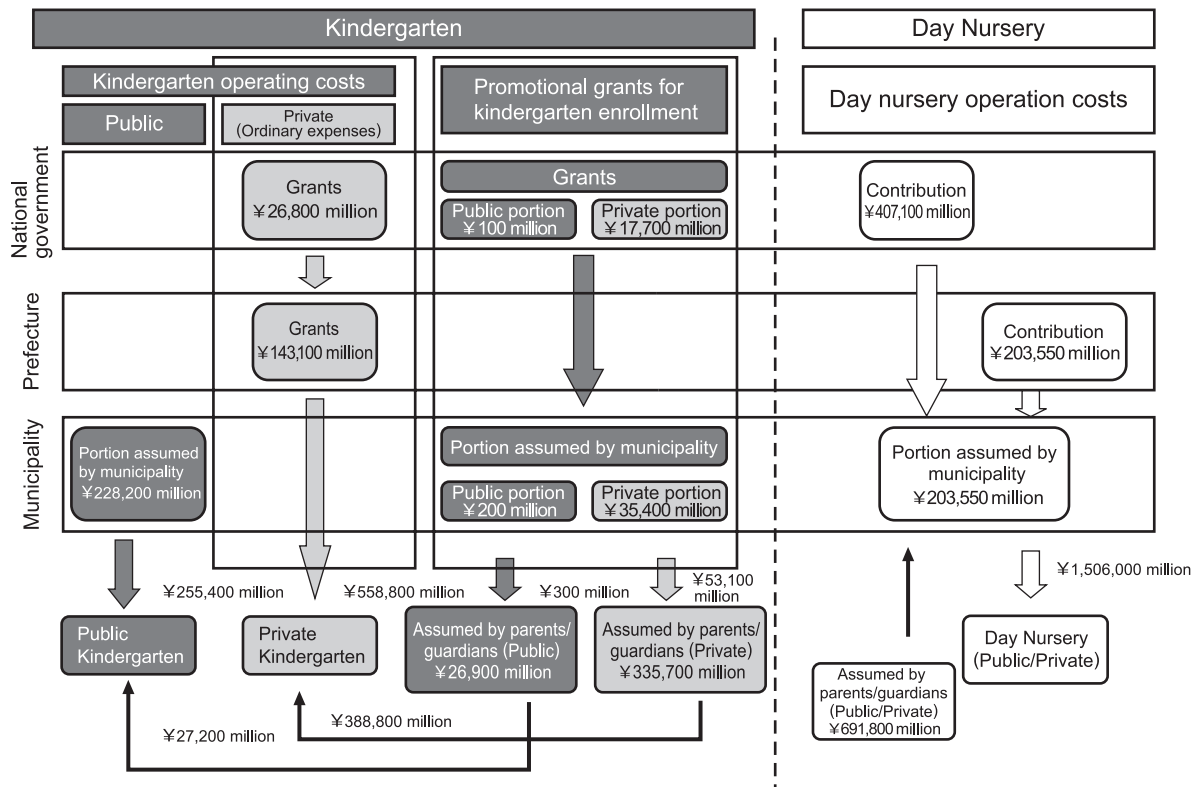


Figure D Flow of Kindergarten and Day Nursery's Financial Assistance

Source: Documents from the Early Childhood Education Subcommittee (2003), the Central Education Council, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Table D Personnel Deployment Ratios at Day Nurseries

1. Teacher Deployment

	Age 0	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4-5
Report of the Central Child Welfare Council (1962)	3 : 1 Report (1968)	6 : 1		20 : 1	30 : 1
1948-51	10 : 1		30 : 1		
1952-61	10 : 1		(10 : 1)	30 : 1	
1962-63	10 : 1 (9 : 1)			30 : 1	
1964	8 : 1		(9 : 1)	30 : 1	
1965	8 : 1			30 : 1	
1966	(7 : 1)			30 : 1	
1967	6 : 1			30 : 1	
1968	6 : 1			(25 : 1)	30 : 1
current	3 : 1	6 : 1		30 : 1	30 : 1
Substitute Teachers	1				

Notes:

1. Deployment ratios are from the Minimum Standards.
2. Figures in parentheses are constants from the social welfare budget.
Infant ratios apply to designated infant nurseries.
3. Ratio of kindergarten teachers at kindergarten is 35:1 regardless of age group.

2. Deployment Ratios for Other Staff

Cooks, etc. ¹	2 (3 for 151 children or more)
Commissioned doctor ²	1
Administrative Staff ³	Between 60 and 90: Part-time 156 days 91 or more: Part-time 156 days

Notes:

1. Not required by the Minimum Standards.
2. Required by Minimum Standards
3. In the social welfare budget, 1994

Source: *Latest Information on the Childcare in Japan 2005*, MINERVA Publishing

Table E Licence Acquisition among Kindergarten Teachers by Type of School

			Specialist	First class	Second class	Total
University	National	Teacher Training University/Department		1,467	1,444	2,911
		General		42	25	67
	Public			46	1	47
	Private			3,899	84	3,893
	Total		0 〈0〉	5,454 〈3,965〉	1,554 〈1,320〉	7,008 〈5,285〉
Junior College	National					0
	Public				387	387
	Private			18	26,120	26,138
	Total		0 〈0〉	18 〈0〉	26,507 〈30,582〉	26,525 〈30,882〉
Graduate School/Major	National	Teacher Training University/Department	90	1	5	101
		General	4			4
	Public					0
	Private		51(14)		1	52(14)
	Total		150(14) 〈84〉	1 〈1〉	6	157(14) 〈85〉
	Designated Training Institution				3,859 〈4,639〉	3,859 〈4,639〉
Total		150	5,473	31,926	37,549	

Notes:

1. Number of graduates is the number of people graduating from an accredited department or program.
2. Figures in parentheses in the Graduate School / Major row indicate the number corresponding to Major.
3. Totals in brackets in the Universities, Junior Colleges, Graduate Schools, and Designated Institutions rows are figures from 1996 provided for comparison.

Source: *Survey of teacher training programs* (2002), Ministry of Education

Table F Higher Education Institutions with Kindergarten Teaching Certification Program

Category	National	Public	Private	Total
University	49	3	53	105
Junior College	0	9	199	208
Graduate School	49	0	23	72
Major	0	0	7	7
Designated Training Institution	0	1	36	37

Note: A designated training institution is an institution that has been designated by the Minister of Education as providing a valid teacher training course of study, based on the Article 5 of Educational Personnel Certification Law and Note 1.3 of Article 5 and in consideration of teacher supply and demand and other factors.

Source: *Survey of teacher training programs* (2002), Ministry of Education

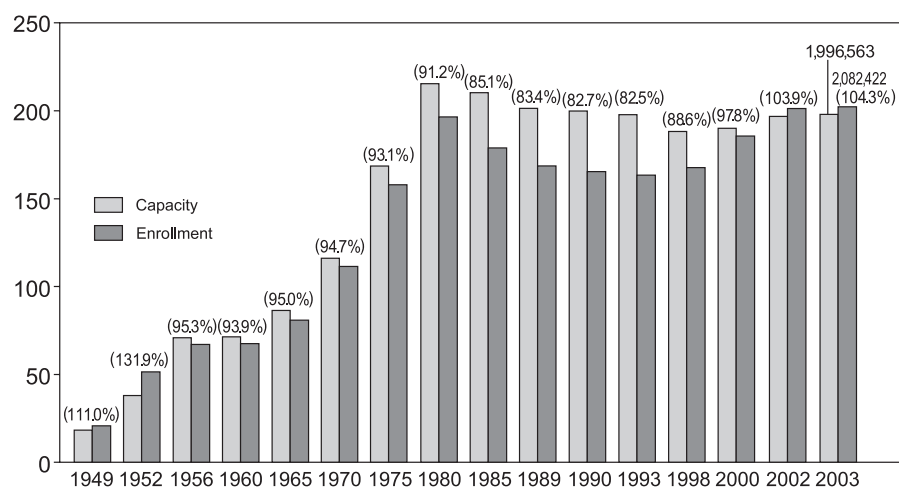
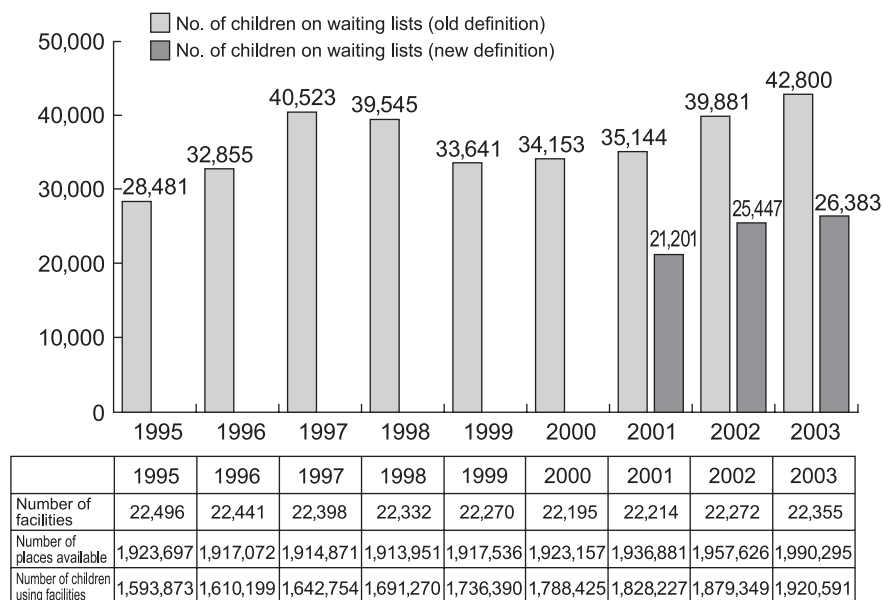


Figure E Day Nursery Capacity and Enrollment Figures

Note : Figures in parentheses are enrollment ratios

Sources : 1949 - *Childcare Yearbook* (as of February 1); 1952 - *Social Statistics Yearbook* (as of December 31); 1956, 1960, 1965, 1970 - *Report on Social Welfare* (as of December 31); Since 1975 - *Ministry of Health and Welfare reports* (as of April 1); 2002, 2003 - *Report on Social Welfare Administration* (as of March 1).



Notes: 1. As of April 1 of each year.

2. Beginning in 2001 there was a change in the definition of children on waitlists for enrollment into day nurseries, so two sets of figures have been graphed: those based on the old definition and those based on the new definition. Under the new definition, children who are waiting to enroll in a specific day nursery of their choice even though other nurseries are available for immediate enrollment, and children whose childcare needs are being met by independent facilities set up by local governments (non-registered facilities like nursery rooms, and individual childcare professionals) even though they desire enrollment in an authorized day nursery have been excluded from the number of wait-listed children.

Source: Survey by the Day Care Division of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Figure F Children on Waiting Lists

Chronological Table: The History of Japan's Early Childhood Education and Care

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1868 1869	The Imperial Oath of Five Articles Restoration of the fief (“han”) lands to the Emperor		
1871 1872	Abolition of fiefs and creation of prefectures	Education Ordinance promulgated. (Kindergarten established as an institution for early childhood education, but not realized.)	American Mission Home established in Yokohama by female Christian missionaries
1873 1875	Rioting (elementary school destroyed)		
1876		Kindergarten affiliated with the Tokyo Normal School for Girls established.	Schools for children in charge of younger children established in Sakai Prefecture and elsewhere.
1877 1878	Seinan War	Kindergarten teacher training added to the curriculum at the Tokyo Normal School for Girls (one year course of study).	
1879	The Imperial Will on the Great Principles of Education drafted.	Osaka model kindergarten established (also conducted teacher training). Education Order enacted (abolished the Education Ordinance and put public and private kindergartens under the supervision of the Minister of Education). Private kindergarten affiliated with the Sakurai Girls' School established in Tokyo (Japan's first private kindergarten).	
1880			
1883			School for children in charge of younger children established by Yoshishige Watanabe in Koyama-mura, Ibaraki Prefecture.
1884		Ministry of Education prohibits young children under school age from attending elementary school and indicates that they should be provided education and care through kindergarten and other means.	
1885 1886	The cabinet system created.	Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools promulgated.	
1888	The City System and Town and Village System Law promulgated.		

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1889	The Greater Japan Constitution promulgated.	Shoei Training School for Kindergarten Teachers established (two-year program).	Daycare facility established by Atsutomi and Naka Akazawa at their retreat and school in Niigata.
1890	The Imperial Rescript on Education Promulgated.	Regulations related to kindergarten enacted, including rules on teacher qualifications, hiring and dismissal, and applying to the Minister of Education for education and care policies. Under these regulations kindergarten teacher qualifications consisted of being a woman and being certified as an elementary school teacher or possessing a license from the prefectural governor. Second Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools promulgated. (Stated that municipalities would be permitted to establish kindergartens, that the establishment of private kindergartens in municipalities required the permission of the prefectural governor, and that regulations related to kindergarten would be established by the Minister of Education. It also stated that the ordinance would apply to kindergartens, except for regulations related to mandatory establishment and enrollment.)	
1892		Classes divided at kindergartens affiliated with higher normal schools for girls, and this is made the model of simple kindergartens for childcare and education for young children in lower social classes. Ministry of Education recognizes the establishment of kindergarten teacher training departments at regular normal schools and recommends training teachers.	Childcare facility established at Tokyo Boseki Co., Ltd.
1894 1895	The Sino-Japanese War broke out.	Ministry of Education submits a letter to prefectural governors requesting that reading, writing and arithmetic be removed from the kindergarten curriculum.	
1896		Fröbel Society of Japan established. Childcare teacher training department added to higher normal schools for girls.	
1897		First general assembly of the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe Childcare Society held.	
1899		Ministry of Education's Regulations on Kindergarten Education and Facilities enacted. (First independent ordinance concerning kindergarten. Established the ages of kindergarten students, kindergarten class time, number of children per teacher, purpose of kindergarten education, educational areas, facilities, etc.)	

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1900		Putaba Kindergarten established by Yuka Noguchi and Mine Morishima in Tokyo's Kojimachi for children in lower social classes. Ministry of Education enacts the Regulations for Carrying Out the Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools (establishes the purpose of kindergarten, educational areas and rules for class time, teacher qualifications, hiring, dismissal, size, facilities, etc.) The Russo-Japanese War broke out.	Day nurseries established in various regions for children of families of deceased military personnel (until 1905).
1904			
1906		Departments for practical childcare training established at higher normal schools for girls.	Day nurseries developed by the Home Ministry as a childcare institution differing in type from kindergarten.
1908			
1911		Regulations for Carrying Out the Imperial Ordinance Relating to Elementary Schools revised. (Regulations on educational areas eliminated and class time left to the discretion of the school manager or founder, subject to approval by the prefectural governor. Made passing an examination a requirement for obtaining a teaching license.)	
1914	World War I broke out.		
1916		Ministry of Education holds kindergarten teacher workshops. (They covered a broad range of topics, including the kindergarten system, practical knowledge and skills related to educational methods and activities, childhood development, and teacher training. Held annually until 1938.)	
1917			Tokyo day nurseries start open-air schools at neighboring beaches.
1918	Commotion against Rice Prices		Public day nurseries established in Osaka.
1919		Ministry of Education establishes a teacher training center at the Nara Women's Higher Normal School.	Public day nurseries established in Kyoto. Public day nurseries established in Tokyo.
1920	The "gun" as a unit of administrative jurisdiction abolished Great Kanto Earthquake		
1921			
1923			Daycare services started for areas affected by the Great Kanto Earthquake.
1925		Nationwide survey of kindergartens conducted.	

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1926		Ordinance Relating to Kindergartens promulgated. Regulations for Carrying Out the Ordinance Relating to Kindergartens enacted.	
1927	World panic		Around this time, seasonal day nurseries open during the busy farming season increase rapidly.
1931 1933	Manchurian Incident Japan withdraws from the League of Nations.		
1936		Society for the Research of childcare and Education Issues established. (Chairman: Mantaro Kido)	
1937	Sino-Japanese War broke out.	Tokyo Federation of Private Kindergartens formed (private kindergarten association).	
1938	Ministry of Health and Welfare established. General Mobilization Order promulgated.		Social Work Law enacted. (Day nurseries legally positioned as a part of child protection services.)
1939			Togoshi Day Nursery established as the model day nursery for Society for the Research of Childcare and Education Issues.
1940			Training of day nursery teachers commences by leasing kindergarten and day nursery facilities.
1943		Regulations on Upper Secondary Schools for Girls enacted. (Allows affiliated kindergartens or day nurseries.)	
1944		Tokyo issues ordinance closing kindergartens.	Conditions for using wartime nurseries established. (In this year seasonal day nurseries exceed 50,000 nationwide.) Standards for the Establishment of Wartime Day Nurseries established.
1945 1946 1947	World War II ended. The Constitution of Japan promulgated. The Local Autonomy Law promulgated. The National Public Service Personnel Law promulgated.	The Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Law promulgated. (Kindergarten listed as an official type of school. Ordinance Relating to Kindergartens abolished, and a 6-3-3-4-year school system established.) Regulations for Carrying Out the School Education Law enacted. (Abolished the Regulations for Carrying Out the Ordinance Relating to Kindergartens.) Education Reform Committee advocates teacher development.	Child Welfare Law promulgated. (Day nurseries established as a type of child welfare facility.)

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1948		Ministry of Education issues Nursing Guidelines:	Handbook of Early Childhood Education and Care.
			Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions implemented.
			Provision of lunches started with LARA good.
1949		Notification issued regarding measures to address unauthorized kindergartens.	Ministry of Health and Welfare decides on regulations for nursery teacher training.
		Educational Personnel Certification Law promulgated. (Same requirements for kindergarten teacher training as for elementary and secondary school teachers.)	First nursery teacher examination administered.
1950	The Law concerning Public Service Personnel promulgated.	Elementary School and Kindergarten Staff Workshop held (continued until 1953).	Ministry of Health and Welfare issues Day Nursery Administration Guidelines.
1951	Children's Charter	Council for Educational Reform advocates on the problem of financing preschool.	
		Report issued on addressing children wishing to enroll in kindergarten	
		Report issued on the Cumulative Record for Kindergarten.	
1952	The Treaty of Peace with Japan and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty declared	Central Education Council established.	Ministry of Health and Welfare issues Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries.
1953		Music Rhythm edition of kindergarten teaching manual issued. (Successive manual issued for each area until 1971.)	
		Grants provided for public kindergarten facilities and equipment.	
		Cumulative Record for Kindergarten revised.	
1955		Ministry of Education issues National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens.	
1956		Courses held for leaders in kindergarten education (until 1962).	
		Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens enacted.	

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1957			Ministry of Health and Welfare formulates Guidelines for the Establishment of Seasonal Day Nurseries.
1959			Ministry of Health and Welfare conducts survey on the state of day nurseries.
1960	The U. S. -Japan Security Treaty signed.	Ministry of Education conducts survey on the state of kindergartens.	
1961	Plan to double national income decided.		Guidelines for the Establishment of Day Nurseries in Remote Areas formulated.
1962	Law concerning a mutual aid association for local public servants promulgated.	Practical kindergarten workshops held beginning this year.	Ministry of Health and Welfare establishes Enrollment Procedures and Standards.
1963		Curriculum Committee issues report on improving the kindergarten curriculum.	
		Ministry of Education announces Kindergarten Education Promotion Plan.	
		Research conference held on the kindergarten curriculum. (Continued until 1966; became course for leaders in kindergarten education beginning in fiscal 1967.)	
		Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare issue joint report on the relationship between kindergartens and day nurseries.	
1964	Tokyo Olympic Games	National Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten revised and announced.	
		Program established to assist with kindergarten facilities costs.	
1965			Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries issued.
1967	Law concerning compensation to local public servants in the event of disasters promulgated.	Program established to assist in private kindergarten facilities costs.	Ministry of Health and Welfare partially revises the Minimum Standards for Child Welfare Institutions. (Allows the establishment of classrooms and playrooms on the second floor and higher.)
1968		Dedicated kindergarten curriculum director deployed in the Ministry of Education's Primary Education Division.	Ministry of Health and Welfare reports on fair measures for day nursery enrollment.
			Permission granted for the establishment of small-scale day nurseries.

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1969	Special measures law concerned with countermeasures to assist under populated areas promulgated.		Notification issued on strengthening measures for infant daycare. Central Child Welfare Council issues report on infant daycare measures at day nurseries.
1970	International Education Year		
1971	OECD Education Mission visits Japan to investigate educational problems.	Ministry of Education formulates second Kindergarten Education Promotion Plan.	
1972	Oil Shock	Kindergarten Education Division established in the Primary and Secondary Education Bureau of the Ministry of Education.	
1974		Private School Law revised.	Ministry of Health and Welfare issues guidelines on childcare for disabled children.
1975			Male nursery teachers legally recognized.
1977			Ministry of Health and Welfare issues guidelines of special measures for infant daycare.
		Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare begin discussions on kindergarten and day nurseries.	
1978			Ministry of Health and Welfare issues notification regarding the acceptance of disabled children at day nurseries.
1981			Ministry of Health and Welfare issues notification on conducting childcare during nighttime hours.
1989		National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens revised and announced.	
1990	UNESCO International Literacy Year		Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries revised and announced.
1991		Ministry of Education formulates third Kindergarten Education Promotion Plan.	
1994		Ministries of Education, Health and Welfare, Labor and child-rearing support policies (Angel Plan).	Ministry of Health and Welfare issues notification on conducting childcare during nighttime hours.
1995	The Great Hanshin Earthquake		
1997		Ministry of Education formulates guidelines for the promotion and implementation of daycare services after kindergarten hours.	

Year	Social Movement	Kindergarten	Day Nurseries
1998	Law concerned with the advancement of regional devolution enacted.	<p>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare jointly issue notification on policies related to the shared use of facilities by kindergartens and day nurseries.</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare issue joint action plan to support children and families.</p> <p>National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens revised and announced.</p> <p>Ministry of Health and Welfare issues notification regarding the Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries</p> <p>Ministerial Conference on Promoting Measures to Counter the Declining Birthrate formulates a basic policy on promoting measures to counter the declining birthrate (New Angel Plan).</p> <p>National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens implemented.</p> <p>Child Abuse Prevention Law goes into force.</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology establishes Early Childhood Education Promotion Program.</p> <p>Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens partially revised (regarding self-inspection, self-evaluation and public announcements).</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology makes announcements regarding improving kindergarten teacher qualifications.</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare announces the Plus One Proposal to Halt the Declining Birthrate.</p> <p>Nursery teacher qualifications codified.</p> <p>Basic Law on Measures to Address the Declining Birthrate enacted.</p>	<p>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare jointly issue notification on policies related to the shared use of facilities by kindergartens and day nurseries.</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare issue joint action plan to support children and families.</p> <p>National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens revised and announced.</p> <p>Ministry of Health and Welfare issues notification regarding the Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries</p> <p>Ministerial Conference on Promoting Measures to Counter the Declining Birthrate formulates a basic policy on promoting measures to counter the declining birthrate (New Angel Plan).</p> <p>National Curriculum Standards for Kindergartens implemented.</p> <p>Child Abuse Prevention Law goes into force.</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology establishes Early Childhood Education Promotion Program.</p> <p>Official Requirements for the Establishment of Kindergartens partially revised (regarding self-inspection, self-evaluation and public announcements).</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology makes announcements regarding improving kindergarten teacher qualifications.</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare announces the Plus One Proposal to Halt the Declining Birthrate.</p> <p>Nursery teacher qualifications codified.</p> <p>Basic Law on Measures to Address the Declining Birthrate enacted.</p>
1999			Official name of people engaged in providing children education and care at child welfare facilities changed to nursery teacher. (Went into force on April 1, 1999.)
2000			Guidelines for Nursery Care at Day Nurseries implemented.
2001			
2002			
2003			
2004			