

[Press Release]

Benesse Holdings, Inc.
Representative Director and President CEO
Hitoshi Kobayashi

**Child Research Net International Collaborative Research
Report on “Survey on Children’s Daily Life among Eight Asian Countries 2021”**

Development of “Resilience” is Important for Children’s Well-being during the Covid-19 Pandemic

**“Parenting Attitude” and “Support from Childcare Facilities” Are
Keys for the Development of Children’s Resilience**

The Child Research Net (CRN), supported by the Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute, an in-house think tank of the Benesse Corporation Inc. (Headquarters: Okayama city, Representative Director and President: Hitoshi Kobayashi), hosted the “Survey on Children’s Daily Life among Eight Asian Countries 2021.” The survey was conducted between August and November 2021, targeting mothers of 5-year-olds in eight Asian countries, including Japan.*

According to previous surveys and research studies, it has been revealed that the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the daily lives of children around the world. This has led to physical and mental disorders among a lot of children, threatening their “well-being (meaning physical and mental wellness and happiness.” Therefore, the CRN organized a survey on the actual status of children’s well-being, focusing on their “resilience” with researchers from eight Asian countries. The term “resilience” means the ability to withstand and recover from adversity or hardships, which is essential for realizing children’s well-being. This international comparative survey aimed at revealing common factors and variations, seeking better ways to support children’s well-being according to the situation in each country.

The survey results show that the development of resilience is vital for children’s well-being during challenging times under the COVID-19 pandemic, which was commonly seen in all eight countries. In addition, the factors of “mother’s parenting attitude” and “support from childcare facilities” are also associated with children’s resilience in several countries, including Japan.

This report explains the results of our analysis. We hope our readers find this report helpful for their child rearing and education, seeking better ways to support children and their families.

* Participating eight Asian countries: Japan, China, The Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand

The summary of survey results is as follows:

* For the purpose of international comparison, this survey targeted mothers from eight countries.

1. “Resilience” is associated with children’s well-being in all eight countries

◆ The development of resilience is vital for realizing children’s well-being.

2. In Japan, the factors of (1) Mother’s responsive parenting attitude, (2) Mother’s childrearing confidence, (3) Support from childcare facilities, (4) Mothers’ support when using digital media, and (5) Number of friends to play with are associated with children’s resilience

◆ We divided the above factors (1) to (5) into “High,” “Middle,” and “Low” groups and compared the children’s resilience scores. As a result, the resilience score in the High group is higher than the remaining groups.

3. The factors of (1) Mother’s responsive parenting attitude, (2) Mother’s childrearing confidence, (3) Support from nursery school/teachers, and (4) Mothers’ support when using digital media are associated with children’s resilience in most countries as well

◆ The factors of (1) Mother’s responsive parenting attitude and (3) Support from childcare facilities are associated with children’s resilience in five countries including Japan, while the factors of (2) Mother’s childrearing confidence and (4) Mothers’ support when the child is using digital media are associated with children’s resilience in four countries including Japan.

[Details of Survey Results]

1. “Resilience” is associated with children’s well-being in all eight countries

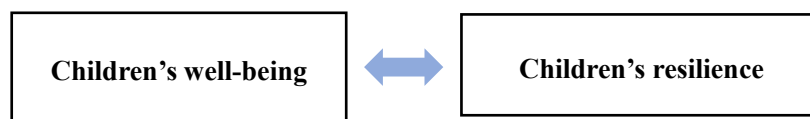
- ◆ The development of resilience is vital for realizing children’s well-being.
- ◆ Higher resilience scores indicate higher scores of children’s well-being. Figure 1-2 shows the results of our analysis, based on Japan’s data extracted from the overall data of eight countries.

<Definition of terms and methodology>

Well-being: Healthy physical and mental conditions. In this survey, the KINDL scale (developed by Ravens-Sieberer & Bullinger) was used to broadly measure children’s quality of life (QOL).

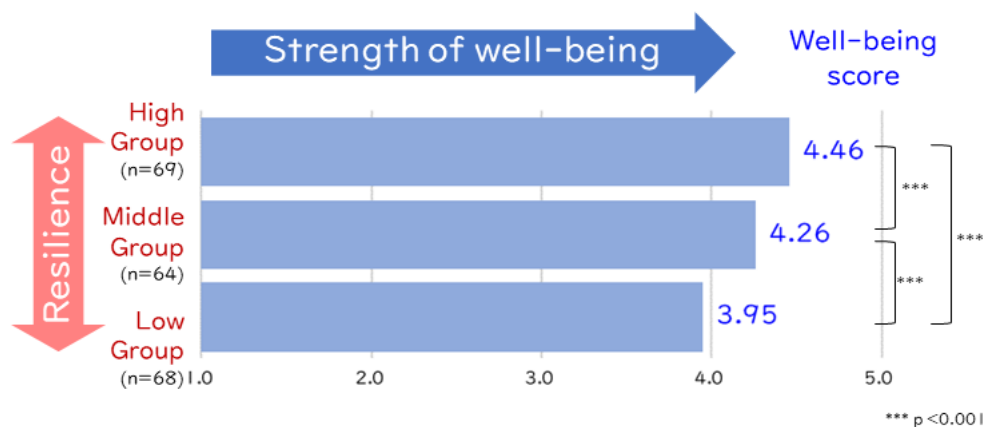
Resilience: The ability to withstand and recover from adversity or hardships. In this survey, the PMK-CYRM-R scale (developed by the Resilience Research Centre in Canada) was used to measure children’s resilience.

■ Figure 1-1: Relationship between Children’s “Well-being” and “Resilience”



The values of the correlation coefficients between “well-being” and “resilience” by country are as follows: Japan = 0.630, China = 0.679, The Philippines = 0.468, Malaysia = 0.473, Taiwan = 0.659, Indonesia = 0.616, Singapore = 0.691, Thailand = 0.523 (each, $p < 0.001$)

■ Figure 1-2: [Japan] Children’s well-being score by resilience strength



Higher resilience scores indicate higher scores of children’s well-being

* Three resilience groups:

After aggregating the scores of 17 resilience items using the PMK-CYRM-R scale, the resulting data was almost equally divided into three groups of “High,” “Middle,” and “Low” based on the distribution.

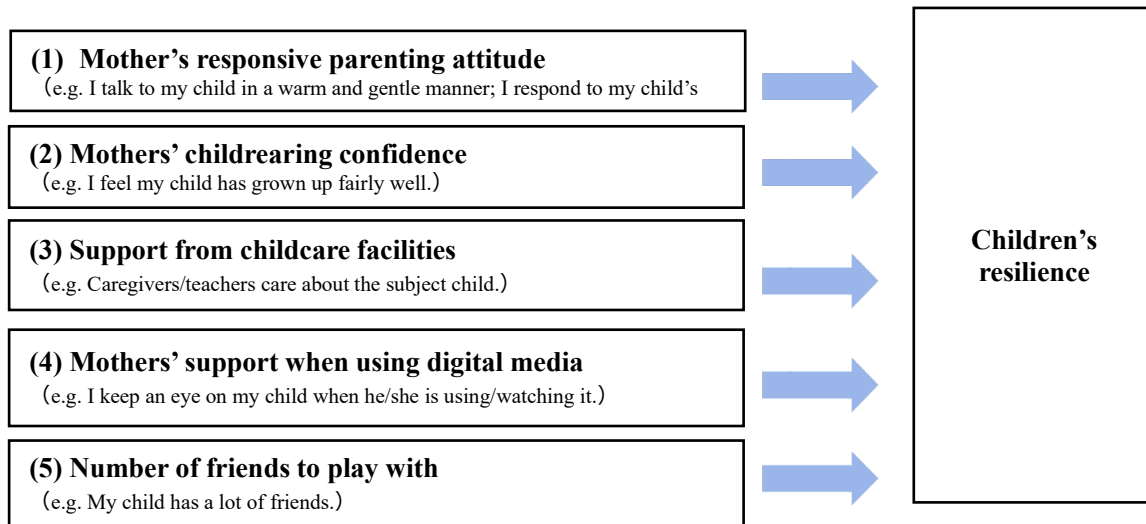
* Well-being scores:

After aggregating the scores of 24 well-being items using the KINDL scale from “Never” (1 point) to “All the time” (5 points), the resulting data (1 to 5 points) was divided by the number of items. The above figures are the average values of each group (high, middle, and low resilience groups).

2. In Japan, the factors of (1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude, (2) Mother's childrearing confidence, (3) Support from childcare facilities, (4) Mothers' support when the child is using digital media, and (5) Number of friends to play with are associated with children's resilience

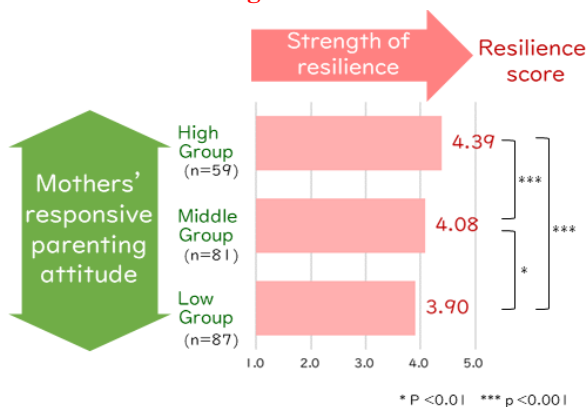
- ◆ We divided the above factors (1) to (5) into "High," "Middle," and "Low" groups and compared the children's resilience scores. As a result, the resilience score in the High group is higher than in the remaining groups.

■ Figure 2: [Japan] Five factors relating to children's resilience



■ Figure 2-1: [Japan] (1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude vs. children's resilience scores

Stronger mothers' responsive parenting attitudes indicate higher children's resilience

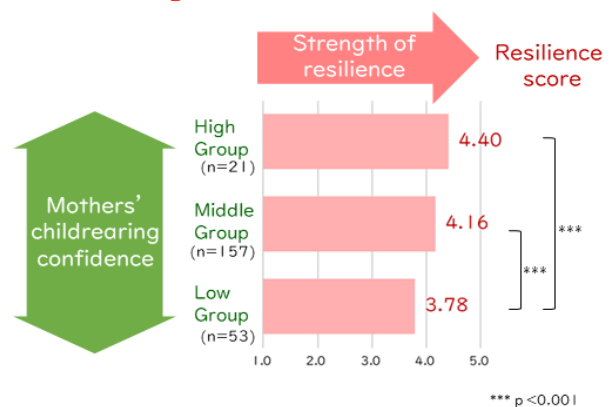


* **Three groups of responsive parenting attitudes:** First, the scores of the following seven factors were aggregated: "I talk to my child in a warm and gentle manner," "We have physical contact," "I respond to my child's needs," "I am proud when my child does something well," "When my child is about to do something, I don't interfere and watch them through to the end (except when it's dangerous)," "I provide an environment where my child can work on what he/she wants to do," and "I provide opportunities for playing and experiencing things that expand my child's interests." And then, the resulting data was almost equally divided into the three groups of "High," "Middle," and "Low" based on the distribution.

* **Resilience scores:** After aggregating the scores of 17 resilience items using the PMK-CYRM-R scale from "Not at all" (1 point) to "Very much so" (5 points), the resulting data was divided by the number of items (distribution range: 1 to 5 points).

■ Figure 2-2: [Japan] (2) Mother's childrearing confidence vs. children's resilience scores

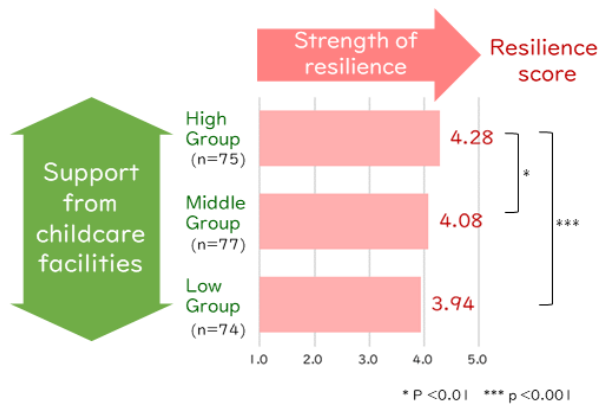
Higher mothers' childrearing confidence indicates higher children's resilience scores



* **Three groups of childrearing confidence:** The scores of "I feel my child has grown fairly well" was divided into three groups: "1. Very much so" = High group; "2. Fairly so" = Middle group; "3. Not so much" and "4. Not at all" = Low group.

* **Resilience scores:** Same as Figure 2-1.

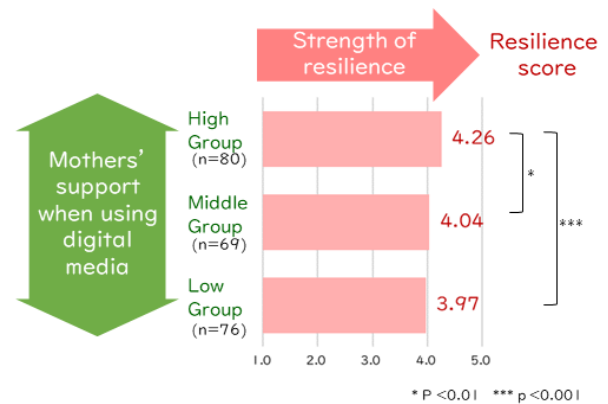
■ **Figure 2-3: [Japan] (3) Support from childcare facilities vs. children's resilience scores**
Stronger support from childcare facilities indicates higher children's resilience scores



* **Three groups of support from childcare facilities:** First, the scores of the following five factors were aggregated: “Caregivers/teachers' conversation and involvement with the subject child are warm-hearted,” “Caregivers/teachers respect the subject child's feelings,” “Caregivers/teachers care about the subject child,” “Caregivers/teachers care about you (subject child's mother),” and “There are caregivers/teachers whom I can turn to for advice.” And then, the resulting data was almost equally divided into the three groups of “High,” “Middle,” and “Low” based on the distribution.

* **Resilience scores:** Same as Figure 2-1.

■ **Figure 2-4: [Japan] (4) Mothers' support when using digital media vs. children's resilience scores**
Stronger mothers' support when the child is using digital media indicates higher children's resilience scores



* **Three groups of mother's support:** First, the scores of the following seven factors were aggregated: “Parents choose what he/she watches/uses,” “I keep an eye on my child when he/she is using/watching it,” “I talk to my child in line with the content my child is using/watching,” “I watch/use together with my child,” “I encourage to decide time length of use/viewing,” “I research together when something he/she does not know comes up,” and “I support my child so that he/she can do difficult activities.” And then, the resulting data was almost equally divided into the three groups of “High,” “Middle,” and “Low” based on the distribution.

* **Resilience scores:** Same as Figure 2-1.

3. The factors of (1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude, (2) Mother's childrearing confidence, (3) Support from childcare facilities, and (4) Mothers' support when the child is using digital media are associated with children's resilience in most countries as well

◆ The factors of (1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude and (3) Support from **childcare facilities** are associated with children's resilience in five countries including Japan, while the factors of (2) Mother's childrearing confidence and (4) Mothers' support when using digital media are associated with children's resilience in four countries including Japan.

■ **Table 1: Factors relating to children's resilience by country**

	Japan	China	PHL	MYS	Taiwan	IDN	SGP	THA
(1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude	○				○	○	○	○
(2) Mother's childrearing confidence	○				○	○		○
(3) Support from childcare facilities/schools	○	○				○	○	○
(4) Mothers' support when using digital media	○			○	○	○		
(5) Number of friends to play with	○					○		

* PHL=The Philippines, MYS = Malaysia, IDN = Indonesia, SGP = Singapore, THA = Thailand

[Summary and Discussions]

No matter what age we are living in, children's well-being is essential. However, under the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to pay particular attention to ensure their well-being is maintained. Our survey results show that "resilience" (the ability to withstand and recover from adversity or hardships) is associated with children's well-being. This result is typical in all eight Asian countries under survey. Therefore, **it is important to nurture resilience to ensure children's well-being under challenging circumstances like the pandemic.**

Then, what factors will improve children's resilience? In Japan, the factors of (1) Mother's responsive parenting attitude, (2) Mother's childrearing confidence, (3) Support from childcare facilities, (4) Mothers' support when using digital media, and (5) Number of friends to play with are associated with children's resilience. In addition, the above factors of (1) to (4) also show the same results in most countries other than Japan. Therefore, these factors should be considered as important to nurture children's resilience. **Support from both households (family members) and childcare facilities (caregivers), which are close and familiar environments for children, is critical for nurturing children's resilience.**

As it has been three years since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged restrictions on our daily lives continue, support from parents and caregivers is vital to ensure each child's healthy growth and development. We hope parents and childcare workers involved in early childhood education and care find these survey results helpful in seeking better ways to support children's well-being.

[Survey Overview]

Title	Survey on Children's Daily Life among Eight Asian Countries 2021						
Theme	Exploring Factors Nurturing "Happy and Resilient" Children among Asian Countries						
Period	August-November 2021						
Method	Questionnaire survey (Online/Paper) * The format may differ by country.						
Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,973 mothers with children aged five attending kindergartens (daycare centers) in cities and suburbs in eight Asian countries (Japan, China, The Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand) Number of subjects by country 						
	Japan	China	PHL	MYS	Taiwan	IDN	SGP
	246	264	218	250	260	416	136
* PHL=The Philippines, MYS = Malaysia, IDN = Indonesia, SGP = Singapore, THA = Thailand							
Survey items	Children's resilience; children's well-being; mother's parenting attitude; childrearing perceptions; mother's level of satisfaction in daily life; support from childcare facilities; sharing household chores with spouse; spouse's support; children's actual usage of digital media; mother's support when using digital media; children's way of spending time daily; children's play situation; situation of COVID-19, etc.						
Survey planning and analysis members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project leader Yoichi Sakakihara (CRN Director; Professor Emeritus at Ochanomizu University) Project members Junko Ogawa, Seiko Mochida, Akihiro Sato, Haruo Kimura, Aiping Liu, Hanae Omori (Child Research Net / Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute) Collaborative researchers from eight countries Japan: Tomomi Sato (Professor, Aichi Shukutoku University) China: Nianli Zhou (Professor, East China Normal University) The Philippines: Thelma Mingoa (Assistant professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Management, De La Salle University) Malaysia: Aminah Ayob (Professor Emerita, Sultan Idris Education University) Taiwan: Fu Tsai Hung (Professor, National Taipei University of Education) Indonesia: Sofia Hartati (Dean, Faculty of Education, State University of Jakarta) Singapore: Christine Chen (President, Association for Early Childhood Educators (Singapore)) Thailand: Sasilak Khayankij (Associate professor, Chulalongkorn University) 						

[About the Child Research Net (CRN)]



The CRN is a non-profit, web-based child research institute available in three languages: Japanese, English, and Chinese. It collects and disseminates information on interdisciplinary ECEC research studies and childrearing practices worldwide. Recently, it formed the Child Research Network Asia (CRNA), consisting of researchers from various Asian countries, promoting international collaborative studies on children's well-being.

URL : <https://www.childresearch.net/>

<Profile: CRN Director Yoichi Sakakihara>



M.D., Ph.D., Director of Child Research Net, Professor Emeritus at Ochanomizu University, Executive Advisor of the Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute (BERD), President of Japanese Society of Child Science. Specializes in pediatric neurology, developmental neurology, in particular, treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Asperger's syndrome, and other developmental disorders and neuroscience. His hobbies are climbing mountains and listening to music. He is the father of two sons and one daughter.

Major publications include “The monkey who wares diapers” (Kodansha); “Children who can’t concentrate” (Shogakukan); “Hyperactive children” (Kodansha +α Shinsho); “Asperger’s syndrome and learning disorders” (Kodansha +α Shinsho); “First meet nursing series” (Shogakukan); “The critical and sensitive periods of the child’s brain development” (Kodansha +α Shinsho); “Children's developmental disorders: Risk of misdiagnosis” (Poplar Shinsho); and “Illustrated mechanism for children with developmental disorders” (Natsumesha).

[Additional Data Sources]

* Additional data, including this report and the spreadsheets of survey results, are available at the CRN website.

For additional data, please click the link below.

You can also read country reports written by each collaborative researcher from eight countries.

<https://www.childresearch.net/crna-research-activities.html>

