The 3rd
Basic Survey on Early Childhood Education and Care in Japan

The environment surrounding childcare facilities is changing; declining birthrate, change in families including growing numbers of double income families with young child(ren), a revision of course of study/guidelines and free early childhood education and care.

A survey was conducted on the actual circumstances/issues of childcare facilities in kindergartens, daycare centers and certified ECEC centers in the same framework, in cooperation with their principals.

This paper introduces survey data to aid understanding of the current circumstances of childcare in transition.
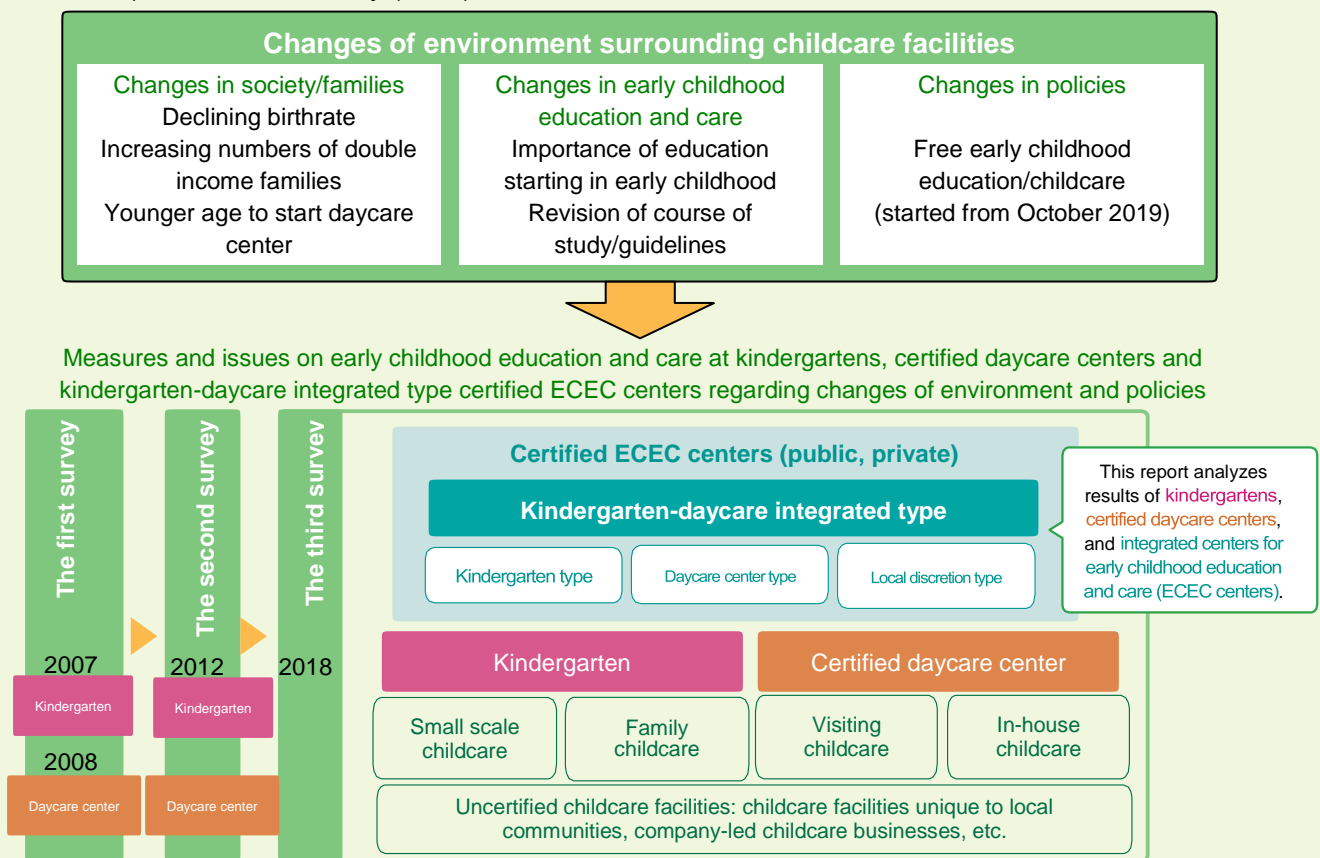
Preliminary Report

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

About the survey

Background and purpose

The role of childcare facilities in providing a growing environment for infants and young children is becoming more and more important in these times of declining birthrate, increasing numbers of double income families with infants and young children, and younger age to start daycare center. The structures of early childhood education and care are becoming more diverse along with changes in society. The importance of nurturing "disposition toward learning, humanity" from early childhood is attracting attention again in integrated education reform from early childhood to the higher educational stage. In 2018, a revision for kindergarten course of study, daycare center guidelines, and kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC center education course of study (hereinafter referred to as course of study/guidelines) was established.

The purpose of this survey is to identify the actual circumstances and issues in childcare facilities in transition beyond the types of facilities. The survey was conducted nationwide in Japan at kindergartens, daycare centers and certified ECEC centers. The framework allows comparison with the first survey (2007/2008) and second survey (2012).

Changes of environment surrounding childcare facilities

Changes in society/families	Changes in early childhood education and care	Changes in policies
Declining birthrate Increasing numbers of double income families Younger age to start daycare center	Importance of education starting in early childhood Revision of course of study/guidelines	Free early childhood education/childcare (started from October 2019)

Measures and issues on early childhood education and care at kindergartens, certified daycare centers and kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC centers regarding changes of environment and policies

The first survey — 2007 — Kindergarten — 2008 — Daycare center

The second survey — 2012 — Kindergarten — Daycare center

The third survey — 2018

Certified ECEC centers (public, private)

Kindergarten-daycare integrated type

Kindergarten type | Daycare center type | Local discretion type

This report analyzes results of kindergartens, certified daycare centers, and integrated centers for early childhood education and care (ECEC centers).

Kindergarten | **Certified daycare center**

Small scale childcare | Family childcare | Visiting childcare | In-house childcare

Uncertified childcare facilities: childcare facilities unique to local communities, company-led childcare businesses, etc.

Outline of the survey

Themes: Environment/structure of the facility, educational/childcare activities, actual circumstances/awareness of facility principals concerning childrearing support activities, etc.

Subjects: Principals, directors, facility chiefs, vice principals, vice directors, vice facility chiefs, supervisors, etc. of public and private kindergartens, public and private certified daycare centers, public and private kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC centers with 30 or more children

Method of the survey: By mail (questionnaires for written answers are mailed out and collected)

Period: November - December 2018

Area of the survey: Nationwide in Japan

Number of questionnaires sent: 16,037. Valid responses: 4,565 (valid response rate 28.5%)

Items of the survey: Environment and equipment, circumstances of teachers/caregivers, goal of education or childcare, response to course of study/guidelines, educational and childcare activities, support for child rearing, professional development, connection between childcare facilities and elementary schools, issues in management of the childcare facilities, communication with parents, etc.

Basic attributes

■ Number of valid responses and type of childcare facilities

		The first survey	The second survey	The third survey
		2007 (survey on kindergartens) 2008 (survey on daycare centers)	2012	2018
		Number of valid responses (ratio of public and private)		
Kindergarten	Public	401 (25.0%)	456 (33.1%)	606 (40.6%)
	Private	1,203 (75.0%)	921 (66.9%)	888 (59.4%)
	Total	1,604	1,377	1,494
Daycare center	Public	1,540 (51.0%)	1,362 (36.8%)	840 (36.2%)
	Private	1,478 (49.0%)	2,343 (63.2%)	1,481 (63.8%)
	Total	3,018	3,705	2,321
Certified ECEC center	Public	- -	- -	148 (19.7%)
	Private	- -	- -	602 (80.3%)
	Total	- -	- -	750

■ Position of respondents (2018)

(%)

	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Principal, director, facility chief	75.7	72.9	87.5	76.4	82.4	66.3
Vice principal, vice director, vice facility chief	16.0	13.9	4.4	5.4	10.1	16.9
Supervisor	5.1	8.3	6.1	13.0	6.1	10.5
Others	2.0	2.6	0.5	2.6	0.7	3.8
No response/unknown	1.2	2.4	1.5	2.6	0.7	2.5

Notes concerning the data

- This report analyzes mainly the third survey (2018) divided by the type of the facility, public/private.
- Please refer to the reports disclosed on the website of Benesse Educational Research & Development Institute for details of the first and the second surveys.
- As for the certified ECEC centers, the objects of the survey are public and private kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC centers. In this report, they will be referred to as "public and private certified ECEC centers."
- As for the types, publicly established and publicity operated facilities are categorized as "public," while publicly established and privately operated facilities and privately established and privately operated facilities are categorized as "private."
- Percentages (%) used in this report are computed following the computing method of each item and are shown as numbers with the second decimal place rounded. Therefore, the total may not be exactly 100.
- Figures/tables in parentheses ( ) indicate the numbers of objects for analysis.

1-1 Opening hours of childcare facilities

Opening hours have become longer than in 2012 in both kindergartens and daycare centers

Average opening hours at kindergartens are between 7 to 8 hours at public facilities and 9 to 10 hours at private facilities. At daycare centers, opening hours are between 11 to 12 hours at public facilities and 12 to 13 hours at private facilities. At certified ECEC centers, opening hours are between 11 to 12 hours at public facilities and also 11 to 12 hours at private facilities. (Table 1-1-1). Private facilities have longer opening hours, regardless of the type of facility. Opening time is the earliest at private daycare centers - 76.7% are open by between 7 and 7:30 (Fig. 1-1-1). Closing time is also the latest at private daycare centers - 84.6% close after 19:00 (Fig. 1-1-2).

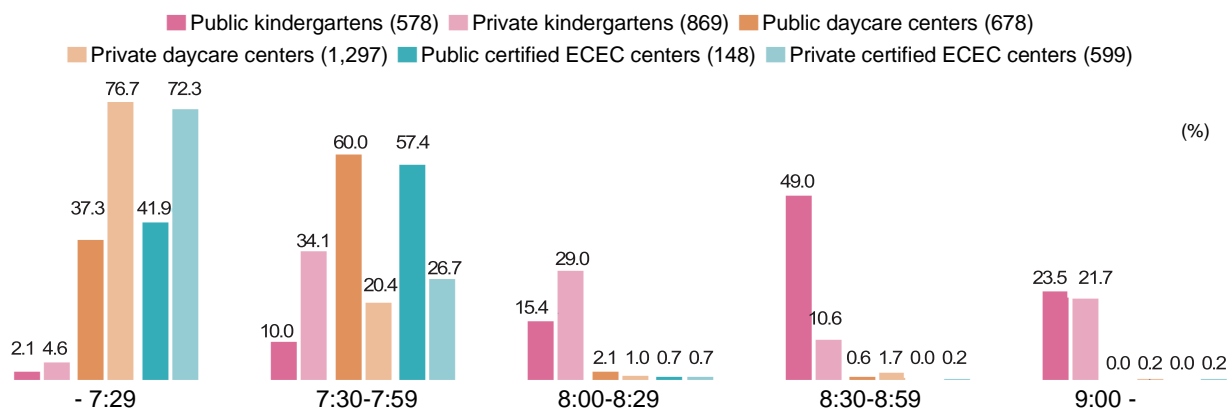**Table 1-1-1** **Duration of opening hours (changes over the years, average)**

	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
2012	7 hrs 9 mins	9 hrs 21 mins	10 hrs 57 mins	11 hrs 51 mins	-	-
2018	7 hrs 29 mins	9 hrs 29 mins	11 hrs 25 mins	12 hrs 2 mins	11 hrs 24 mins	11 hrs 50 mins

* Figures of the earliest opening time and latest closing time including extended childcare at childcare facilities are used for computing

  Figures of (closing time) – (opening time) are used as the duration of opening hours

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

* Average duration of opening hours are computed per type of childcare facilities
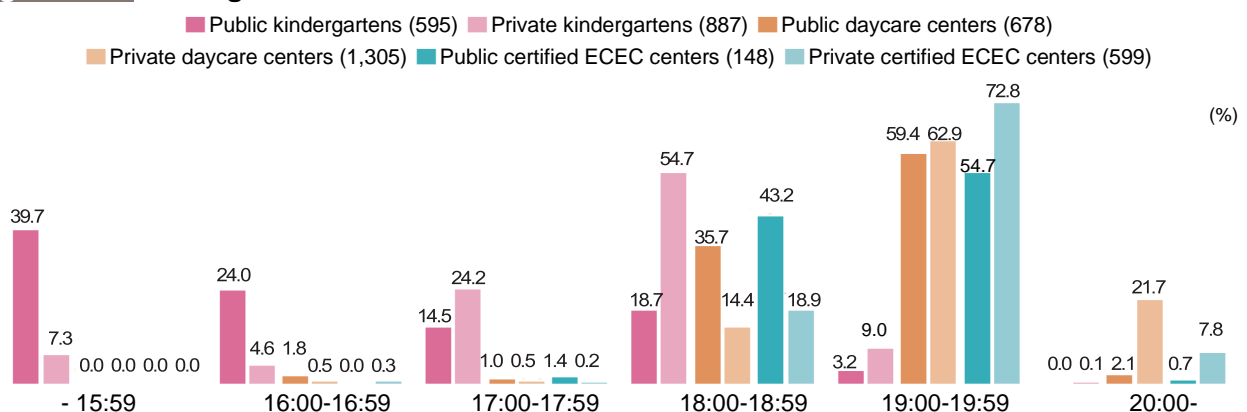
Figure 1-1-1 **Opening time**

■ Public kindergartens (578)　■ Private kindergartens (869)　■ Public daycare centers (678)
■ Private daycare centers (1,297)　■ Public certified ECEC centers (148)　■ Private certified ECEC centers (599)

* The earliest childcare starting time at each facility is used for computation among standard childcare starting time, extended childcare starting time prior to standard childcare at daycare centers, and extended childcare starting time prior to standard childcare at kindergartens

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

Figure 1-1-2 **Closing time**

■ Public kindergartens (595)　■ Private kindergartens (887)　■ Public daycare centers (678)
■ Private daycare centers (1,305)　■ Public certified ECEC centers (148)　■ Private certified ECEC centers (599)

* The latest childcare ending time at each facility is used for computation among standard childcare ending time, extended childcare ending time after standard childcare at daycare centers, and extended childcare ending time after standard childcare at kindergartens

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

1-2 Standard childcare hours at childcare facilities

Standard childcare hours are 5 to 6 hours at kindergartens, 9 to 10 hours at daycare centers, 5 to 6 hours at class 1 certified ECEC centers, and 10 to 11 hours at class 2 and class 3 certified ECEC centers.

The standard duration of education hours a day at kindergartens is 4 hours according to the kindergarten course of study, however, this survey reveals that it is an average of 5 to 6 hours in both public and private kindergartens (Table 1-2-1). Public daycare centers are open for 9 to 10 hours, while private daycare centers are open for 10 to 11 hours. Childcare hours at certified ECEC centers are 5 to 6 hours at both public and private class 1 facilities, and 10 to 11 hours at class 2 and class 3 facilities.

Q **From what time to what time are the standard (excluding extended childcare) childcare hours at your facility?**
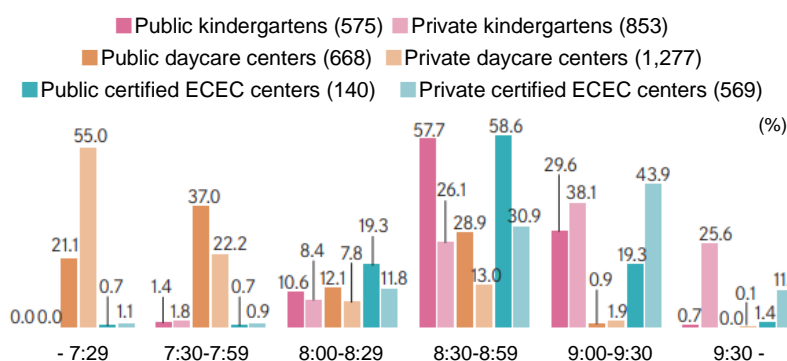
Table 1-2-1 Duration of hours of standard childcare (average)

	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Standard hours of childcare (Class 1 certified ECEC centers)	5 hrs 27 mins	5 hrs 16 mins	9 hrs 45 mins	10 hrs 29 mins	5 hrs 35 mins	5 hrs 29 mins
Standard hours of childcare (class 2 and class 3 certified ECEC centers)	-	-	-	-	10 hrs 24 mins	10 hrs 37 mins

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

* Average hours per type of facilities is computed

Figure 1-2-1 Opening time of childcare

Public kindergartens (575)　Private kindergartens (853)
Public daycare centers (668)　Private daycare centers (1,277)
Public certified ECEC centers (140)　Private certified ECEC centers (569)

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses
* Opening time of standard childcare for class 1 certified ECEC center

Figure 1-2-2 Opening time of childcare (Class 2 and class 3 certified ECEC centers)

Public certified ECEC centers (139)
Private certified ECEC centers (579)
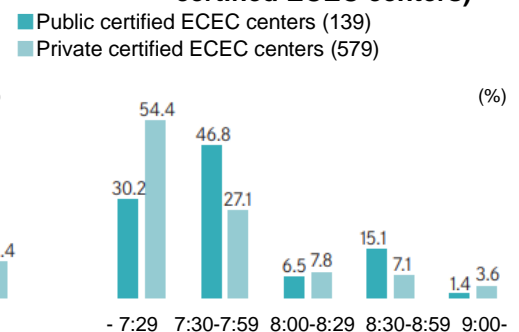
* Certified ECEC center only
* Opening time of standard childcare for class 2 and class 3
* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

Figure 1-2-3 Ending time of childcare

Public kindergartens (180)　Private kindergartens (285)
Public daycare centers (402)　Private daycare centers (553)
Public certified ECEC centers (50)　Private certified ECEC centers (340)

* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses
* Ending time of standard childcare for class 1 certified ECEC center

Figure 1-2-4 Ending time of childcare (Class 2 and class 3 certified ECEC centers)

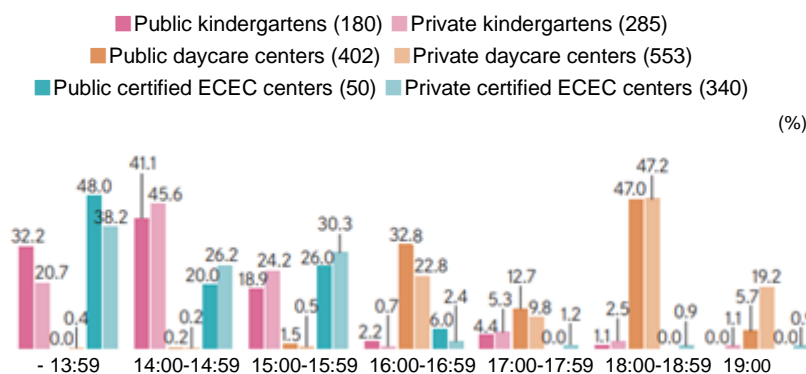Public certified ECEC centers (140)
Private certified ECEC centers (584)

* Certified ECEC center only
* Ending time of standard childcare for class 2 and class 3
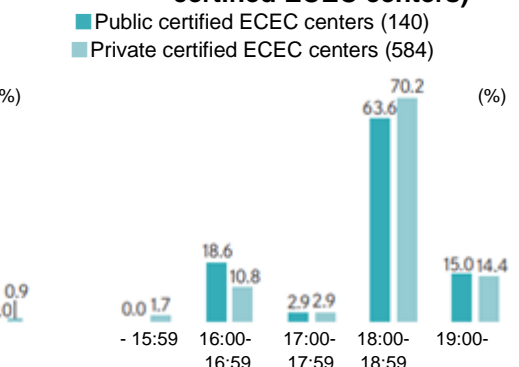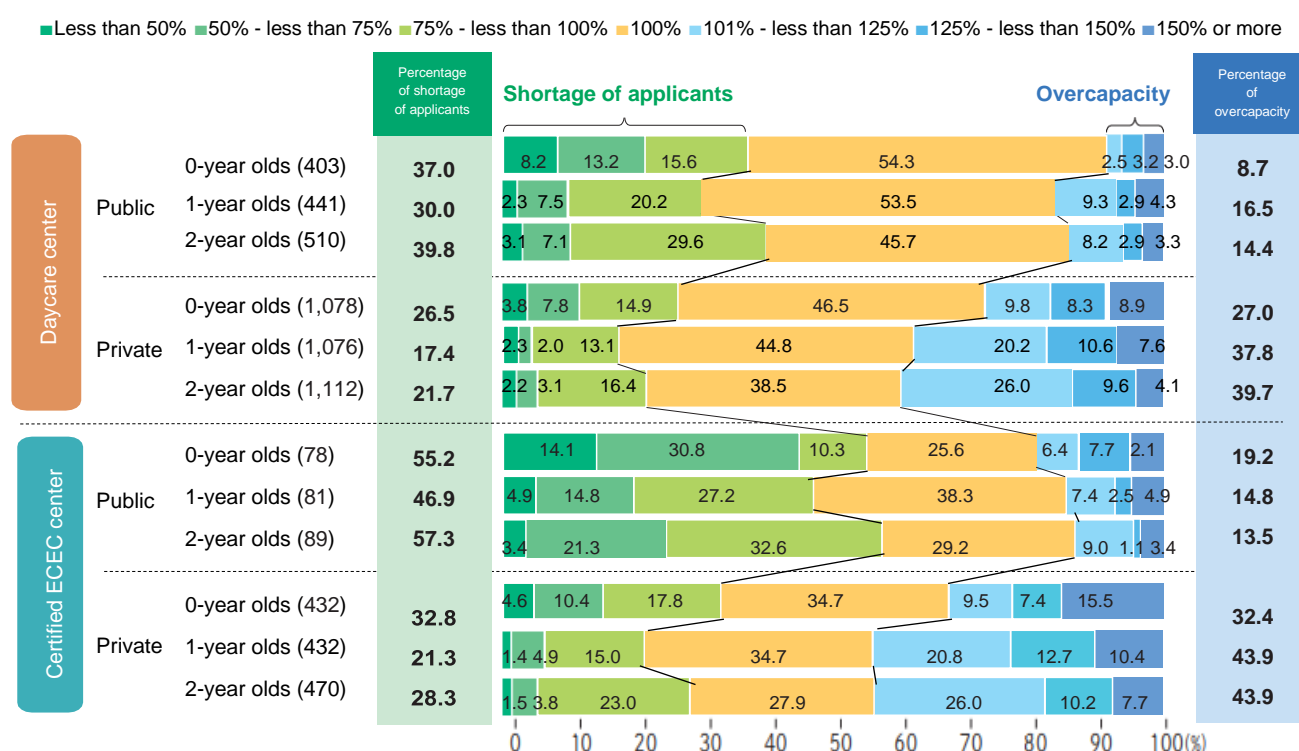* Computing does not include no responses or unknown responses

1-3 Capacity fill-rate (0- to 2-year olds / Daycare center, Certified ECEC center)

30% of private daycare centers and 40% of private certified ECEC centers are operating at overcapacity in childcare for 1-year olds and 2-year olds.

The percentage of actual numbers of children to the capacity in classrooms of younger children (0- to 2-year olds) per age shows private facilities have a higher percentage of overcapacity than public facilities in any age group (Fig. 1-3-1). The highest percentage of overcapacity is observed in private certified ECEC centers. At public daycare centers, private daycare centers and private certified ECEC centers, higher overcapacity percentage is observed in classrooms for 1- and 2-year olds than in classrooms for 0-year olds. At daycare centers where children on waiting lists are making issues in urban areas, the capacity fill-rate shows that over 50% of daycare centers in local communities with a population of "150,000 or more" accept children exceeding their capacity (Fig. 1-3-2).

Q **Please write the capacity and actual numbers of children for each classroom at your facility as of November 1, 2018. If there is no applicable child, write "0".**

Figure 1-3-1 **Capacity fill-rate (per age group, daycare center, certified ECEC center)**

Legend: ■Less than 50% ■50% - less than 75% ■75% - less than 100% ■100% ■101% - less than 125% ■125% - less than 150% ■150% or more

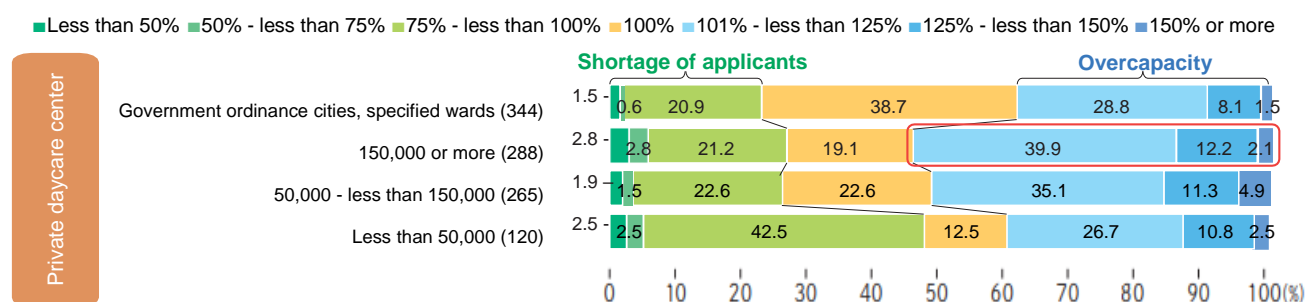| Facility	Type	Age group (n)	Percentage of shortage of applicants	Less than 50%	50% - less than 75%	75% - less than 100%	100%	101% - less than 125%	125% - less than 150%	150% or more	Percentage of overcapacity
Daycare center	Public	0-year olds (403)	37.0	8.2	13.2	15.6	54.3	2.5	3.2	3.0	8.7
		1-year olds (441)	30.0	2.3	7.5	20.2	53.5	9.3	2.9	4.3	16.5
		2-year olds (510)	39.8	3.1	7.1	29.6	45.7	8.2	2.9	3.3	14.4
	Private	0-year olds (1,078)	26.5	3.8	7.8	14.9	46.5	9.8	8.3	8.9	27.0
		1-year olds (1,076)	17.4	2.3	2.0	13.1	44.8	20.2	10.6	7.6	37.8
		2-year olds (1,112)	21.7	2.2	3.1	16.4	38.5	26.0	9.6	4.1	39.7
Certified ECEC center	Public	0-year olds (78)	55.2	14.1	30.8	10.3	25.6	6.4	7.7	2.1	19.2
		1-year olds (81)	46.9	4.9	14.8	27.2	38.3	7.4	2.5	4.9	14.8
		2-year olds (89)	57.3	3.4	21.3	32.6	29.2	9.0	1.1	3.4	13.5
	Private	0-year olds (432)	32.8	4.6	10.4	17.8	34.7	9.5	7.4	15.5	32.4
		1-year olds (432)	21.3	1.4	4.9	15.0	34.7	20.8	12.7	10.4	43.9
		2-year olds (470)	28.3	1.5	3.8	23.0	27.9	26.0	10.2	7.7	43.9

Shortage of applicants / Overcapacity

* Daycare centers and certified ECEC centers only
* Only the cases of written capacity and actual numbers in each age group are analyzed
* Actual number of children in classrooms in each age group is divided by the capacity to compute the capacity fill-rate
* Capacity 0 cases are excluded

Figure 1-3-2 **Capacity fill-rate (total of 0 to 2-year olds, private daycare centers, according to population)**

Legend: ■Less than 50% ■50% - less than 75% ■75% - less than 100% ■100% ■101% - less than 125% ■125% - less than 150% ■150% or more

Private daycare center — Population category (n)	Less than 50%	50% - less than 75%	75% - less than 100%	100%	101% - less than 125%	125% - less than 150%	150% or more
Government ordinance cities, specified wards (344)	1.5	0.6	20.9	38.7	28.8	8.1	1.5
150,000 or more (288)	2.8	2.8	21.2	19.1	39.9	12.2	2.1
50,000 - less than 150,000 (265)	1.9	1.5	22.6	22.6	35.1	11.3	4.9
Less than 50,000 (120)	2.5	2.5	42.5	12.5	26.7	10.8	2.5

Shortage of applicants / Overcapacity

* According to population of local community where the facility is located (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications – Vital statistics 2018)
* Only the cases of written capacity and actual numbers in each age group are analyzed
* Actual number of children in classrooms in each age group is divided by the capacity to compute the capacity fill-rate
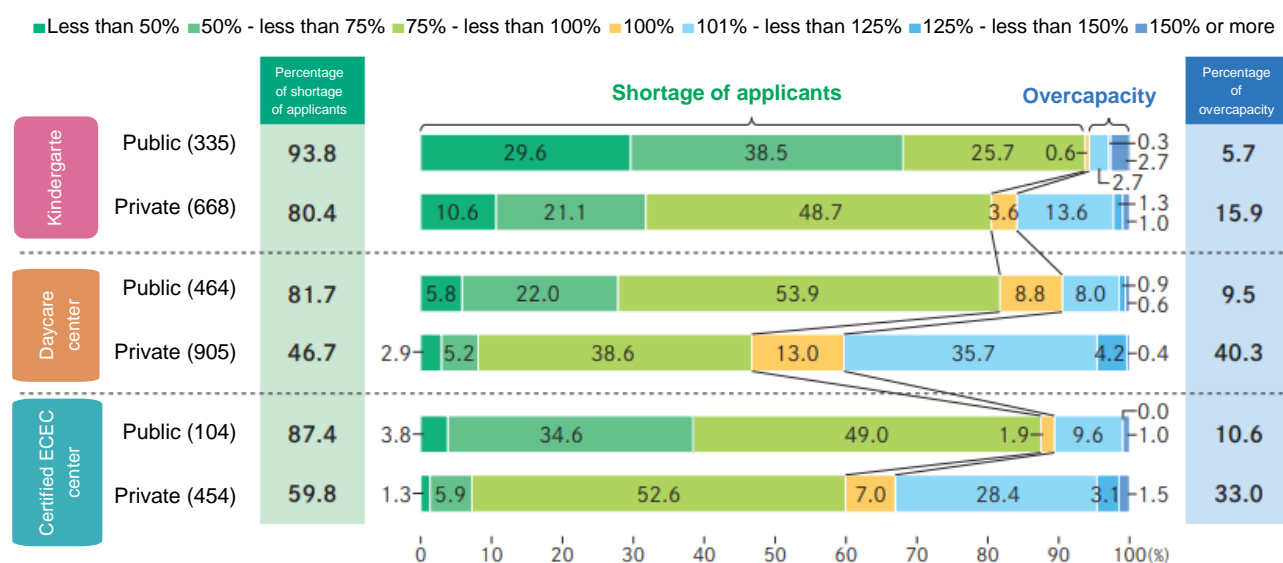* Capacity 0 cases are excluded

1-4 Capacity fill-rate (3 to 5-year olds)

In classrooms for 3- to 5-year olds, over 80% of kindergartens, public daycare centers and certified ECEC centers have a shortage of applicants.

Over 80% of 3- to 5-year olds classrooms at public kindergartens, private kindergartens, public daycare centers, and public certified ECEC centers have a shortage of applicants (Fig. 1-4-1). 46.7% of private daycare centers and 59.8% of private certified ECEC centers have a shortage of applicants, while 40.3% of private daycare centers and 33.0% of private certified ECEC centers are operating at overcapacity. At daycare centers where children on waiting lists are making issues in urban areas, the capacity fill-rate shows that nearly 50% of daycare centers in local communities with a population of "150,000 or more" accept children exceeding their capacity, showing the same trend (Fig. 1-3-2) as in the case of 0- to 2-year olds (Fig.1-4-2).

Q **Please write the capacity and actual numbers of children for each classroom at your facility as of November 1, 2018. If there is no applicable child, write "0".**

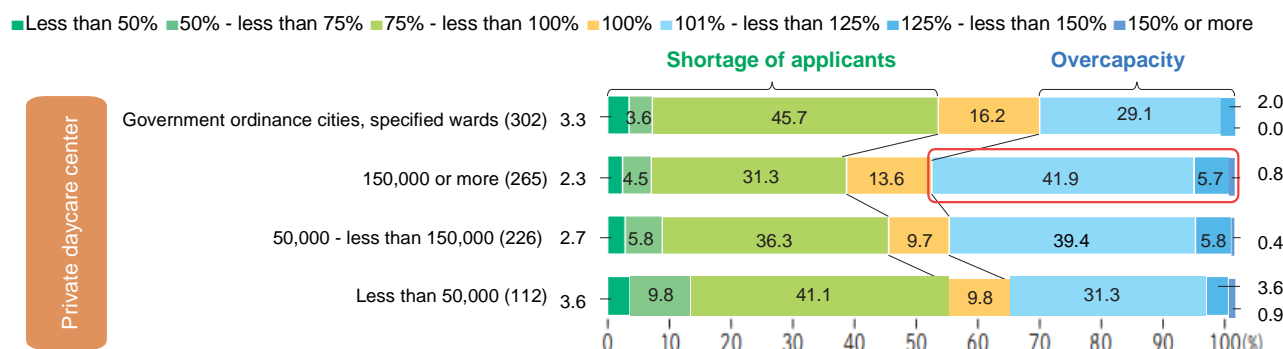**Figure 1-4-1 Capacity fill-rate (3 to 5-year olds)**

* Only the cases of written capacity and actual numbers in each age group are analyzed
* Actual number of children in classrooms in each age group is divided by the capacity to compute the capacity fill-rate
* Capacity 0 cases are excluded

Figure 1-4-2 Capacity fill-rate (total of 3 to 5-year olds　private daycare centers, according to population)

* According to population of local community where the facility is located (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications – Vital statistics 2018)
* Only the cases of written capacity and actual numbers in each age group are analyzed
* Actual number of children in classrooms in each age group is divided by the capacity to compute the capacity fill-rate
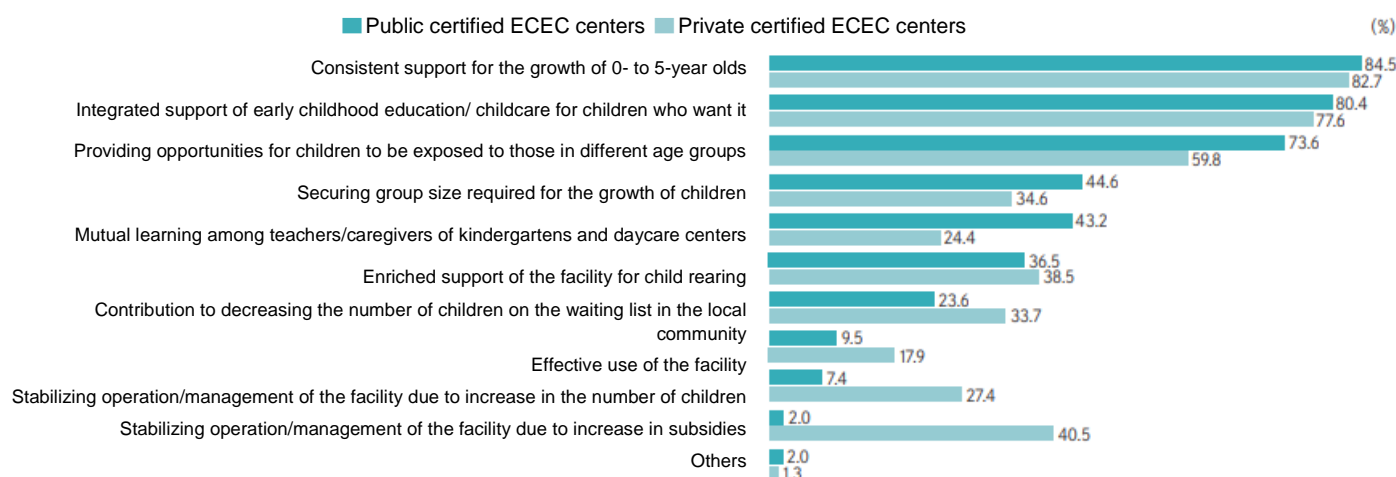* Capacity 0 cases are excluded

7

1-5 Benefits/good-design in management of certified ECEC centers

Benefits of certified ECEC centers are to provide integrated support of early childhood education/childcare and consistent support for growth of children.

As for the benefits of kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC centers, the highly evaluated points are "consistent support for growth of 0- to 5-year olds," "integrated support of early childhood education/childcare for children who want it" and "providing opportunities for children to be exposed to those in different age groups" in both public and private facilities (Fig. 1-5-1). As for good-design in management, the highly evaluated points are given to development of work environment and communications of caregivers/teachers, such as "one staff room instead of several" and/or "increasing staff meeting and training time" in both public and private facilities (Fig. 1-5-2).

Q   **Circle all that apply for the benefits of certified ECEC centers.**

Figure 1-5-1 **Benefits of certified ECEC centers**

Public certified ECEC centers ■ Private certified ECEC centers (%)

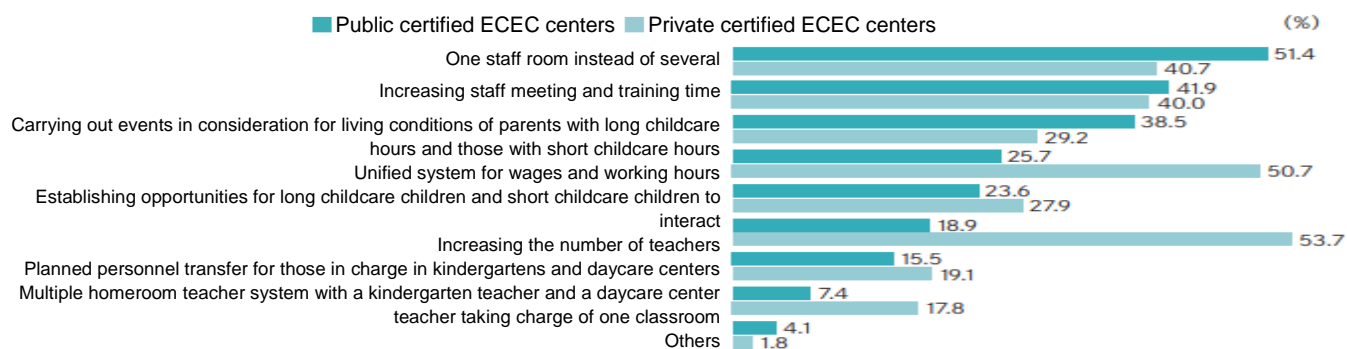|	Public	Private
Consistent support for the growth of 0- to 5-year olds	84.5	82.7
Integrated support of early childhood education/ childcare for children who want it	80.4	77.6
Providing opportunities for children to be exposed to those in different age groups	73.6	59.8
Securing group size required for the growth of children	44.6	34.6
Mutual learning among teachers/caregivers of kindergartens and daycare centers	43.2	24.4
Enriched support of the facility for child rearing	36.5	38.5
Contribution to decreasing the number of children on the waiting list in the local community	23.6	33.7
Effective use of the facility	9.5	17.9
Stabilizing operation/management of the facility due to increase in the number of children	7.4	27.4
Stabilizing operation/management of the facility due to increase in subsidies	2.0	40.5
Others	2.0	1.3

* Multiple responses
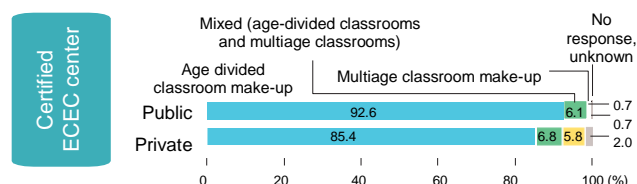* Indicated according to the descending order of public facilities

Q   **Circle all that apply for good-design in management of certified ECEC centers.**

Figure 1-5-2 **Good-design in management of certified ECEC centers**

Public certified ECEC centers ■ Private certified ECEC centers (%)

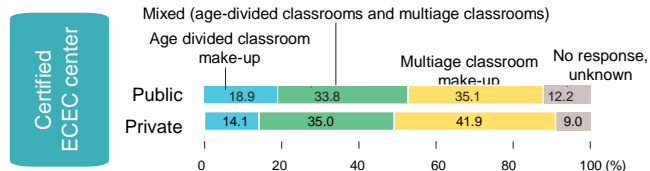|	Public	Private
One staff room instead of several	51.4	40.7
Increasing staff meeting and training time	41.9	40.0
Carrying out events in consideration for living conditions of parents with long childcare hours and those with short childcare hours	38.5	29.2
Unified system for wages and working hours	25.7	50.7
Establishing opportunities for long childcare children and short childcare children to interact	23.6	27.9
Increasing the number of teachers	18.9	53.7
Planned personnel transfer for those in charge in kindergartens and daycare centers	15.5	19.1
Multiple homeroom teacher system with a kindergarten teacher and a daycare center teacher taking charge of one classroom	7.4	17.8
Others	4.1	1.8

Q   **How are the classrooms of 3-year olds and older made up in FY2018?**

Figure 1-5-3 **Classroom make-up of educational hours based on the overall plan**

Certified ECEC center

Mixed (age-divided classrooms and multiage classrooms)
Age divided classroom make-up
Multiage classroom make-up
No response, unknown

	Age divided	Multiage		No response
Public	92.6	6.1		0.7 / 0.7
Private	85.4	6.8	5.8	2.0

0   20   40   60   80   100 (%)

Figure 1-5-4 **Classroom make-up of hours with class 2 and class 3 children only**

Certified ECEC center

Mixed (age-divided classrooms and multiage classrooms)
Age divided classroom make-up
Multiage classroom make-up
No response, unknown

|	Age divided	Mixed	Multiage	No response
Public	18.9	33.8	35.1	12.2
Private	14.1	35.0	41.9	9.0

0   20   40   60   80   100 (%)

1-6 Lunch during standard childcare hours at childcare facilities

Most often, lunch is "served by the facility" apart from at public kindergartens.

In kindergartens, lunch is mainly "brought by the children" or "served by the facility" (Fig.1-6-1). Some kindergartens designate days for children to bring lunch or the facility to provide lunch. In daycare centers and certified ECEC centers, a lot of them "provide lunch," however, diverse styles are also observed including "children bring staple food while facilities provide side dishes" or some children bring lunch or staple food while others eat provided lunch.

Q **How is lunch mainly offered to children during standard childcare hours?**

Figure 1-6-1 **Lunch serving style for children**
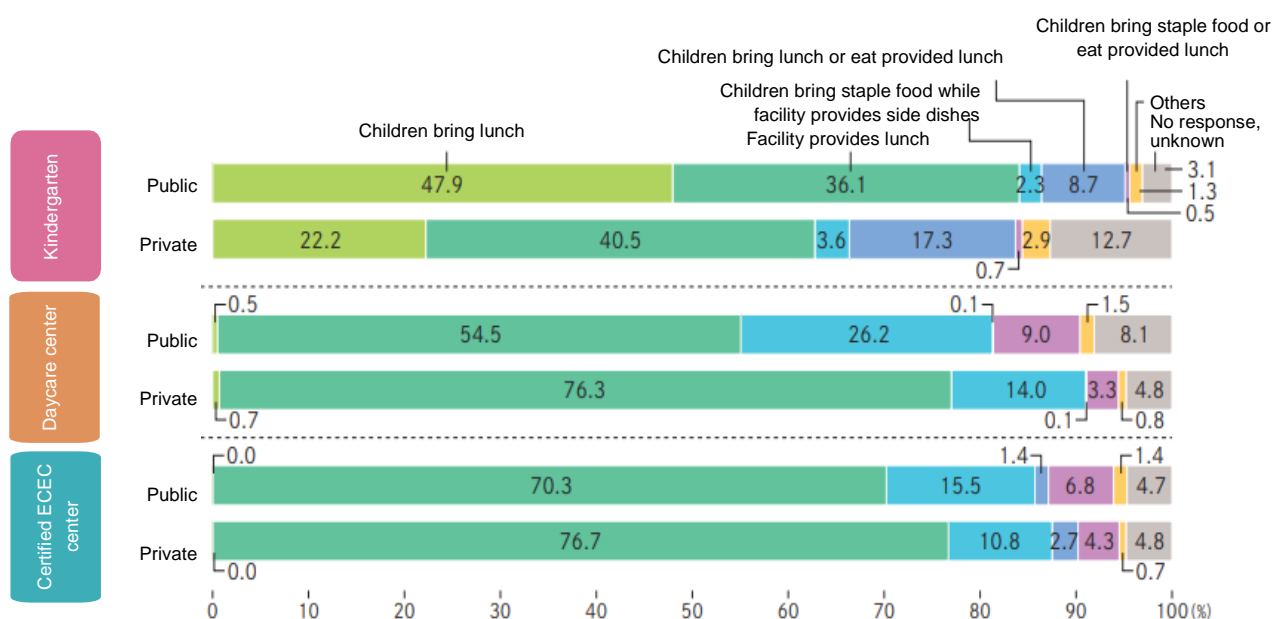
Q **How do you prepare the facility provided lunch?**

Figure 1-6-2 **Lunch preparation methods**

Legend:
- Public kindergartens (297)
- Private kindergartens (578)
- Public daycare centers (768)
- Private daycare centers (1,400)
- Public certified ECEC centers (141)
- Private certified ECEC centers (573)
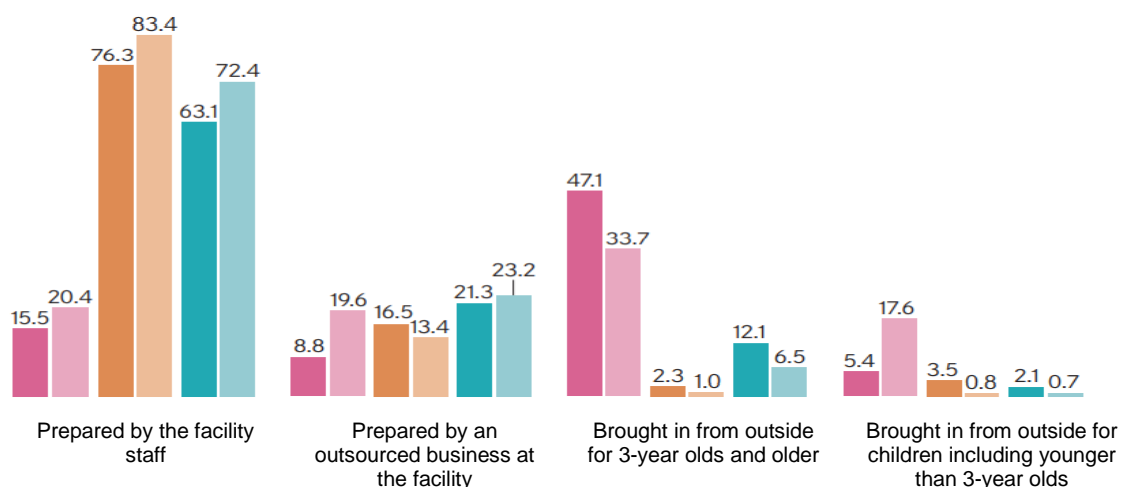
* Multiple responses
* Excluding facilities responding "children bring lunch" in Fig. 1-6-1

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1-7 Circumstances of children with special needs

70-90% of facilities have children with disabilities or special needs, percentage increasing over the years.

Around 90% of public facilities and 70 to 80% private facilities have children with disabilities or special needs regardless of the facility type, and the percentage is increasing over the years in both kindergartens and daycare centers (Fig. 1-7-1). Support systems for children are largely provided by extra staff employed by the local government in public facilities, while assigning staff using subsidies from the public administration, teachers/caregivers who do not have homeroom classes, principals, or chiefs at private facilities (Fig. 1-7-2).

Q **Do you have children with disabilities or special needs?**

Figure 1-7-1 **Children with disabilities or special needs (comparison over the years)**

■2007/2008 survey ■2012 survey ■2018 survey

(%)
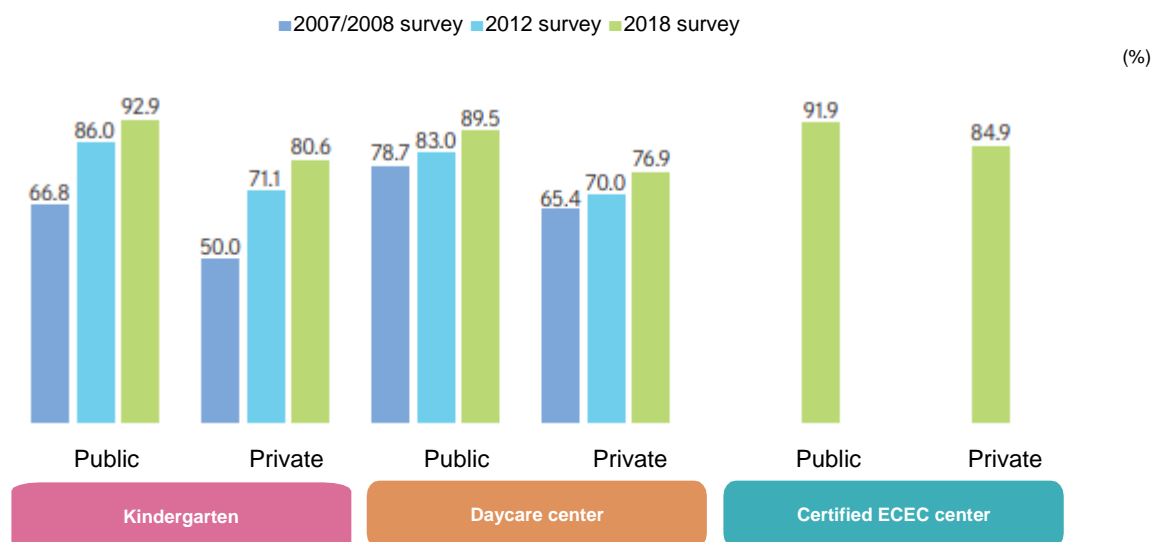
* Percentage of "yes"
* Comparison over the years is applicable to kindergartens and daycare centers only

Q **What is the support system for such children?**

Figure 1-7-2 **System to provide special support**

■ Public kindergartens (563) ■ Private kindergartens (716) ■ Public daycare centers (752)
■ Private daycare centers (1,139) ■ Public certified ECEC centers (136) ■ Private certified ECEC centers (511)
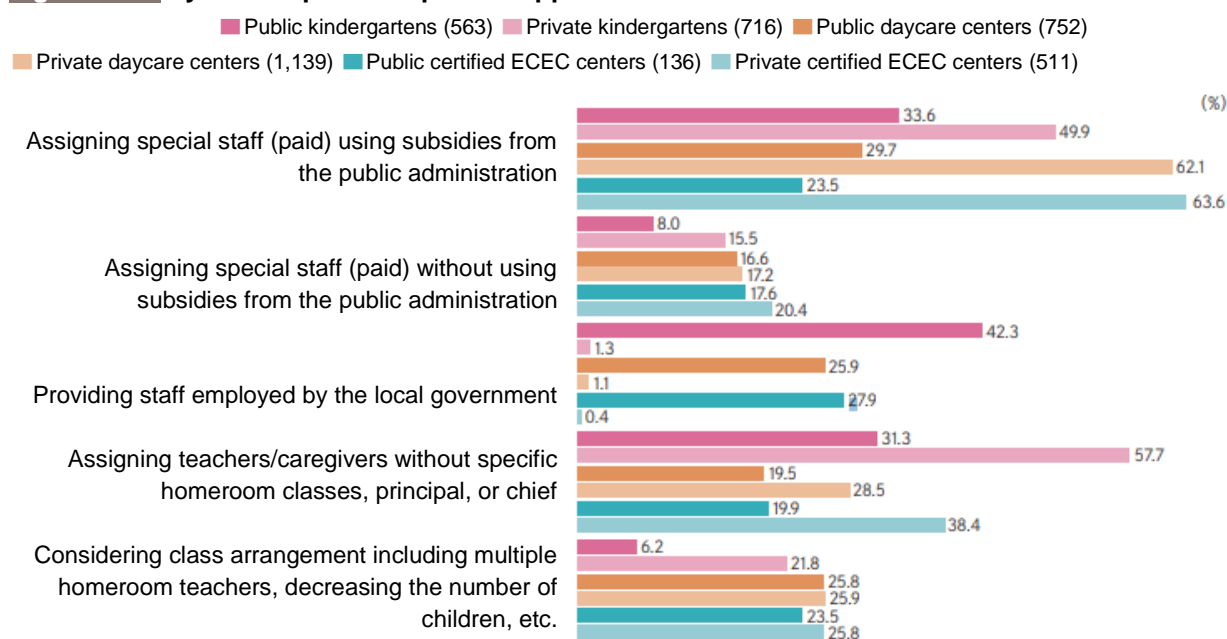
* Multiple responses
* Applicable to facilities having children with disabilities or special needs
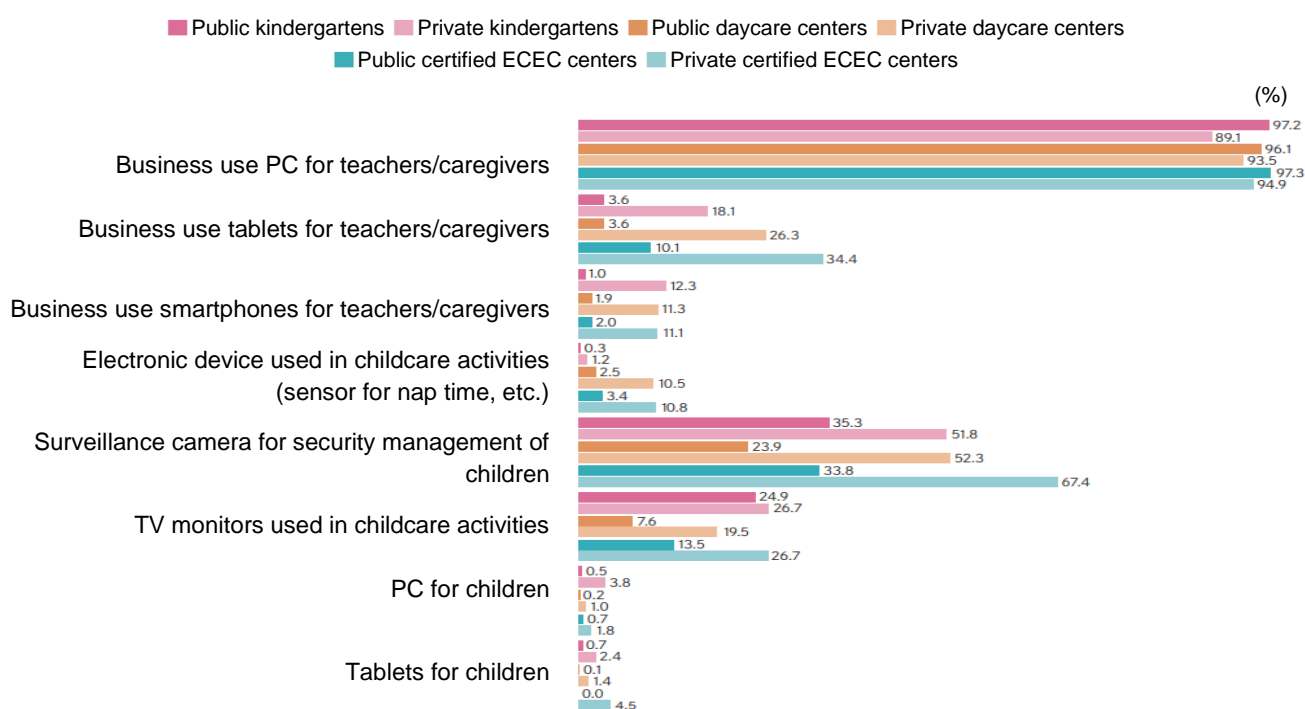* 5 items are indicated out of 7 items including "others" and "nothing special"

1-8 IT environment at childcare facilities

90% facilities have business use PC for teachers/caregivers. Over half of private facilities have surveillance cameras for security management of children.

Around 90% of facilities have "business use PC for teachers/caregivers" regardless of the facility type. However, the dissemination rate of IT devices/equipment is low apart from "surveillance camera for security management of children" and "TV monitor used in childcare activities," in particular among public facilities at less than 10% (Fig. 1-8-1). Use in the management system of arriving/leaving, attendance/absence of children is highest among private certified ECEC centers at 50%, and approx. 20% among private kindergartens and approx. 30% among private daycare centers (Fig. 1-8-2). On the other hand, the percentage at public facilities is less than 10%.

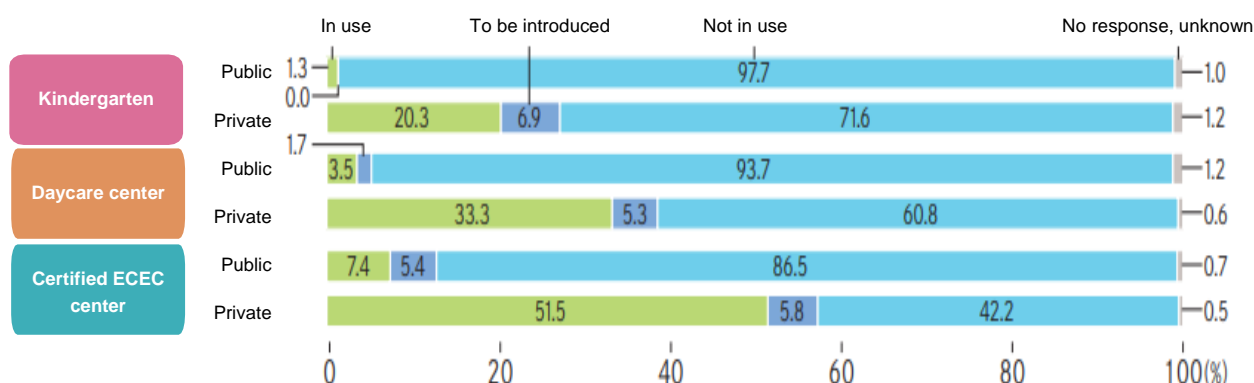**Q** **Do you have the following environment/equipment at your facility?**

Figure 1-8-1 **Actual circumstances of IT environment at the facility**

Legend: ■ Public kindergartens ■ Private kindergartens ■ Public daycare centers ■ Private daycare centers ■ Public certified ECEC centers ■ Private certified ECEC centers

(%)

Business use PC for teachers/caregivers: 97.2, 89.1, 96.1, 93.5, 97.3, 94.9

Business use tablets for teachers/caregivers: 3.6, 18.1, 3.6, 26.3, 10.1, 34.4

Business use smartphones for teachers/caregivers: 1.0, 12.3, 1.9, 11.3, 2.0, 11.1

Electronic device used in childcare activities (sensor for nap time, etc.): 0.3, 1.2, 2.5, 10.5, 3.4, 10.8

Surveillance camera for security management of children: 35.3, 51.8, 23.9, 52.3, 33.8, 67.4

TV monitors used in childcare activities: 24.9, 26.7, 7.6, 19.5, 13.5, 26.7

PC for children: 0.5, 3.8, 0.2, 1.0, 0.7, 1.8

Tablets for children: 0.7, 2.4, 0.1, 1.4, 0.0, 4.5

* Multiple responses

Q **Do you use an electronic system to manage arriving/leaving, attendance/absence, or use of school bus?**

Figure 1-8-2 **Use of management system of arriving/leaving, attendance/absence, of children**

Legend: In use | To be introduced | Not in use | No response, unknown

Kindergarten
- Public: In use 1.3, To be introduced 0.0, Not in use 97.7, No response 1.0
- Private: In use 20.3, To be introduced 6.9, Not in use 71.6, No response 1.2

Daycare center
- Public: In use 1.7, To be introduced 3.5, Not in use 93.7, No response 1.2
- Private: In use 33.3, To be introduced 5.3, Not in use 60.8, No response 0.6

Certified ECEC center
- Public: In use 7.4, To be introduced 5.4, Not in use 86.5, No response 0.7
- Private: In use 51.5, To be introduced 5.8, Not in use 42.2, No response 0.5

0   20   40   60   80   100(%)

1-9 Circumstances of teachers/caregivers

Percentage of permanent employment among teachers/caregivers is higher in private facilities than public facilities regardless of the facility type.

Among teachers/caregivers, the percentage of permanent employment is 44.1% at public kindergartens, 40.9% at public daycare centers, and 41.9% at public certified ECEC centers, indicating a higher percentage of temporary employment (Fig. 1-9-1). The percentage is 79.1% at private kindergartens, 62.9% at private daycare centers and 66.7% at private certified ECEC centers, indicating a higher percentage of permanent employment at private facilities than at public facilities. The lowest percentage of temporary employment is observed among private kindergartens.

Q **Please write the total number of teachers/caregivers excluding principal, director, vice principal, vice director, and chief (with no homeroom classes). Also please write the breakdown of employment status.**

Figure 1-9-1 **Percentage of permanent employment/temporary employment among teachers/caregivers**
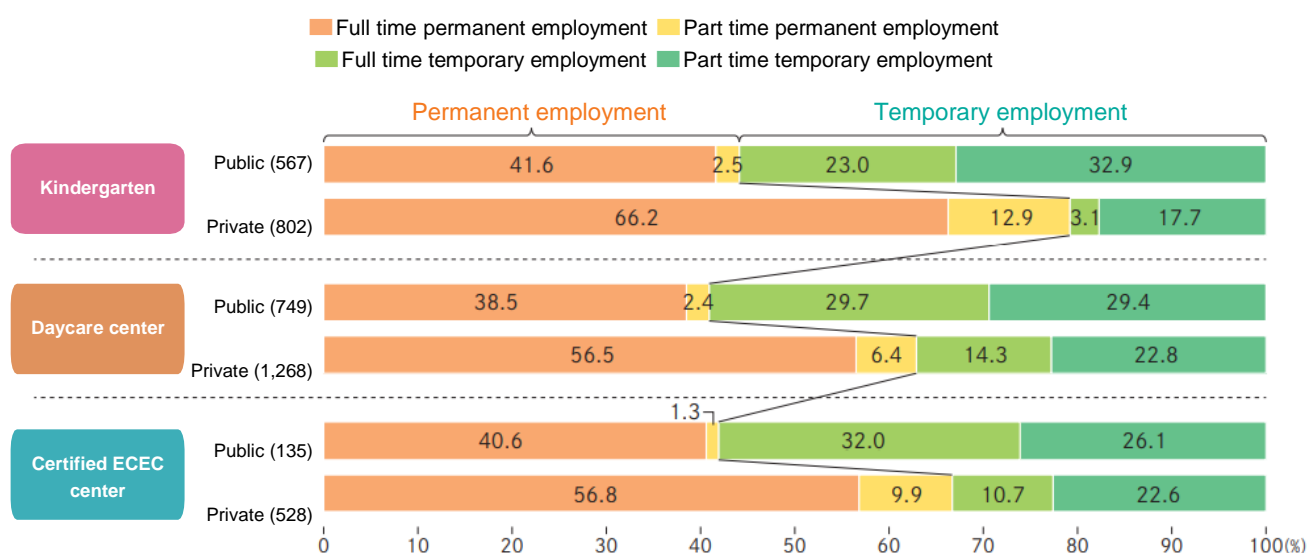
* Only the facilities analyzed whose total of teachers/caregivers and employment status breakdown matched
* Per facility type, total of teachers/caregivers per employment status is divided by the number of total teachers/caregivers for computation
* Permanent employment indicates employment with "no contract termination is set," and temporary employment indicates employment with "specific contract terms"

Figure 1-9-2 **Distribution of percentage of temporary employment among teachers/caregivers**
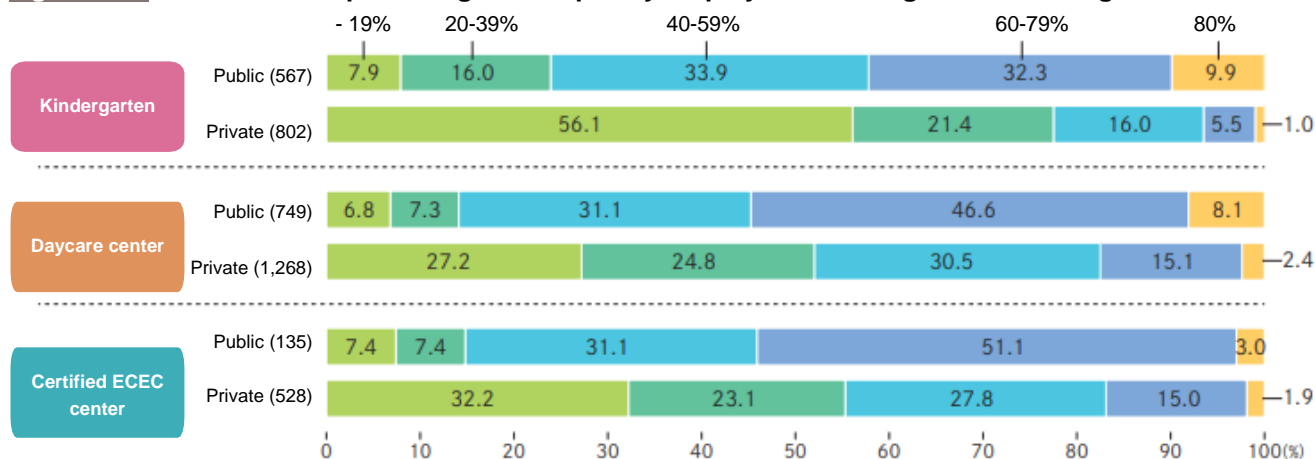
* Only the facilities analyzed whose total of teachers/caregivers and employment status breakdown matched
* Temporary employment is the total of "full time temporary employment" and "part time temporary employment"
* Temporary employment percentage is computed at each facility, and distribution of temporary employment percentage per facility type is indicated

2-1 Goal and instruction planning of education/childcare at childcare facilities

The goal of education/childcare is often set in "to develop a healthy body," in particular among daycare centers.

Regardless of the type of facility, the goal of education/childcare is often concerned with play, healthy body, lifestyle habits, or sociability, namely for children "to play freely," "to develop a healthy body," "to acquire basic lifestyle habits" or "to be considerate to others" (Table 2-1-1). In daycare centers where children spend long hours in groups, "to develop a healthy body" and "to be considerate to others" rank in first and second places at both public and private facilities.

Q **Circle up to three that apply in the following items which you especially focus on as goals and/or contents of education/childcare at your facility.**

Table 2-1-1 **Points of focus as the goal of education/childcare** (%)

|	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
To play freely	① 35.3	③ 29.8	③ 32.3	26.4	③ 35.1	27.2
To develop a healthy body	② 32.5	27.3	① 45.8	① 39.8	① 39.9	② 33.7
To acquire basic lifestyle habits	25.7	② 32.1	32.0	③ 34.0	② 37.8	③ 28.4
To become self-reliant	5.4	7.5	5.8	6.3	3.4	7.8
To be exposed to nature	5.9	8.3	8.7	9.7	5.4	10.8
To be interested in various things through play	30.5	24.9	28.6	28.8	24.3	26.6
To take care of friends and get along well	29.2	22.6	23.0	20.7	13.5	17.1
To express thoughts clearly and listen to others carefully	18.5	14.2	14.4	12.6	20.9	10.8
To acquire good social manners	0.0	3.7	0.2	1.8	0.7	2.2
To be considerate to others	28.5	① 35.5	② 39.5	② 35.8	32.4	① 33.9
To acquire thinking skill	③ 32.0	23.2	19.6	21.9	29.1	26.4
To develop tenacity	13.9	9.8	3.9	6.0	7.4	8.1
To learn letters and numbers	0.0	0.8	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.8
To develop international sensibility and become familiar with foreign languages	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.7	2.0	1.8
To develop rich emotions and sensitivity	19.1	23.0	21.4	21.9	23.0	25.7
To express oneself using the five senses	2.1	3.7	3.1	5.0	2.7	4.3
To develop individuality	1.8	4.5	1.2	2.5	1.4	4.0

* Multiple responses allowed (up to three)
* Indicated excluding "others"
* ①-③ are put for the top 3 items among the choices per type of the facility
* Choices earning 20% or more against the parameter of all facilities are shaded dark

Q **Circle all that apply as instruction plans made at your facility.**

Figure 2-1-1 **Making instruction plans**
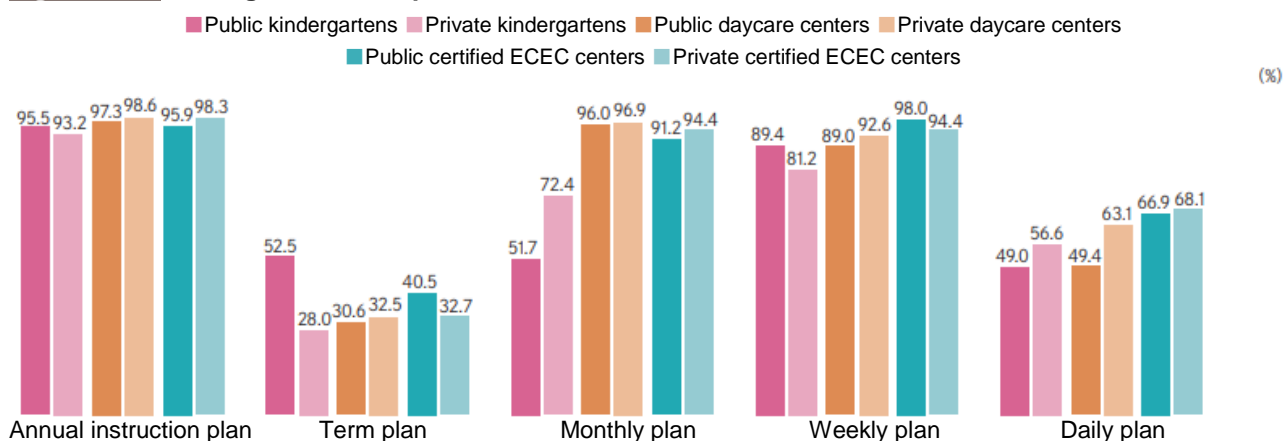
* Multiple responses allowed *Indicated excluding "others"
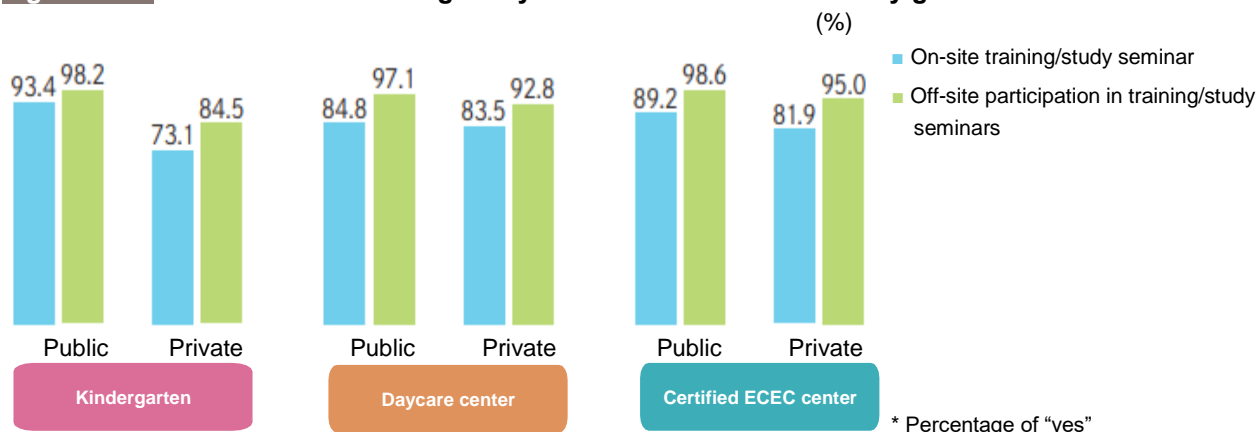
2-2 Response to course of study/guidelines

In compliance with the course of study/guidelines revised in 2018, the structure of childcare curriculum/overall plan has been revised and the childcare reviewed.

In response to the revision of the course of study/guidelines, over 70% of facilities provided opportunities for on-site/off-site training (Fig. 2-2-1), over 50% of facilities reviewed their organization of curriculum/overall plan (Fig. 2-2-2) and reviewed the childcare (Fig. 2-2-3). Approx. 40% of private kindergartens did not review curriculum organization. Regardless of the type of facility, around 80% organized their curriculum/overall plan in anticipation of connection with elementary schools. However, the percentage of joint consideration/plan development of connection curriculum with elementary schools remains at 20 to 40% (Fig. 2-2-4).

Q Has your facility held on-site training/study seminars for "course of study/guidelines"?
Has your facility participated in off-site training/study seminars?

Figure 2-2-1 On-site/off-site training/study seminar for "course of study/guidelines"

(%)

■ On-site training/study seminar
■ Off-site participation in training/study seminars

Kindergarten: Public 93.4 / 98.2, Private 73.1 / 84.5
Daycare center: Public 84.8 / 97.1, Private 83.5 / 92.8
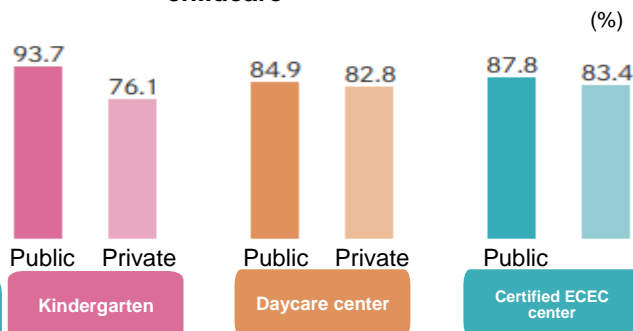Certified ECEC center: Public 89.2 / 98.6, Private 81.9 / 95.0

* Percentage of "yes"

Q Has your facility reviewed its organization of curriculum/overall plan based on the "course of study/guidelines"?

Figure 2-2-2 Review of organization of curriculum/overall plan

(%)

Kindergarten: Public 85.1, Private 59.2
Daycare center: Public 74.4, Private 77.4
Certified ECEC center: Public 85.8, 80.9
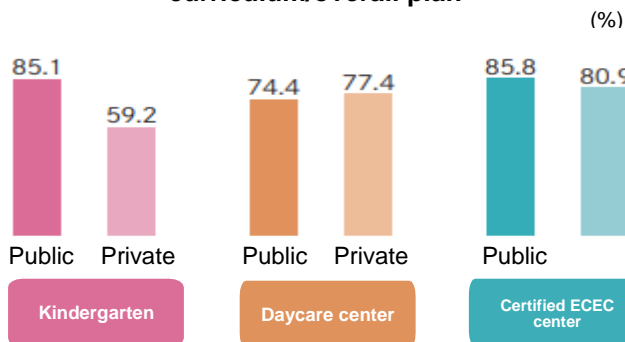
* Percentage of "yes"

Q Does your facility provide opportunities for reviewing childcare among the caregivers in compliance with the "course of study/guidelines"?
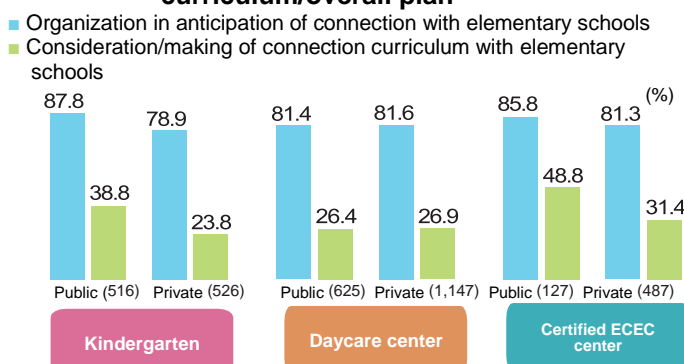
Figure 2-2-3 Opportunities for reviewing childcare

(%)

Kindergarten: Public 93.7, Private 76.1
Daycare center: Public 84.9, Private 82.8
Certified ECEC center: Public 87.8, 83.4

* Percentage of "yes"

Q In reviewing, did you organize the curriculum in anticipation of transition to elementary schools? / Did you jointly consider/make a transitional curriculum with elementary schools (or "do you plan to")?

* Percentage of "yes"
* Only those facilities that have reviewed organization of curriculum/overall plans

Figure 2-2-4 Connection between elementary schools and childcare facilities in reviewing organization of curriculum/overall plan

■ Organization in anticipation of connection with elementary schools
■ Consideration/making of connection curriculum with elementary schools

(%)

Kindergarten: Public (516) 87.8 / 38.8, Private (526) 78.9 / 23.8
Daycare center: Public (625) 81.4 / 26.4, Private (1,147) 81.6 / 26.9
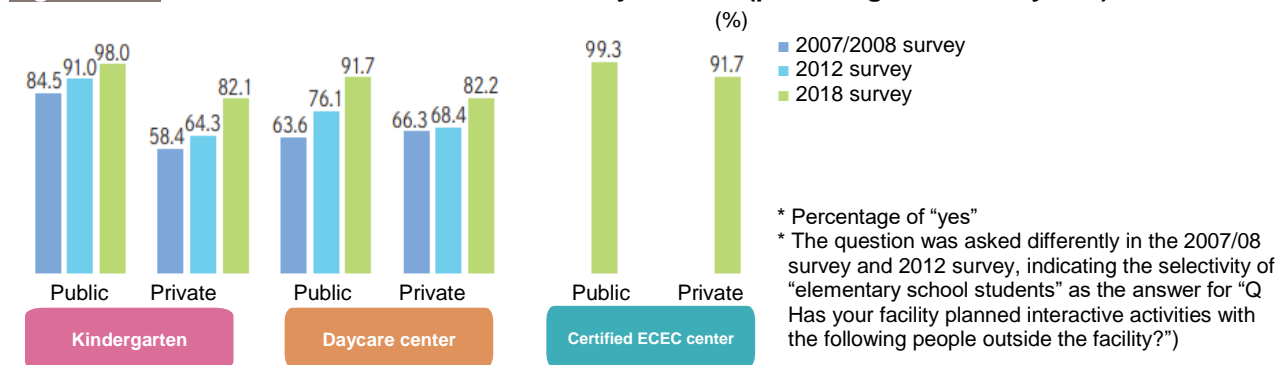Certified ECEC center: Public (127) 85.8 / 48.8, Private (487) 81.3 / 31.4

14

2-3 Communication/collaboration with elementary schools

Interaction/cooperation with elementary schools available at over 80% of facilities, regardless of the facility type

Interacting activities with local elementary schools are available at 98.0% of public kindergartens, 91.7% of public daycare centers, and 99.3% of public certified ECEC centers, indicating availability in almost all regions of Japan (Fig. 2-3-1). In private facilities, 82.1% of private kindergartens, 82.2% of private daycare centers and 91.7% of private certified ECEC centers provide opportunities, indicating active participation. As for the contents of interactions, "children of childcare facilities have tours or class visits to elementary schools" and "children of childcare facilities join in activities with elementary school students" show high percentages regardless of the type of childcare facility (Table 2-3-1). Public facilities are more active in various categories of interactive activity.

Q **Does your facility provide interactive activities with local elementary schools?**

Figure 2-3-1 Interactive activities with elementary schools (percentages over the years)

(%)
- 2007/2008 survey
- 2012 survey
- 2018 survey

* Percentage of "yes"
* The question was asked differently in the 2007/08 survey and 2012 survey, indicating the selectivity of "elementary school students" as the answer for "Q Has your facility planned interactive activities with the following people outside the facility?")

Q **What interactive activities do you provide?**

Table 2-3-1 Contents of interactive activities (%)

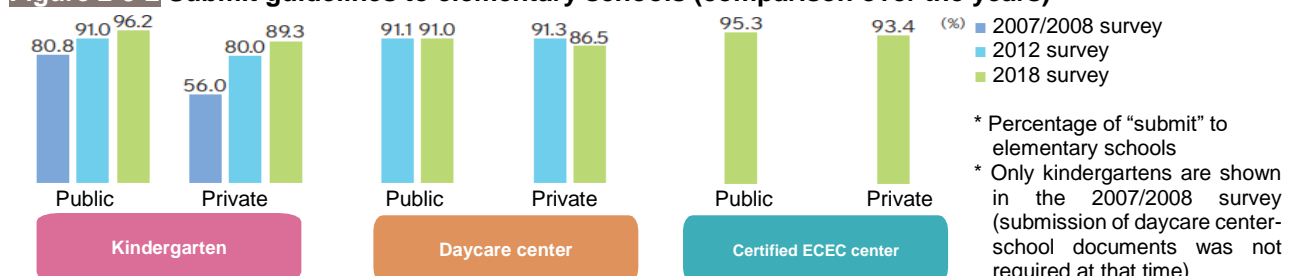|	Kindergarten			Daycare center			Certified ECEC center		
	Public (594)		Private (729)	Public (770)		Private (1,218)	Public (147)		Private (552)
Children of childcare facilities have tours or class visits to elementary schools	81.5	>>	67.4	60.4		64.1	75.5	>	70.5
Children of childcare facilities join in activities with elementary school students	87.2	>>	62.8	69.2	>	61.4	86.4	>>	66.8
Children of childcare facilities see events at elementary schools such as sports day or recitals	52.0	>>	21.9	35.6		38.8	51.7	>>	37.7
Children of childcare facilities participate in events at elementary schools such as sports day or recitals	37.9	>>	20.0	35.1	>	27.4	44.2	>>	29.3
Children of childcare facilities have school lunch at elementary schools	47.8	>>	10.2	13.0		12.6	26.5	>>	10.5
Children of childcare facilities listen to principals or teachers of elementary schools	43.1	>>	16.9	20.5		19.3	35.4	>>	21.4
Elementary school teachers teach children of childcare facilities	10.8	>	5.1	15.5	>	10.0	13.6	>	7.4
Elementary school students see or participate in events of childcare facilities	41.6	>>	26.1	29.7		33.8	43.5	>	34.4
Others	4.7		5.8	9.4		7.6	7.5		6.2

* Multiple responses
* Only those facilities providing interactive activities with elementary schools
* >> and << indicate a difference of 10 points or more, > and < indicate a difference of 5 points or more (less than 10 points)

Q **Copy (or abridged copy) of kindergarten-school documents, daycare center-school documents, certified ECEC center-school documents and kindergarten-daycare integrated type certified ECEC center-school documents**

Figure 2-3-2 Submit guidelines to elementary schools (comparison over the years)
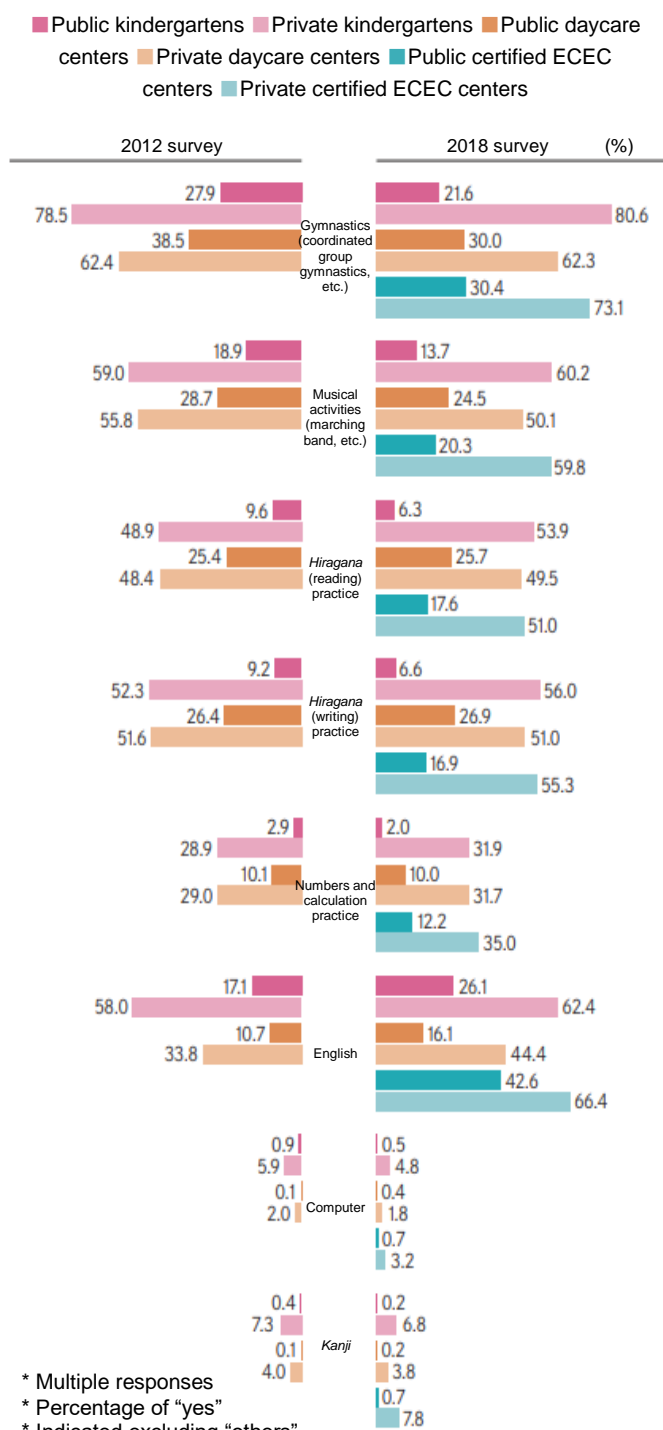

(%)
- 2007/2008 survey
- 2012 survey
- 2018 survey

* Percentage of "submit" to elementary schools
* Only kindergartens are shown in the 2007/2008 survey (submission of daycare center-school documents was not required at that time)

15

2-4 Actual activities during standard childcare hours

Over half of private facilities provide "gymnastics," "musical activities," "*hiragana*" and "English" activities besides integrated activities through play.

During standard childcare hours in private kindergartens and private certified ECEC centers, "gymnastics" is provided at over 70% of facilities, "English" at over 60%, "musical activities" at 60%, and "*hiragana* reading and writing practice" at over 50% of facilities (Fig. 2-4-1). Among the private facilities providing such activities, over 50% of them start "gymnastics" and "English" in 3-year olds classes (Table 2-4-1). "Gymnastics" and "English" are often provided by outsourced instructors (Table 2-4-2).

Q Do you provide the following activities to all the children in the classroom during standard childcare hours in addition to integrated activities through play stipulated in the "course of study/guidelines"?

Figure 2-4-1 **Activities during standard childcare hours (comparison over the years)**

■ Public kindergartens ■ Private kindergartens ■ Public daycare centers ■ Private daycare centers ■ Public certified ECEC centers ■ Private certified ECEC centers

* Multiple responses
* Percentage of "yes"
* Indicated excluding "others"

Table 2-4-1 **Implementation percentage of activities per age group (private facilities only)** (%)

		Kindergarten	Daycare center	Certified ECEC center
		Private	Private	Private
Gymnastics (coordinated group gymnastics, etc.)	3-year olds	70.0	69.0	66.8
	4-year olds	84.6	87.2	85.2
	5-year olds	97.3	95.8	95.5
Musical activities (marching band, etc.)	3-year olds	58.1	56.3	46.1
	4-year olds	73.1	76.4	69.2
	5-year olds	97.4	94.5	94.7
English	3-year olds	61.9	55.4	54.0
	4-year olds	81.9	82.2	82.5
	5-year olds	97.3	95.0	96.8
Hiragana (writing) practice	3-year olds	11.3	9.1	8.7
	4-year olds	35.6	33.7	33.0
	5-year olds	98.0	98.0	97.0

* Multiple responses
* Only those facilities that provide each activity
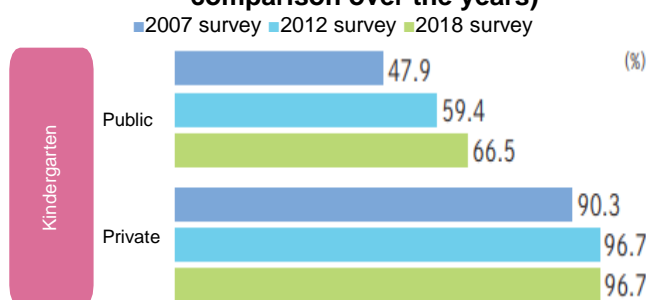* Indicating only the top 4 items of percentages at facilities providing activities for all the children

Table 2-4-2 **Instructors of activities (private facilities only)** (%)

		Kindergarten	Daycare center	Certified ECEC center
		Private	Private	Private
Gymnastics (coordinated group gymnastics, etc.)	Outsourced instructors	81.8	72.2	79.8
	Caregivers of the facility	40.6	41.4	38.9
Musical activities (marching band, etc.)	Outsourced instructors	40.0	40.0	44.2
	Caregivers of the facility	76.6	70.9	73.9
English	Outsourced instructors	88.6	88.6	91.0
	Caregivers of the facility	19.9	15.1	15.3
Hiragana (writing) practice	Outsourced instructors	9.3	11.5	15.0
	Caregivers of the facility	89.3	86.2	85.6

* Multiple responses
* Only those facilities that provide each activity
* Indicating only the top 4 items of percentages at facilities providing activities for all the children

2-5 Actual circumstances of extended childcare (kindergartens)

Extended childcare is available at 66.5% of public kindergartens and 96.7% of private kindergartens. Among the available facilities, 77.7% of public kindergartens and 94.4% of private kindergartens provide extended childcare "every weekday."

Among the facilities providing extended childcare, 64.9% of public kindergartens and 96.4% of private kindergartens implement extended childcare after standard childcare (afternoon) (Fig. 2.5.1). The average closing time of private kindergartens is 17:46 (Table 2-5-1). To accept a child in extended childcare, 49.4% of public kindergartens and 70.4% of private kindergartens do not include parents' being in employment as a requirement (figures/tables omitted). 58.3% of public kindergartens make activity plans for extended childcare, while such plan making remains at 33.9% in private kindergartens (Fig. 2-5-3). Major activities include "free play," "games with a small number of players," "reading picture books and/or *kamishibai* (story telling with picture cards)" or "snack" (Table 2-5-2). "Securing caregivers" is an issue at both public and private facilities to provide extended childcare (Table 2-5-3).

Q Is extended care available at your facility?

Figure 2-5-1 Extended childcare (kindergartens, comparison over the years)

■2007 survey ■2012 survey ■2018 survey

Public: 47.9, 59.4, 66.5
Private: 90.3, 96.7, 96.7

* Percentage of "available"

Figure 2-5-2 Day(s) of extended childcare

■ Public kindergartens (403) ■ Private kindergartens (859)

Every weekday: 77.7 / 94.4
Saturdays: 8.9 / 17.1
During long vacations: 39.7 / 65.7
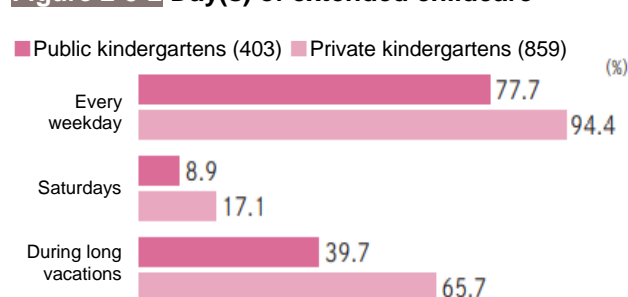
* Multiple responses
* Only the facilities providing extended childcare
* Only 3 items are shown from 7 items including "others"

Table2-5-1 Average starting time and closing time of extended childcare

		Available (%)	Average starting time of childcare in the morning	Average closing time of childcare in the afternoon
Before standard childcare (morning)	Public	19.5	7:42	–
	Private	64.6	7:43	–
After standard childcare (afternoon)	Public	64.9	–	16:58
	Private	96.4	–	17:46

* Only the facilities providing extended childcare
* Compiled excluding "no response" or "unknown"

Figure 2-5-3 Making plans concerning activity contents of extended childcare

Yes / No / No response, unknown

Public (403): 58.3 / 39.0 / 2.7
Private (859): 33.9 / 64.6 / 1.5
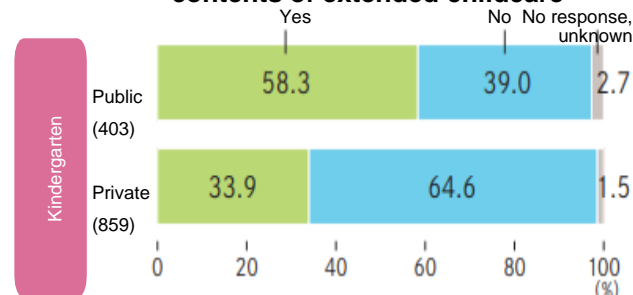
* Only the facilities providing extended childcare

Table 2-5-2 Activity contents of extended childcare

	Kindergarten	
(%)	Public (403)	Private (859)
Free play	95.5	98.1
Games with a small number of players (Card games and board games, etc.)	79.2	73.5
Reading picture books and/or *kamishibai* (story telling with picture cards)	75.9	78.5
Snack	74.2	84.9
Outside activity	63.8	66.1
Arts and crafts	60.5	64.5
Nap	42.2	23.5
Watching videos/DVDs	40.0	43.8
Making snack	8.9	12.9
Worksheets	2.7	4.1
Lessons	0.0	5.4
Computer	0.0	0.7
Others	1.5	1.9

* Multiple responses
* Only the facilities providing extended childcare
* Showing answers of public kindergartens in descending order

Table 2-5-3 Issues of extended childcare

	Kindergarten	
(%)	Public (403)	Private (859)
Securing caregivers	70.0	67.4
Enriching contents of childcare	36.7	30.8
Securing places for extended childcare	32.0	31.8
Improving expertise of caregivers	31.0	18.9
Enrich teaching material, etc.	29.5	27.5
Response to parents	23.3	18.7
Making plans concerning activity contents	18.6	19.8
Financing operation expense	12.7	37.7
Others	2.7	3.1

* Multiple responses
* Only the facilities providing extended childcare
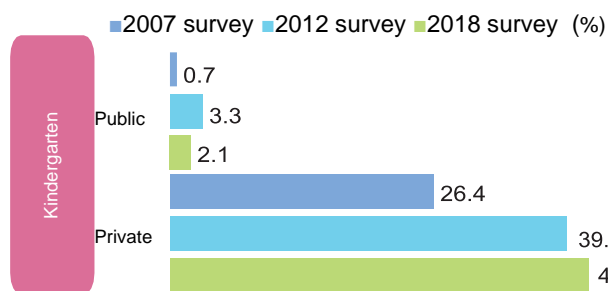* Showing answers of public kindergartens in descending order

2-6 Actual circumstances of childcare for two-year olds (kindergartens)

41.9% of private kindergartens accept 2-year olds, 56.2% of which accept them "every weekday"

41.9% of private kindergartens accept 2-year olds, an increase of 15.5% compared with the percentage in the 2007 survey (26.4%) (Fig. 2-6-1). 32.3% of kindergartens that are not currently accepting are planning or contemplating to accept 2-year olds in the future (Fig. 2-6-2). 53.2% of currently accepting kindergartens have "classrooms exclusively for 2-year olds" (Fig. 2-6-3). 56.2% of currently accepting kindergartens accept 2-year olds "every weekday" (Fig. 2-6-4). The average capacity fill-rate of 2-year olds is 75.7% (Table 2-6-1).

Q Does your facility accept 2-year olds?

Figure 2-6-1 Accepting 2-year olds

■2007 survey ■2012 survey ■2018 survey (%)

Kindergarten

Public — 0.7 / 3.3 / 2.1

Private — 26.4 / 39.7 / 41.

* % of "Yes"

Figure 2-6-2 Plan to accept 2-year olds in the future

Planning / Considering / No plans to accept / No response, unknown

Public (557): 77.0 | 20.1

Private (480): 0.7 / 2.2 | 8.3 | 24.0 | 50.2 | 17.5
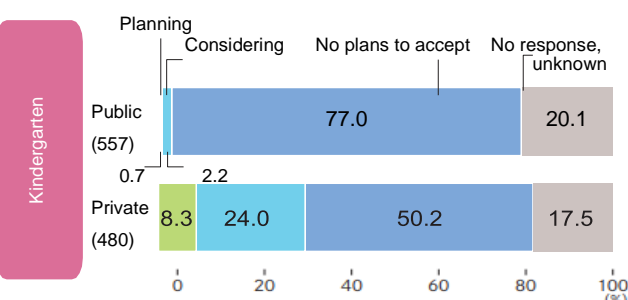
* Only the facilities that are "not currently accepting" 2-year olds

Figure 2-6-3 Classrooms for 2-year olds (private kindergartens)

(%)

No response, unknown 10.5
Others 2.4
Classrooms exclusively for 3-year olds 24.2
Classrooms for 3-year olds 9.7
Classrooms for only 2-year olds 53.2
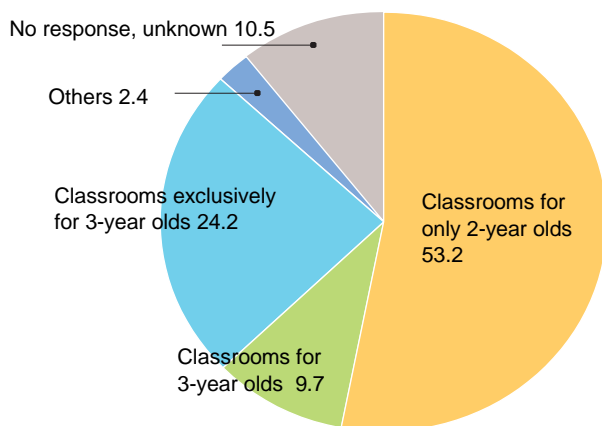
* Only the private kindergartens that are accepting 2-year olds (372)

Figure 2-6-4 Acceptance frequency of 2-year olds (private kindergartens)

(%)

No response, unknown 9.7
Others 4.6
Several times a year 1.1
1-3 days a month 5.1
1-2 days a week 15.9
3-4 days a week 7.5
Every weekday 56.2
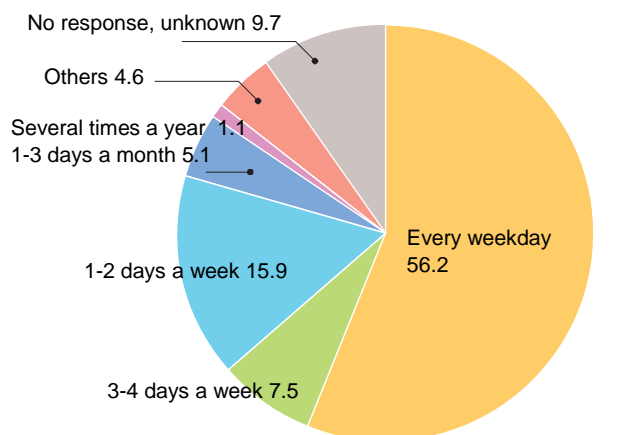
* Only the private kindergartens that are accepting 2-year olds (372)

Table 2-6-1 Number of accepted 2-year olds and capacity fill-rate (private kindergartens)

Average acceptance capacity of 2-year olds (320)	21.4
Average number of actually accepted 2-year olds (345)	16.5
Average capacity fill-rate	75.7%

* Only the kindergartens that indicated capacity and actually accepted numbers among the private kindergartens accepting 2-year olds

3-1 Issues in actual childcare practice/facility operation

"Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers" ranks highly among the issues of facilities, regardless of the facility type.

When asked about issues of childcare practice and facility operation, about half of them answered "very applicable" to "keeping and improving the quality of caregivers" (Table 3-1-1). All the types of the facilities picked this item as one of the top 3 among 20 items. Also over 30% in all the facility types chose ("very applicable)" "settling and securing caregivers," "improving treatment of caregivers" and "enriching contents and methods of childcare," indicating these are issues common to the facilities (Table 3-1-2).

Q   **Questions about issues of childcare practice and operation at your facility**

Table 3-1-1 **Issues of childcare practice and operation at your facility (top 5 per facility type)**

		No.1		No.2		No.3		No.4		No.5	
Kindergarten	Public	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	52.0	Acquiring new children * same percentage as No.3	47.2	Enriching contents and methods of childcare * same percentage as No.2	47.2	Dealing with children with disability, children with special needs	46.9	Maintaining adequate amount of children	42.9
	Private	Improving treatment of caregivers	49.4	Settling and securing caregivers	46.5	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	46.3	Acquiring new children	45.3	Securing budget (grant, childcare fee, etc.)	43.4
Daycare center	Public	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	52.3	Settling and securing caregivers	47.0	Enriching facility and equipment	44.3	Improving treatment of caregivers	43.1	Improving management leadership	40.0
	Private	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	48.9	Settling and securing caregivers	47.2	Improving treatment of caregivers	45.0	Improving management leadership	41.7	Enriching contents and methods of childcare	37.1
Certified ECEC center	Public	Settling and securing caregivers	52.0	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	50.7	Improving treatment of caregivers	45.9	Enriching contents and methods of childcare	35.8	Enriching facility and equipment	31.1
	Private	Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	52.8	Settling and securing caregivers	51.3	Improving treatment of caregivers	43.9	Improving management leadership	39.5	Enriching contents and methods of childcare	38.4

* % of "very applicable"   * Same items in the same color   * Only the top 5 are shown per facility type

Table 3-1-2 **Issues of childcare practice and facility operation**

	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Keeping and improving the quality of caregivers	52.0	46.3	52.3	48.9	50.7	52.8
Acquiring new children	47.2	45.3	4.8	17.4	7.4	26.4
Enriching contents and methods of childcare	47.2	35.8	39.3	37.1	35.8	38.4
Dealing with children with disability, children with special needs	46.9	33.7	38.5	28.6	29.1	31.4
Maintaining adequate amount of children	42.9	42.2	13.2	20.5	15.5	27.6
Settling and securing caregivers	39.8	46.5	47.0	47.2	52.0	51.3
Enriching facility and equipment	39.8	33.2	44.3	27.9	31.1	27.4
Making importance of early childhood education/childcare known	39.6	31.8	24.6	23.8	20.9	27.2
Improving management leadership	39.1	36.3	40.0	41.7	27.7	39.5
Improving treatment of caregivers	38.4	49.4	43.1	45.0	45.9	43.9
Cooperation with elementary schools	35.8	16.0	19.4	17.8	26.4	24.9
Securing budget (grant, childcare fee, etc.)	35.3	43.4	25.1	30.5	24.3	33.4
Measures for safety, crime prevention	33.0	24.7	32.9	21.3	27.7	24.1
Guaranteeing training/opportunity for caregiver development	29.4	26.9	31.0	31.1	27.7	31.9
Cooperation, collaboration, support for parents	25.2	22.5	26.1	21.5	22.3	23.6
Contents of extended care (meals, environment, number of staff, etc.)	24.4	23.0	11.9	11.3	14.9	16.9
Cooperation with local agencies	18.3	9.1	15.4	13.9	14.2	17.4
Utilization of human resources in the local community	16.0	7.3	10.7	11.7	10.8	14.6
Enrichment of childrearing support activities	15.2	13.0	10.8	11.8	11.5	17.4
Implementation of self-evaluation, self-inspection	13.0	15.8	13.1	17.1	6.8	19.1

* % of "very applicable" * Showing answers of public kindergartens in descending order
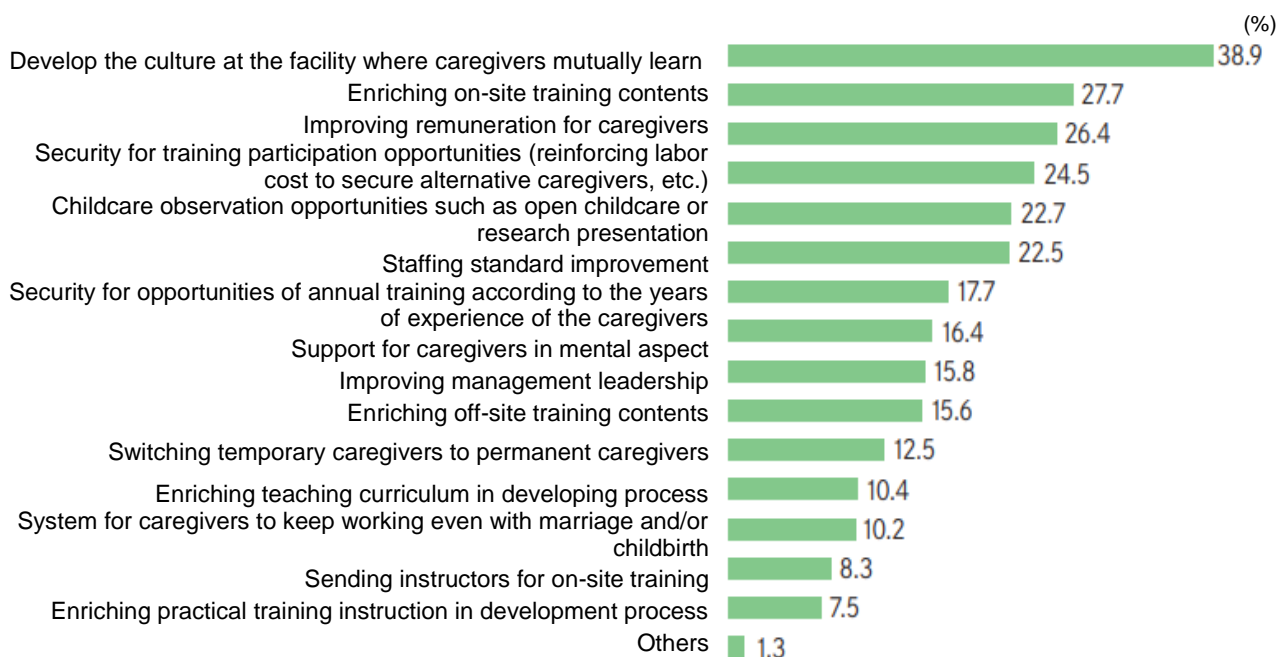* Red numbers are items scoring 50 to 59%, green 40 to 49%, and blue 30 to 39%

3-2 Requirements to improve the quality of teachers/caregivers

When asked about issues of improving the quality of teachers/caregivers, approx. 40% chose "develop a culture at the facility where caregivers learn from each other"

Facilities were asked to choose three items among 16 as necessary to improve teacher/caregiver quality. The top 3 items were "developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility" (38.9%), "enriching on-site training contents" (27.7%) and "improving remuneration for caregivers" (26.4%) (Fig. 3-2-1). Among public kindergartens, No. 1 was "childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation" with 42.6%, while "staffing standard improvement" with 33.6% was No. 1 at public daycare centers (Table 3-2-1). Among private facilities, "improving remuneration for caregivers" tended to be higher than that among public facilities.

Q Choose up to three what you think is necessary in order to improve the quality of caregivers at your facility

Figure 3-2-1 What is necessary in order to improve the quality of caregivers (all facilities)

(%)

Item	%
Develop the culture at the facility where caregivers mutually learn	38.9
Enriching on-site training contents	27.7
Improving remuneration for caregivers	26.4
Security for training participation opportunities (reinforcing labor cost to secure alternative caregivers, etc.)	24.5
Childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation	22.7
Staffing standard improvement	22.5
Security for opportunities of annual training according to the years of experience of the caregivers	17.7
Support for caregivers in mental aspect	16.4
Improving management leadership	15.8
Enriching off-site training contents	15.6
Switching temporary caregivers to permanent caregivers	12.5
Enriching teaching curriculum in developing process	10.4
System for caregivers to keep working even with marriage and/or childbirth	10.2
Sending instructors for on-site training	8.3
Enriching practical training instruction in development process	7.5
Others	1.3

* Multiple choices (up to three)

Table 3-2-1 What is necessary in order to improve the quality of caregivers (top 5 items per facility type)　(%)

		No.1		No.2		No.3		No.4		No.5	
Kindergarten	Public	Childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation	42.6	Enriching on-site training contents	38.6	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	30.7	Security for training participation opportunities	24.3	Security for opportunities of annual training according to the years of experience of the caregivers	22.8
	Private	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	39.0	Improving remuneration for caregivers	36.5	Enriching on-site training contents	27.8	Childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation	20.4	Security for training participation opportunities	20.4
Daycare center	Public	Staffing standard improvement	33.6	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	32.9	Switching temporary caregivers to permanent caregivers	30.7	Enriching on-site training contents	27.3	Security for training participation opportunities	25.6
	Private	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	42.5	Improving remuneration for caregivers	32.3	Security for training participation opportunities	25.3	Staffing standard improvement	25.3	Enriching on-site training contents	23.5
Certified ECEC center	Public	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	39.2	Childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation	31.1	Enriching on-site training contents	28.4	Staffing standard improvement	27.0	Security for training participation opportunities	26.4
	Private	Developing the culture of caregivers mutually learning at the facility	47.0	Enriching on-site training contents	27.2	Security for training participation opportunities	26.9	Improving remuneration for caregivers	24.4	Childcare observation opportunities such as open childcare or research presentation	20.8

* Multiple choices (up to three) * Same items in the same color * Top 5 items per facility type are indicated among 16 including "other"

3-3 Training required for caregivers

Regarding the training necessary for caregivers, approximately 70 to 80% of facilities chose "understanding and care for children with special needs," regardless of facility type

When asked about the particular type of training that is necessary for caregivers, approximately 70 to 80% of facilities ranked "understanding and care for children with special needs" highest (Table 3-3-1), regardless of facility type. Training concerning understanding of young children or childcare practice such as "understanding of growth/development of children," "practice seminar" or "contents and methods of caring infants and young children" ranked highly. Regardless of facility type, "understanding and childcare for children with special needs" and "practice seminar" ranked higher by over 5 points at public facilities than among private facilities, while "sickness of children and treatment" ranked higher by over 5 points in private facilities (Table 3-3-2).

Q **What do you think are particularly necessary training contents for caregivers at your facility? Circle all that apply.**

Table 3-3-1 **Training contents considered particularly necessary for caregivers (top 5 items per facility type)** (%)

		No.1		No.2		No.3		No.4		No.5	
Kindergarten	Public	Understanding and care for children with special needs	89.4	Collaboration/ connection with elementary schools	74.4	Understanding for growth and development of children	69.1	Practice seminar (exercise play, expressive activity, nature experience, etc.)	66.0	Communication skills with parents	56.6
	Private	Understanding and care for children with special needs	81.5	Understanding for growth and development of children	68.2	Practice seminar (exercise play, expressive activity, nature experience, etc.)	58.1	Communication skills with parents	52.3	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	50.1
Daycare center	Public	Understanding and care for children with special needs	86.4	Contents and methods of caring for infants (0 to 2-year olds)	71.1	Understanding for growth and development of children	71.0	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	68.5	Practice seminar (exercise play, expressive activity, nature experience, etc.)	63.3
	Private	Understanding and care for children with special needs	78.8	Contents and methods of caring for infants (0 to 2-year olds)	76.7	Understanding for growth and development of children	74.7	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	74.3	Communication skills with parents	63.9
Certified ECEC center	Public	Understanding and care for children with special needs	89.9	Understanding for growth and development of children	77.0	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	75.0	Contents and methods of caring for infants (0 to 2-year olds)	70.9	Collaboration/ connection with elementary schools	68.2
	Private	Understanding and care for children with special needs	80.9	Contents and methods of caring for infants (0 to 2-year olds)	73.9	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	71.3	Understanding for growth and development of children	70.8	Communication skills with parents	61.8

* Multiple responses * Same items in the same color * Top 5 items per facility type are indicated among 21 including "other"

Table 3-3-2 **Training contents considered especially necessary for caregivers** (%)

		Kindergarten			Daycare center			Certified ECEC center		
		Public		Private	Public		Private	Public		Private
Concerning facility operation	Collaboration/connection with elementary schools	74.4	>>	44.3	47.9		45.2	68.2	>>	54.2
	Emergency procedure	48.8		44.7	56.4		54.3	54.1		51.0
	Administration for early childhood education and care, national policy	45.2	>>	22.3	24.4		29.3	37.8	>	28.4
	Collaboration and integration between kindergartens and daycare centers	27.7	>>	13.1	18.7		14.9	25.0	>	17.6
	Skills to use digital media	11.4		9.7	6.1		10.8	10.1		10.5
Concerning understanding young children and childcare practice	Understanding and childcare for children with special needs	89.4	>	81.5	86.4	>	78.8	89.9	>	80.9
	Understanding for growth and development of children	69.1		68.2	71.0		74.7	77.0	>	70.8
	Practice seminar (exercise play, expressive activity, nature experience, etc.)	66.0	>	58.1	63.3	>	57.3	61.5	>	54.3
	Contents and methods of childcare for young children (3 to 5-year olds)	55.0		50.1	68.5	<	74.3	75.0		71.3
	Instruction plan making	49.5	>>	37.3	49.4		49.8	60.8	>>	47.7
	Childcare record, documentation	48.3	>>	28.8	36.2		34.8	48.6		44.9
	Describing childcare facility-school documents	41.3		39.2	53.7		50.4	55.4		56.0
	Human rights of children	33.2	>>	12.7	33.8		36.8	31.1		30.2
	Sickness of children and treatment	24.6	<	34.3	43.1	<	49.6	41.2	<	46.8
	Self-evaluation	23.4		18.8	28.6	<	35.1	29.1		31.9
	Contents and methods of caring for infants (0 to 2-year olds)	6.1	<	11.3	71.1	<	76.7	70.9		73.9
Concerning parents and local community	Communication skills with parents	56.6		52.3	62.4		63.9	58.8		61.8
	Support for parents in childrearing	39.1	>	32.1	53.6		53.1	50.7		50.3
	Response to psychological issues of parents	33.8		36.6	36.5	<	41.6	38.5		38.4
	Collaboration with the local community and use of local resources	23.9	>>	11.0	17.4	<	22.4	27.7		25.2

* Multiple responses * Showing answers of public kindergartens in descending order per category * Red numbers are items scoring 50% or more, green 40 to 49%, and blue 30 to 39% * >> and << indicates a difference of 10 points or more, > and < indicates a difference of 5 points or more (less than 10 points)

3-4 Training frequency in and out of the facilities, intention for online training

Frequency of on-site training varies among facility types. More than half of facilities want to introduce online training "depending on contents or program"

66% of public kindergartens, 50.2% of public daycare centers and 59.4% of public certified ECEC centers provide on-site training "weekly" or "once or twice a month." The frequency tends to be higher than that among private facilities (Fig. 3-4-1). On the other hand, fewer than 10% of facilities provide "no training," and most facilities provide training at least "several times a year." "Several times a year" ranked highest in the frequency of participation in off-site training and joint training among kindergarten/daycare centers/elementary schools, regardless of facility type (Fig. 3-4-2, 3-4-3). As for intention for online training, between 50% and 70% answered "want to introduce it, depending on the contents/program," indicating a positive attitude (Fig. 3-4-4).

Q What is the frequency of on-site training (training held at your facility) in a year? Circle the closest figure

Figure 3-4-1 Frequency of on-site training
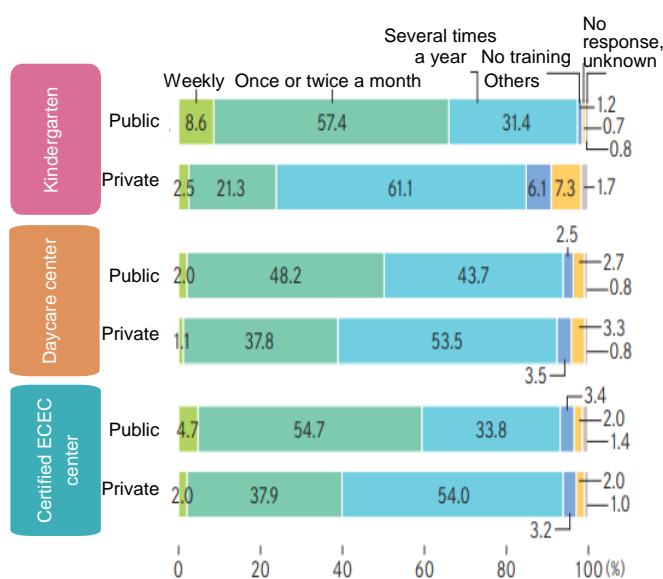
Q What is the frequency of off-site training your caregivers receive per person in a year? Circle the closest figure

Figure 3-4-2 Frequency of participation in off-site training
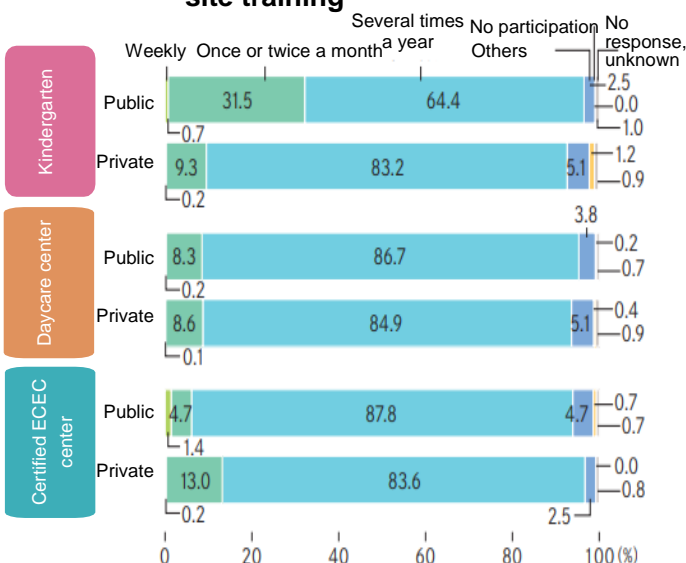
Q How often do the caregivers at your facility participate in joint training among kindergarten/daycare centers/elementary schools organized by administration, other facilities, or associated organizations?

Figure 3-4-3 Frequency of participation in joint training among kindergartens/daycare centers/elementary schools?
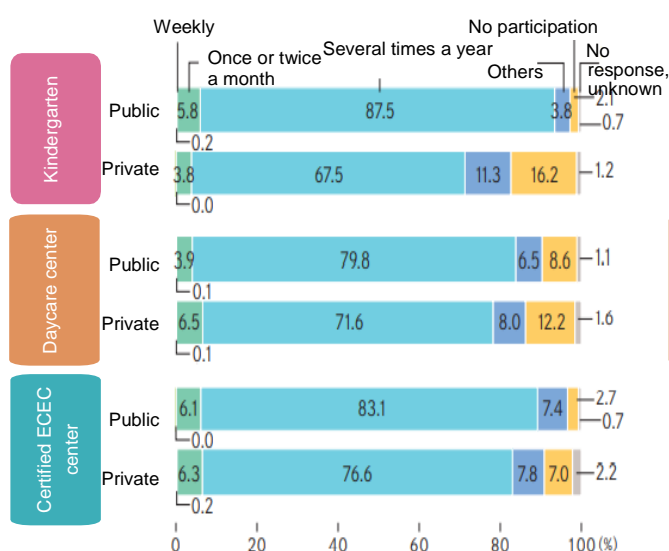
Q Do you want to introduce online training using the Internet if available?

**Figure 3-4-4** Intention for online training

22
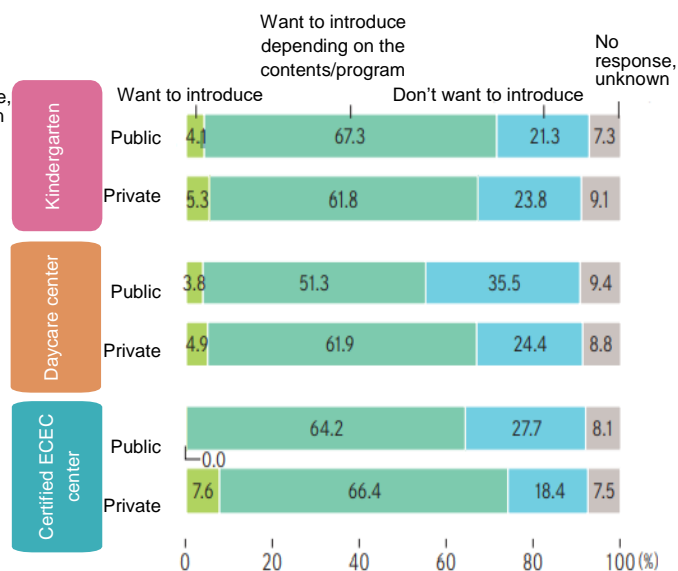
4-1 Details/objects for childrearing support activities

60% to 90% of facilities provide "childrearing consultation" or "open playground" as childrearing support activity, regardless of facility type

As childrearing support activities, "childrearing consultation," "open playground" and "providing information on childrearing" are often provided. "Temporary childcare" is provided at nearly 70 % of certified ECEC centers and "parent-child trial visit (for preschool children)" is provided at more than 70% of private kindergartens (Fig. 4-1-1). For parents of enrolled children, "childrearing consultation," "providing information on childrearing" and "seminar and/or lecture on childrearing" score highly, while for parents in the local community, "open playground," "childrearing consultation" (daycare centers, certified ECEC centers), "parent-child trial visit (for preschool children)" (kindergartens) also score highly (Table 4-1-1).

Q **Does your facility provide the following childrearing support activities?**

Figure 4-1-1 **Contents of childrearing support activities provided at the facility**

■ Public kindergartens ■ Private kindergartens ■ Public daycare centers ■ Private daycare centers
■ Public certified ECEC centers ■ Private certified ECEC centers
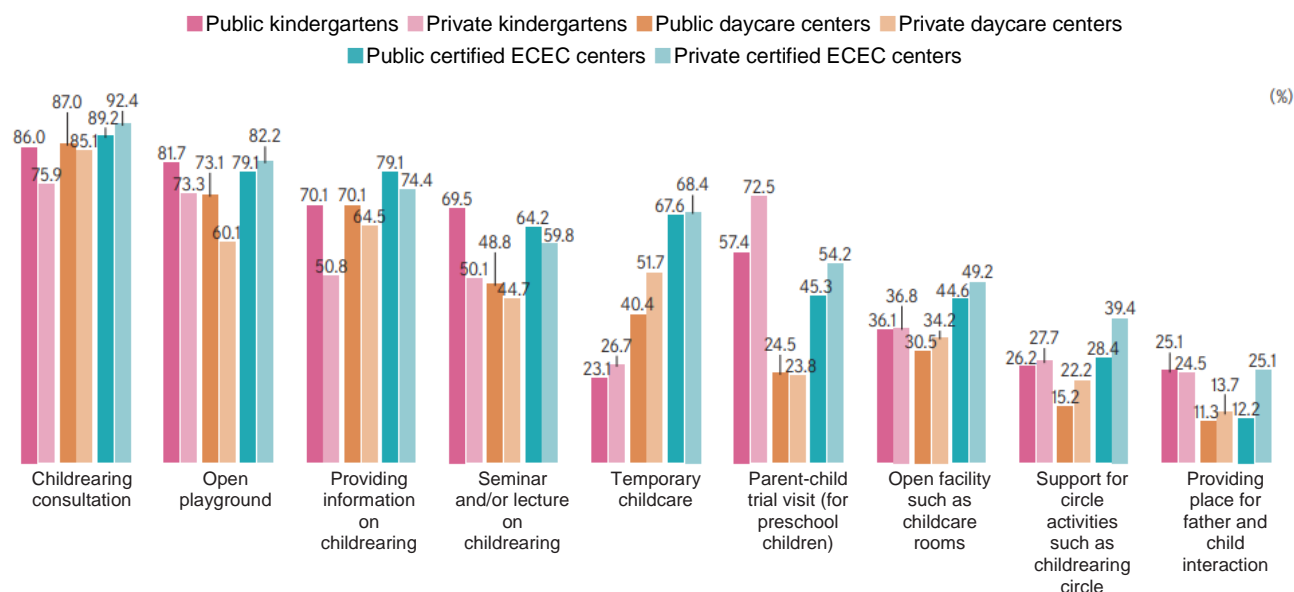
* Multiple responses
* Percentage of answers of providing either or both "parents of enrolled children" and "parents in the local community"

Table 4-1-1 **Targets of childrearing support activities provided at the facility** (%)

		Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
		Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Childrearing consultation	Parents of enrolled children	**83.0**	**70.4**	**81.0**	**76.7**	**81.1**	**79.9**
	Parents in the local community	38.3	33.8	**50.4**	**52.6**	**60.8**	**70.9**
Open playground	Parents of enrolled children	**72.1**	46.7	26.5	21.8	41.9	42.0
	Parents in the local community	**51.5**	**59.0**	**68.6**	**55.9**	**70.3**	**73.9**
Open facility such as childcare rooms	Parents of enrolled children	24.9	23.4	10.5	14.1	16.2	25.7
	Parents in the local community	25.9	25.7	27.4	27.5	41.9	38.9
Providing place for father and child interaction	Parents of enrolled children	24.8	22.7	9.2	10.5	9.5	20.3
	Parents in the local community	2.0	3.8	3.6	5.5	7.4	8.8
Support for circle activities such as childrearing circle	Parents of enrolled children	17.3	18.8	3.6	6.6	9.5	18.8
	Parents in the local community	15.3	18.6	14.2	19.9	25.0	33.7
Providing information on childrearing	Parents of enrolled children	**67.3**	44.6	**65.2**	**54.6**	**68.2**	**61.5**
	Parents in the local community	28.1	24.8	35.5	36.4	42.6	**52.5**
Seminar and/or lecture on childrearing	Parents of enrolled children	**67.7**	46.8	41.1	34.0	**50.0**	46.3
	Parents in the local community	16.0	18.0	17.9	25.1	31.1	38.0
Temporary childcare	Parents of enrolled children	22.3	22.9	10.6	14.2	32.4	33.4
	Parents in the local community	1.2	8.6	36.5	47.3	**57.4**	**59.6**
Parent-child trial visit (for preschool children)	Parents of enrolled children	26.6	38.9	10.5	12.0	23.6	26.1
	Parents in the local community	**50.2**	**61.1**	18.1	15.2	36.5	44.4

* Multiple responses
* Computed per facility type against the parameter of all facilities
* Red numbers are items scoring 70% or more, green 60% to 70%, and blue 50% to 60%

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4-2 How to comprehend the requests of parents for childcare facilities

Facilities think parents expect them to "provide children with experiences unavailable at home" and to "inform them how their children are doing at the facility," regardless of facility type

The top 5 of what facilities think parents expect from them are to "provide children with experiences unavailable at home," "inform them how their children are doing at the facility," "teach children social skills," "teach children good daily habits", and "teach children rules of communal life" (Table 4-2-1). Facilities assume that "more opportunities for learning letters and numbers," and "extra-curricular lessons after standard childcare hours" are around 10% or less (Table 4-2-2).

Q **What do you think parents of children enrolled at your facility expect from the facility? Please answer the level of expectation regardless of availability at your facility.**

Table 4-2-1 **Expectation of parents viewed by the facility (top 5 items per facility type)** (%)

		No.1		No.2		No.3		No.4		No.5	
Kindergarten	Public	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	71.6	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	71.3	Teach children social skills	69.3	Teach children good lifestyle habits	63.5	Teach children rules of communal life	63.0
	Private	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	63.4	Teach children social skills	57.8	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	57.0	Teach children good lifestyle habits	54.1	Teach children rules of communal life	50.7
Daycare center	Public	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	56.7	Teach children good lifestyle habits	54.9	Teach children social skills	50.7	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	44.8	Teach children rules of communal life	38.8
	Private	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	56.8	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	54.1	Teach children good lifestyle habits	51.1	Teach children social skills	46.0	Teach children rules of communal life	36.7
Certified ECEC center	Public	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	66.2	Teach children good lifestyle habits	58.8	Teach children social skills	58.1	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	54.1	Teach children rules of communal life	44.6
	Private	Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	62.1	Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	60.3	Teach children good lifestyle habits	53.8	Teach children social skills	50.2	Teach children rules of communal life	42.0

* Percentage of "highly expecting"
* Same items in the same color
* Top 5 items per facility type are indicated among 18

Table 4-2-2 **Expectation of parents viewed by the facility** (%)

	Kindergarten		Daycare center		Certified ECEC center	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Provide children with experiences unavailable at home	71.6	63.4	44.8	54.1	54.1	62.1
Inform them how their children are doing at the facility	71.3	57.0	56.7	56.8	66.2	60.3
Teach children social skills	69.3	57.8	50.7	46.0	58.1	50.2
Teach children good lifestyle habits	63.5	54.1	54.9	51.1	58.8	53.8
Teach children rules of communal life	63.0	50.7	38.8	36.7	44.6	42.0
Want to communicate with teachers/caregivers	37.1	23.9	23.1	23.6	23.6	25.4
Increase opportunity for free play	32.5	30.4	16.4	20.3	16.9	22.4
Teach them how to deal with children (how to praise, scold)	20.8	12.8	14.4	16.3	15.5	14.6
Increase security	20.8	18.4	11.7	13.7	12.8	16.4
Extend childcare hours	18.8	9.0	7.9	8.4	10.1	9.3
Make childrearing consultation available	18.8	12.4	11.8	14.7	16.2	15.0
Provide temporary care when family member is sick	11.7	10.9	19.0	23.3	25.0	18.8
Support interaction among parents	11.6	8.0	6.0	8.2	7.4	9.1
Provide opportunity to experience English	3.8	14.8	2.7	12.3	6.8	16.9
Let parents participate in the facility operation	3.8	0.9	1.4	3.3	4.7	3.3
Provide childcare for sick children	3.0	4.8	16.1	19.8	20.9	15.0
Increase opportunity for learning letters and numbers	2.6	7.8	3.6	10.9	5.4	11.1
Provide extra-curricular lessons after standard childcare hours	1.2	5.0	0.2	2.2	2.0	4.7

* Percentage of "highly expecting"
* Showing answers of public kindergartens in descending order
* Red numbers are items scoring 70% to 80%, green 60% to 70%, and blue 50% to 60%

4-3 Communication methods to parents

Approximately 80 to 90% of facilities provide "exchange at entering/leaving time," "class observation" and "individual parent-teacher conference" regardless of facility type

As for measures to notify parents about facility information and how their children are doing, "exchange at entering/leaving time," "class observation," "individual parent-teacher conference," and "letters from the facility" score high percentages. "Paper parent-teacher notebook" is also used for younger children. "Facility website" scores highly among private facilities (Fig. 4-3-1). "Individual parent-teacher conference" scored higher than it did in 2012, while "paper parent-teacher" is decreasing among 3- to 5-year olds (Table 4-3-1). Though not indicated in the figure, "SNS" and "electronic parent-teacher notebook (application)" score lower than 10% at all facilities.

Q **At your facility, how do you notify parents about facility information and how their children are doing?**

Figure 4-3-1 **Measures for communicating information to parents**
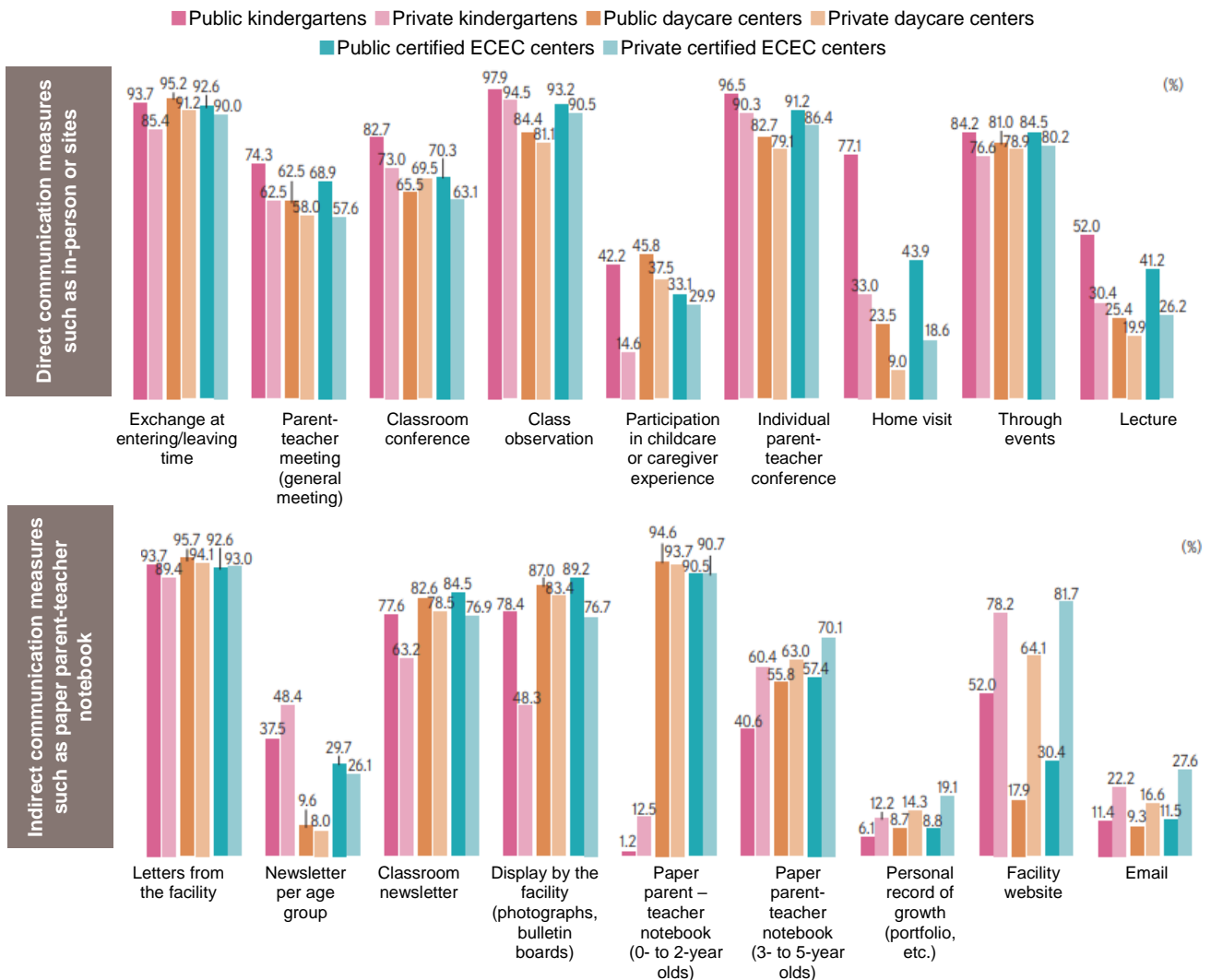
* Multiple responses
* 18 items are indicated among 21

Table 4-3-1 **Measures for communicating information to parents (comparison over the years)** (%)

	Kindergarten				Daycare center			
	Public		Private		Public		Private	
	2012		2018	2012		2018	2012		2018	2012		2018
Individual parent-teacher conference	90.4	<	96.5	84.5	<	90.3	70.2	<<	82.7	71.3	<	79.1
Display by the facility (photographs, posters)	69.1	<	78.4	48.9		48.3	79.3	<	87.0	84.5		83.4
Facility website	44.7	<	52.0	78.3		78.2	15.1		17.9	52.8	<<	64.1
Email	4.4	<	11.4	18.5		22.2	3.1	<	9.3	12.1		16.6
Paper parent-teacher notebook (3- to 5-year olds)	46.1	>	40.6	67.3	>	60.4	60.9	>	55.8	71.1	>	63.0
Home visits	75.7		77.1	45.2	>>	33.0	25.5		23.5	14.5	>	9.0

* Multiple responses allowed
* Certified ECEC centers are excluded because comparison with 2012 was unavailable
* 6 items out of 21 with significant changes are indicated
* >> and << indicates a difference of 10 points or more, > and< indicates a difference of 5 points or more (less than 10 points)

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Actual circumstances of childcare seen from this survey

Takashi Muto, Research Professor, Shiraume Gakuen University Graduate School

This study investigated the actual circumstances of kindergartens, daycare centers and certified ECEC centers, from national surveys. The first survey was conducted in 2007/2008, the second one in 2012, and this third one in November 2018, which was a full-scale survey held at the time when the Comprehensive Support System for Children and Child-rearing took root and certified ECEC centers became established. Another important point is that it was held prior to 2019 when early childhood education and care became free of charge later that year. The trend of the times was clearly indicated in the results of this survey. I would like to discuss the actual circumstances from the key results. 1) Certified ECEC centers seem to have become established to a large degree. From their benefits and good-design in management, positive opinions about their features score highly; integration of early childhood education and care, availability of consistent childcare from infancy to preschool period, etc. For that purpose, integration of kindergartens and daycare centers have been accomplished. 2) Overcapacity is observed in classrooms for 1-year olds and 2-year olds, while a significant shortage of applicants is observed in classrooms for 0-year olds and 3-year old children and older. This may be only a slight shortage in some classrooms, but classroom integration may become an issue if a lot of facilities have such a shortage, in particular with local communities. 3) Facility open hours are becoming longer. In reflection of the Comprehensive Support System for Children and Child-rearing which sets the standard childcare period as 11 hours, childcare hours are becoming longer. Extended childcare at kindergartens is increasing, resulting in longer facility open hours. 4) Lunch served by the facility has become more prevalent, also at private kindergartens. 5) Special needs education is now commonplace, irrespective of whether the facility is a kindergarten or daycare center. 6) As for the IT environment, it still remains in the framework of PC for office work. Introduction of tablets, etc., has only just begun. The use of a management system for attendance/absence, etc., is gradually spreading among private

facilities, and is expected to become more prevalent in the future. 7) The ratio of permanent employment and temporary employment among teachers/caregivers reveals the predominance of temporary workers in public facilities. There are certain percentages of temporary workers in private facilities, who may be serving in assistant positions, not necessarily as classroom teachers. 8) The idea of putting play in the center comes at the top for the principle or goal of facilities. Many facilities list more specific items, which correspond to the ideal image of how children should be by the end of the early childhood. 9) Training for course of study/guidelines is well provided, which seems to be put into good use for reviewing the overall plan and/or childcare at the facility. 10) A lot of facilities have interaction with elementary schools or send childcare facility-school documents, but the percentage has yet to reach 100%. 11) Gymnastics, music and English lessons are provided as special activities at more than half of the facilities. 12) Almost all private kindergartens provide extended childcare. Moreover, an increasing number of facilities provide rather prolonged childcare every day, of which the activity contents may present issues. 13) More and more kindergartens provide childcare for 2-year olds. 14) Maintaining and improving the quality of teachers/caregivers score highly among issues in practice, reflecting the issues and willingness associated with facilities. 15) Supporting parents and communicating information with parents is done in a diversified manner, and is expected to develop even further.

The above summary well present the circumstances of facilities trying to come up with ways to cope with the changing times. At the same time, there are numerous issues, in particular quality improvement in childcare. Facilities are providing caregivers with expanded training to improve the quality of caregivers and/or team childcare. They are also focusing on collaboration with parents. We need to develop more surveys on the connection of such practical measures with childcare quality.

Accurate description of actual circumstances and some issues are revealed in this survey

Toshiyuki Shiomi, Professor Emeritus, The University of Tokyo/ Academic Advisor, Shiraume Gakuen University

Surveys on the actual circumstances of early childhood education and care in the field or awareness of the issues by the national government or public authorities are generally insufficient. This survey reveals them to a certain extent, which makes it important.

This is the third survey, however, the first after the three documents of guidelines, course of study and childcare facility-School Documents were revised. Also it was right before early childhood education and care became free of charge. Therefore it is very important to identify the actual circumstances and issues of childcare in the field. When read carefully, the survey results have potential clues for future practice and facility management.

First of all, I had a strong impression that certified ECEC centers earned improved or more favorable evaluations than they did before. When the system started in 2006, it was not easy to integrate the respective cultures of kindergartens and daycare centers. Moreover, the administrative side often remained redundant, resulting in cumbersome procedures or frequent trouble-like incidents. Though the issues of integrating the two cultures of kindergartens and daycare centers remain, numerous facilities acknowledge merits occurring after the revision of the laws, which is clearly indicated in the survey results. If the financial aspect is improved somewhat, there is a possibility of increase in such merits.

Meanwhile, it is becoming apparent that there is another issue of significantly prolonged open hours for childcare, in particular at daycare centers and certified ECEC centers. This survey finds that the national average daily open hours at private daycare centers are over 12 hours, while certified ECEC centers are open for almost 12 hours. Even in kindergartens, private facilities are open

for around 9.5 hours. Unconsciously, children become more nervous and feel stressed in daycare centers, certified ECEC centers or kindergartens than they do at home, however carefully they are cared for, when they are in groups and the teachers are not their parents. Granted that some stress helps children grow, how should we face the fact that a large number of children are receiving over 12 hours of childcare in so-called developed countries?

Work style reform is the topic of today. However, it seems that its purpose has yet to penetrate the world of early childhood education and care. I feel we need to build a new framework now, for example, making a law to restrict the work style of parents while their children are young.

Additionally, the survey revealed the reality that more caregivers are in temporary employment than in permanent employment in public daycare centers, for example. How to evaluate this reality is also an issue. Raising expertise, i.e. improving childcare quality contradicts increasing the number of caregivers in temporary employment. What to do with this? Since efforts in the field alone cannot solve this issue, it will present a major issue in childcare administration. About one third of public kindergartens listed "acquire thinking skill" as one of the points to focus in childcare, while the percentage is around 20% among daycare centers. One of the goals in childcare is to nurture and develop the capabilities of children, thus development of thinking skills is a very important point. We need to recognize the fact that there is a difference in focus between daycare centers and kindergartens.

I hope you will take in much more from this survey and make use of it in practice and management in the field.

Issue of improving quality of caregivers in facility management, and expectation for new measures

Kaori Shioya, Professor, Kokugakuin University

1. Findings from the survey results

I feel we can see a further advance in the declining birthrate and new issues of childcare from the results of this survey. Particularly in kindergartens, the big issue is naturally the survival of facilities, making it increasingly difficult to give critical decisions at turning points. Meanwhile, in daycare centers and certified ECEC centers, further training is in demand in childcare for those "with special needs" as is the case in kindergartens, in addition to long childcare hours and childcare for infants. In the circumstances, it is a matter of course that the issue of keeping and improving the quality of caregivers is emerging.

2. Understanding and care for children with special needs

The fact that approximately 70 to 80% of facilities chose "understanding and care for children with special needs" as necessary training for caregivers regardless of facility type means that it is becoming difficult to provide childcare in the field. It is not only the issue of children with a so-called "disability". There are issues of children with specific ways to understand and/or behave, or behavioral issues rooted in a complex family environment. In addition to dealing with such children individually, various issues occur when providing childcare in groups with such children. I can almost feel the pain of caregivers who are unable to respond to each child due to a constant labor shortage and a rigorous work environment. I think it is important not to lose sight of these things at the heart of the problem.

3. To improve the quality of teachers/caregivers

Many facilities list "developing culture of teachers/caregivers mutually learning at the facility" as a requirement for improving the quality of caregivers. Any caregiver would feel that teamwork in the field is more important than anything else in order to solve issues in childcare. Needless to say, preparing a system for caregivers to participate in training and seminars or securing a budget for training is important. However, it is the sharing issues among staff in the organization and learning together that is definitely important. New methods including online training have begun to be considered. That being said, it is important to closely inspect how this teamwork, a feature of childcare in the field, helps improve the capability of individual caregivers while it is activated.

For example, numerous measures such as enrichment of case conference can be considered for children with difficulty in dealing with things. It is essential to have leadership of the principal, supervisor or skills of experienced staff. From now on, development of staff organization with good human relations needs to be accomplished, as well as efforts and inventive ways for human resources development. I have high hopes for the new measures to be taken in the field.

Support for child rearing and collaboration with parents

Misako Aramaki, Associate Professor, Mejiro University

From the viewpoint of the general trend, we can see "child rearing consultation," "providing information on childrearing," and "seminar and/or lecture on childrearing" are basically conducted for parents of enrolled children, while "open playground," "open facility such as childcare rooms," "temporary childcare," and "parent-child trial visit" are often conducted more for parents in the local community than for enrolled children. Roughly said, the former is considered as emotional or informational support, while the latter is instrumental support. The target seems to differ depending on the contents and purpose of the support. It can be considered that the facility type may affect the difference in role and strength requested for in childrearing support. In comparison with kindergartens and daycare centers, both public and private certified ECEC centers are actively engaged in support for parents in the local community, indicating they are expected to play a central role in childrearing support in the community. Public kindergartens show a high percentage of lectures, indicating their provision of active information on childrearing and early childhood education and care to the parents. However, in comparison with the cases of certified ECEC centers, their service seems to be limited to parents of enrolled children. I hope they open their doors to parents in the local community as well.

As for specific means to communicate information to parents, the overall feature is an increasing percentage of holding "Individual parent-teacher conference." As the needs of parents are becoming more diversified, the necessity and importance of dealing with each family is growing. Also, the use of "paper-based parent-teacher notebook" for 3- to 5-year olds seems to be declining, which may be interpreted as a part of more efficient clerical work. As for the information communication method to all parents, so-called documentation including display by facilities (photographs and bulletin boards) seems to be widely used, however, private kindergartens seem to make more use of the facility website. It may be because of the underlying reality that their children use the school bus in higher percentages.

Finally, generally speaking, all the facilities seem to feel that the parents ask them to develop social skills and good daily habits among children based on the experience in communal life. Such a trend coincides with the survey aimed at parents (for example, "Survey on Children's Everyday Life V" by Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute (2016)). This survey for parents showed strong affirmative responses to such questions as "more intellectual education," "extra-curricular lessons after standard childcare hours," especially among parents using daycare centers scoring around 20% for both items. Moreover, the percentage is increasing every year. When compared with these results, there is a slight gap in the understanding of facilities shown in this research. If there is a gap between actual requests of parents and the understanding of facilities, compromising will become an important issue for gaining understanding of parents for childcare practice in the facilities, as well as for increasing cooperation with parents to support the development of children.

The 3rd Basic Survey on Early Childhood Education and Care in Japan Preliminary Report

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Early Childhood Education from Now

Information journal for kindergartens, daycare centers and certified ECEC centers

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