

Survey background

Global Trend in Early Childhood Education

Our social environment is rapidly changing internationally at an accelerating pace through globalization in economy and informatization using IT. No longer sufficient to simply master conventional knowledge, it is also considered necessary for us to acquire attitudes and capabilities to flexibly adapt to our environments, continue to learn, and solve problems. Attention is also turning toward the importance of acquiring such attitudes and capabilities in early childhood for future individual development.

Transition from Early Childhood to Elementary School in Japan

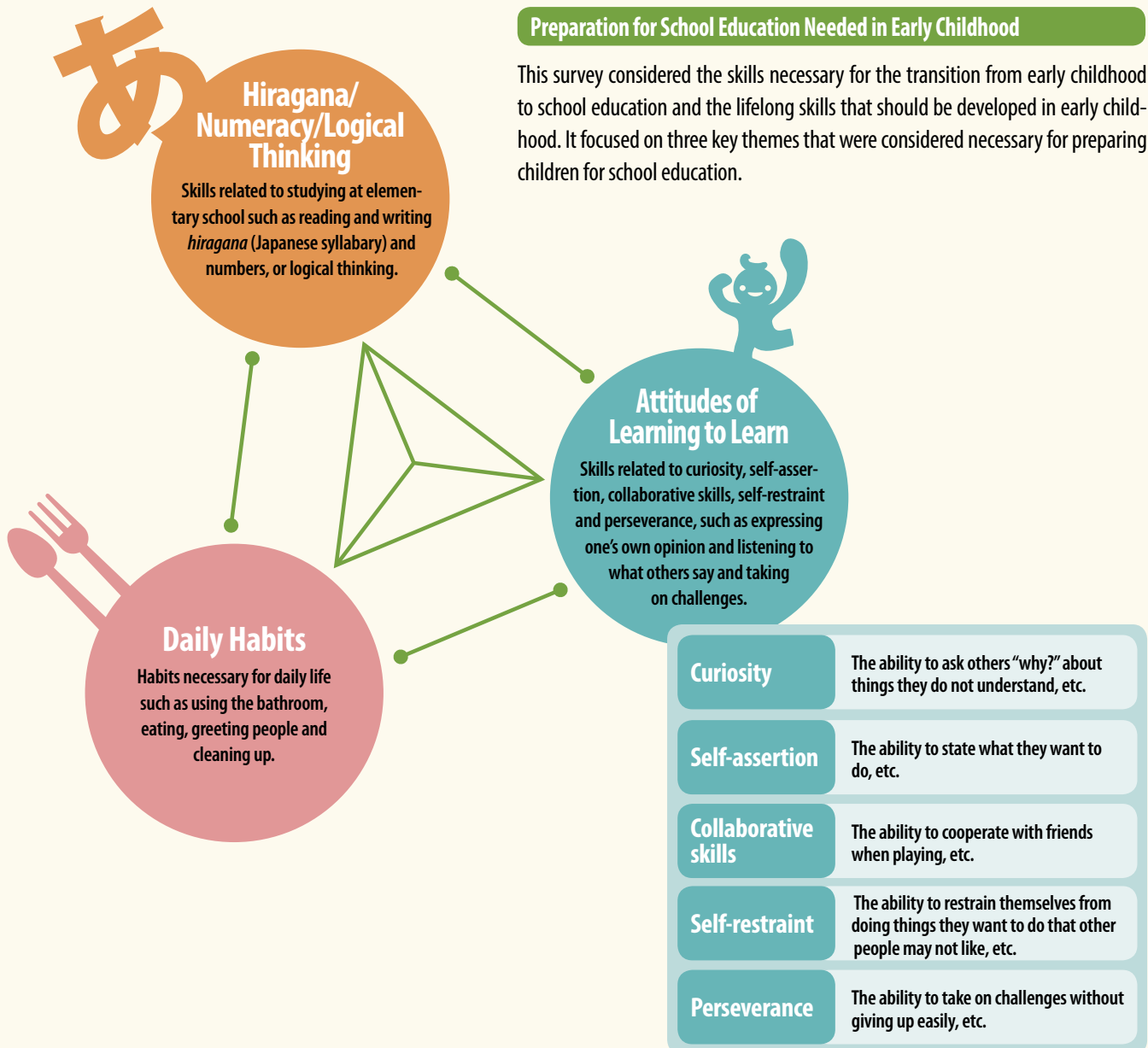
Children cultivate the basics of learning during the period from early childhood to elementary school. To ensure that preschool education and care and elementary education provide a smooth transition in line with children's development, kindergartens, day-care centers, Early Childhood Education and Care centers (ECEC centers: *nintei kodomo en*), etc., and elementary schools have begun implementing transitional curricula.

A Demand for Evidence Based on Data

Much research is conducted on activities and involvement with day-care centers/kindergartens and the home in Japan with regard to learning processes in early childhood and environments that encourage learning. Moreover, nowadays it is required to build up evidence based on data collection and analysis.

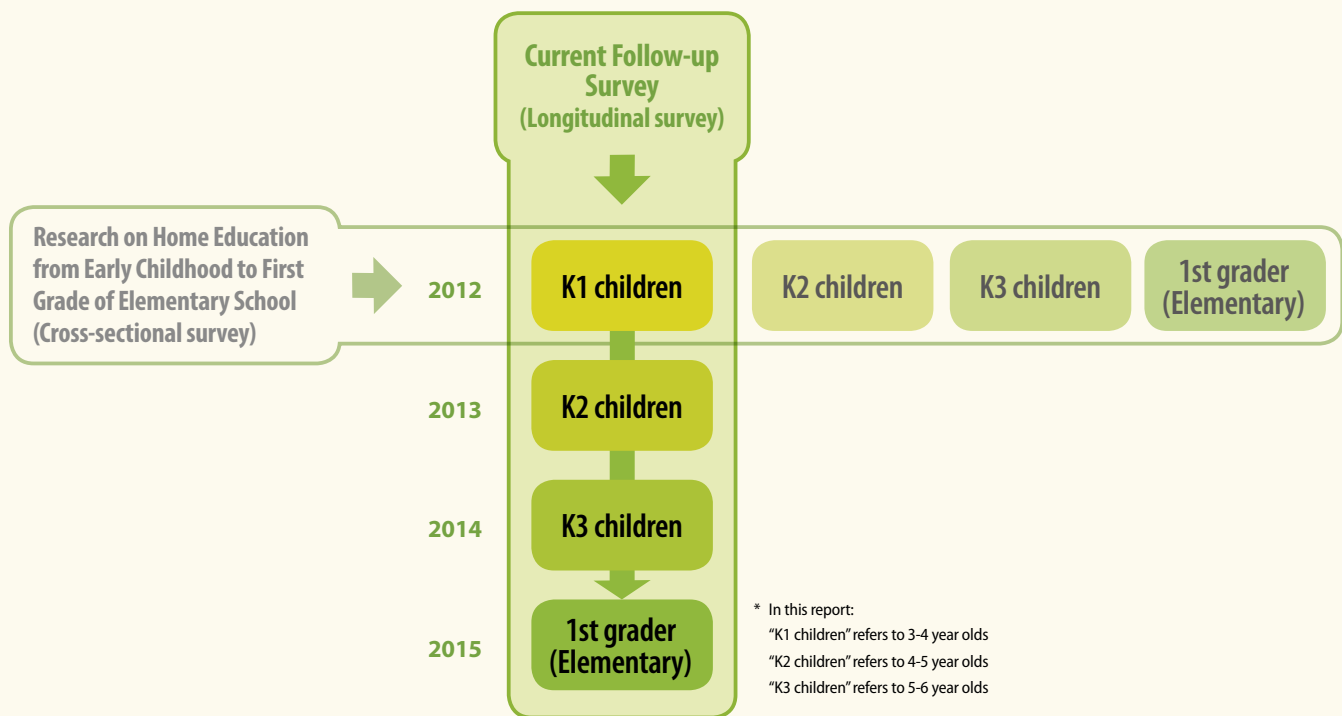
Preparation for School Education Needed in Early Childhood

This survey considered the skills necessary for the transition from early childhood to school education and the lifelong skills that should be developed in early childhood. It focused on three key themes that were considered necessary for preparing children for school education.



About the survey

In this survey, the 2012 cross-sectional survey revealed the actual conditions of life at home of children aged three to six (first-year kindergarteners or K1 to first graders in elementary school), how they were raised and interacted with their parents at home. From then on, we have carried out a survey targeting the mothers of K1 children since 2012, and longitudinal surveys have been carried out every year since 2013 to study the learning processes of children as well as real learning situations at home. This summary analyzes questionnaires responses from 544 mothers on their children (from when they were K1 to first graders in elementary school) based on data collected from the longitudinal survey.



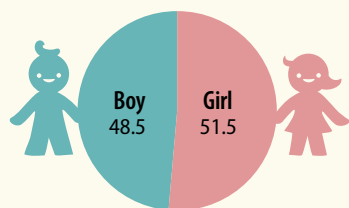
Survey overview

- Theme:** Aspects of children's learning from early childhood to first grade and parental involvement and awareness
- Method:** Mail (Self-administered questionnaires were distributed and collected by mail)
- Subjects:** Mothers of K1 children who agreed to take part in the longitudinal survey until their children became first graders, and who had completed the survey.
- Number of samples:** 544
- Survey area:** All areas of Japan
- Survey items:** Daily schedule of children; aspects of children's learning; maternal involvement; roles of the father and the mother; degree of satisfaction with childcare facility or elementary school; mothers' social involvement; after-school activities; shared reading, etc.

Period:	Period of K1	January to February 2012
	Period of K2	January to February 2013
	Period of K3	January to February 2014
	Period of 1st Grade (Elementary school)	March 2015

Basic attributes of samples

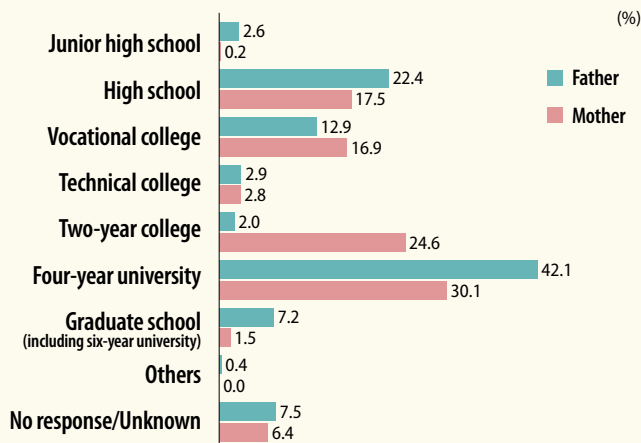
Child Gender



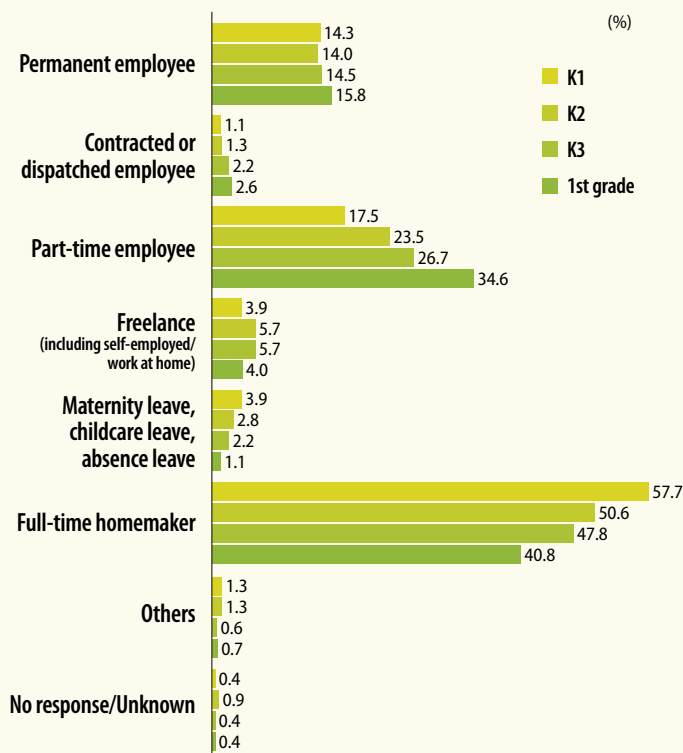
Birth Order (Relative to Siblings)



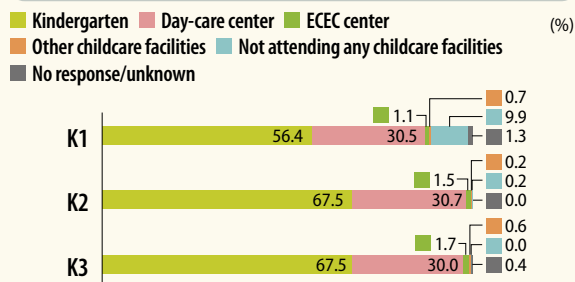
Education of Parents (Period of First-grade)



Employment of Mother



Attending Facilities



After-School Care Attendance



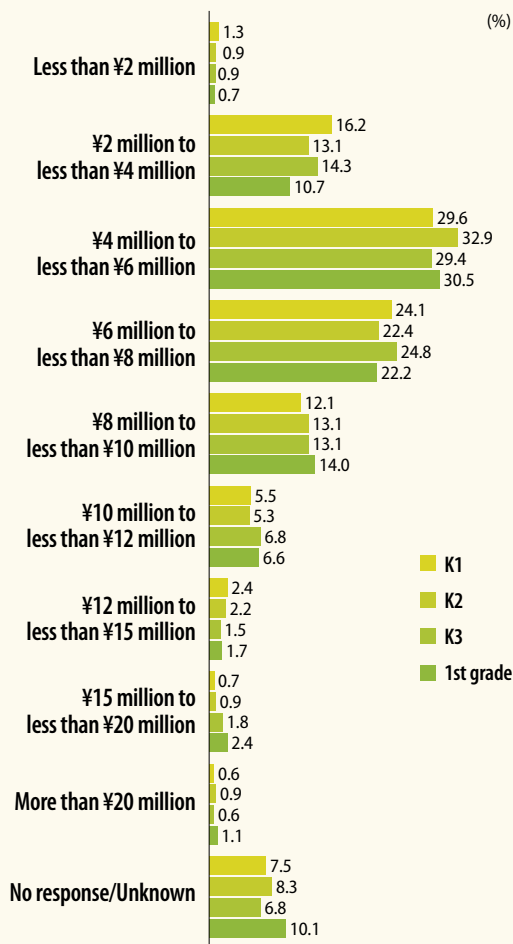
Average Age of Parents

(Age)

	K1	K2	K3	1st grade
Father	38.4	39.5	40.4	41.5
Mother	36.6	37.6	38.5	39.7

* When calculating the average age, "No response/Unknown" was excluded.

Household Income



Features of this Report

During the early stage of learning from preschool to the first year of elementary school, what should be done at home to support the child's growth and to ensure that children continue to learn, adapt to their environments flexibly and solve problems?

In order to give an idea of how to support children through this stage, BERD has carried out one of Japan's few longitudinal surveys on this question and analyzed the development of learning in children from early childhood to first grade. This report aims to help create better environments for children and their families from the viewpoint of the childrearing generation and to assist those who are involved in supporting them.

How will children learn to think for themselves and come up with solutions during the transitional period between early childhood and elementary school?

What kinds of attitudes are essential for children during early childhood?
How should parents support children at home?



 Let's look at the longitudinal data from four key points. 

POINT

1

Development of Learning from Early Childhood to the First Grade of Elementary School



POINT

2

The Process of Learning



POINT

3

Changes in Parental Involvement



POINT

4

Learning Attitude during the First Grade of Elementary School, and Parental Involvement during K3 Period



To Families

This survey was carried out to indicate how to contribute to the better growth of children and better ways for parents to interact with them at home. It aims to provide a view of their growth from pre-school to entering elementary school and identify essential key points so that parents can discover tips in childrearing. It is our humble hope that this report will be helpful in supporting your children.

To Those Involved in Childcare Facilities and Elementary Schools

Having conducted annual surveys of the same children over the course of four years from a class for 3-4 year-olds through to the first year of elementary school, we have studied the way in which children are raised at home during the transitional period from preschool to elementary school. We hope that you will find this information useful in providing support for children's growth in early childhood education and elementary school education, establishing relationships with parents and guardians, and considering the cooperation between childcare facilities and elementary schools.