

Future

"Future,"
the title of this report,
was proposed and voted for by
the members of the Children's
Community Building Clubs.



**Building Better Communities
Through the Participation of Children!**

Soft

Speaking Out From Tohoku



Speaking Out From Tohoku

~Building Better Communities Through the Participation of Children!~

by the Children's Community Building Clubs

■ ■ What is Save the Children? ■ ■

Save the Children, an international non-governmental organization (INGO), works in 120 countries to realize children's rights to survive, develop, be protected and participate. It provides emergency relief assistance to disaster-affected areas as well as support in the areas of education, nutrition improvement and public health.

In 2003, Save the Children Japan launched a programme in Japan called, "Speaking Out: Let's Talk Together," to enable children to take part in decisions that concerned them. It is based upon the idea that when it comes to children, children are often the ones who know best. In 2010, the programme, "Speaking Out Against Poverty: Keeping Hopes and Dreams from Being Stolen," was initiated to help tackle the issue of poverty in Japan, together with local, prefectural and national authorities.

Soon after the March 11th earthquake and tsunami in 2011, Save the Children Japan launched its recovery assistance programme in Iwate, Fukushima, and Miyagi Prefectures. The "Speaking Out From Tohoku" (SOFT) programme was aimed at building better communities through the ideas and participation of children, and has been part of Save the Children's recovery programme ever since.



■ ■ What is the SOFT programme? ■ ■

SOFT stands for Speaking Out From Tohoku, and is a programme that literally means to **convey messages from the people of Tohoku**. The SOFT programme aims to build better communities by creating opportunities for children to speak out their thoughts and opinions, and to participate in the processes of reconstruction. Save the Children Japan started this programme in May 2011, building on from its experience in promoting child participation in its previous "Speaking Out" programmes.

Save the Children Japan provides opportunities for children, as members of their communities, to speak out and actively participate in the recovery plans and building processes being formulated by all levels of government. Examples of SOFT programmes are the Children's Community Building Clubs, Hear Our Voice ~ Children's Voices, and the Children's Community Building Clubs of Tohoku Summits.

■ ■ What are the Children's Community Building Clubs? ■ ■

A survey conducted by Save the Children Japan in May and June of 2011 revealed that a large number of children in Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures wanted to **consult with other children and do something for their communities**.

In response to the findings of the survey, Save the Children Japan created the **Children's Community Building Club** project. The members of the clubs, from 5th graders to high school students, regularly meet together. They work together on the recovery of their communities by sharing their opinions with other community members and by talking to relevant authorities and experts. As of November 2012, Children's Community Building Clubs have been established in Yamada Town and Rikuzentakata City in Iwate Prefecture, and Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture.

* In the following population information, children refer to those 18 and under.

● Yamada Town, Iwate Prefecture

Club name: Keppare Yamada Toekomst (KYT)

Concept: Future and Tradition ~ A Community That Overflows With Love

"Keppare" means "Go for it!" in Japanese and "Toekomst" means "future" in Dutch. Yamada has had a long and close relationship with The Netherlands. We hope that we, the people of Yamada, will do our best in moving towards the future.

Town population: 16,783 people (incl. 2,284 children) as of November 2014

Yamada is well known for its oysters, scallops, and matsutake and shiitake mushrooms. The town also has a famous event called the Yamada Festival. Club members feel the town is a community that overflows with love.

To learn more, please see pp.6-7

● Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture

Club name: Kizuna ~ save the hope TAKATA

Concept: A community where people do not just live, but lead full and rich lives

People in Rikuzentakata value a sense of community. The club name "Kizuna" means "human bond" in Japanese. We want to cherish and further the bonds between people through our activities.

City population: 20,409 people (incl. 2,644 children) as of October 2014

There is a unique summer star festival in Rikuzentakata. The festival requires a lot of time and energy to prepare all the decorations and music. However, it is all worth it as the festival is such a fun event and attracts many people. Rikuzentakata also offers tasty and nutritious seafood and mountain vegetables.

To learn more, please see pp.8-9

● Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture

Club name: THE Rolling Stones: Now That's What We Call ROCK!

Concept: A community where the new and old rock 'n' roll together and life is pleasant for both children and adults

Ishinomaki can be broken into "ishi" + "maki" which means "stones" + "roll" in Japanese. So the town's name really does sound like Rolling Stones! We want to revitalize our community by our activities. Using all our efforts, like in Rock 'n' Roll music, we want to make people smile and cheer up!

City population: 150,114 people (incl. 22,061 children) as of September 2014

Ishinomaki is rich in nature and is surrounded by the sea, mountains and rivers. People here value their relationships with each other. "Ishi" also means "stone" and "maki" means "roll" in Japanese, so it's a city of Rock 'n' Roll.

To learn more, please see pp.10-11

■ ■ Hear Our Voice ~Children's Voices~ ■ ■

Save the Children Japan has been collecting children's voices through interviews and surveys. We then help make what children think about the recovery from the disaster, the community building processes and disaster risk reduction heard within the larger society. Save the Children Japan supports children's activities so as to advocate policies to local, prefectural and national authorities that reflect children's opinions.

To learn more, please see pp.15-17



Activities of Speaking Out From Tohoku in 2014



This November marks three and a half years since the launch of the SOFT Programme. In 2011, the members of the Children's Community Building Clubs each created a Dream Community plan, and they have been working on realizing these through various "actions" while "connecting" with the government, other community members, and new club members. "Future" is the community building process for a better future, as engaged in by the children. Please take a look at their achievements in 2014.



Children's Community Building Club in Ishinomaki City Kicked off the New Year by aiming for the grand opening of the Ishinomaki City Children's Center



Children's Community Building Club in Yamada Town Kicked off the New Year by working on "Yamada Karuta"



Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City Started planning the 2nd "Susume! Takatakkō! Machizukuri Talk★"



Children's Community Building Club in Yamada Town Finally completed "Yamada Karuta" to convey Yamada's attractions★



Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City Discussed with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and library staff at the ninth Area Meeting to Report on Activities and Projects



Children's Community Building Club in Ishinomaki City Completed map of the shopping district to contribute towards the revitalization of the district



"Mini Tree of Light" received "JIA Golden Cubes Award"



The discussion among children from Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures for the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Hear Our Voice ~ Disaster Risk Reduction ~ Preparatory Workshop for the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

The 5th Tohoku Children's Community Building Summit ~Towns that grow up with us~



Hear Our Voice ~ Disaster Risk Reduction ~ Participated in the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction



Presentation at the working group for the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Ishinomaki City Children's Center received a "Kids Design Award 2014"

Ishinomaki City Children's Center received a "Good Design Award for 2014"

Ishinomaki City Children's Center received a "Community Building Award"

SOFT Interim Report 4 "Future"

Hear Our Voice 9 Survey on Attitudes towards Child Participation 2014 was launched

Hear Our Voice 9 Flash report of survey on Attitudes towards Child Participation 2014 was published



Participants of the Children's Community Building Leaders Tour 2014



Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City Soon-to-be graduates of the club interviewed the Mayor on FM Disaster Radio

SOFT Interim Report The Interim Report for the Soft programme is published annually on Universal Children's Day, 20th of November.

Future: SOFT Interim Report 4 "Future" reports the activities of the SOFT programme from December 2013 to November 2014. For previous activities, please refer to "Hope: SOFT Interim Report 1", "Action: SOFT Interim Report 2", and "Connect: SOFT Interim Report 3".

2011 7 8 11 1 4 8 11 1 2013 3 4 8 9

Started the Children's Community Building Club in Yamada Town! Developed the "Dream Community Plan"

Presented the "Dream Community Plan" at the Area Meeting to Report on Activities and Projects

Completed a miniature model of the "Dream Community Plan"

Started the Future and Tradition folding screen project!

Completed the Future and Tradition folding screen project

Started interviewing community members about the recovery!

Interviewed the Mayor

Started creating the "Dream Compact City Plan"

Completed a mockup version of the Dream Compact City Plan

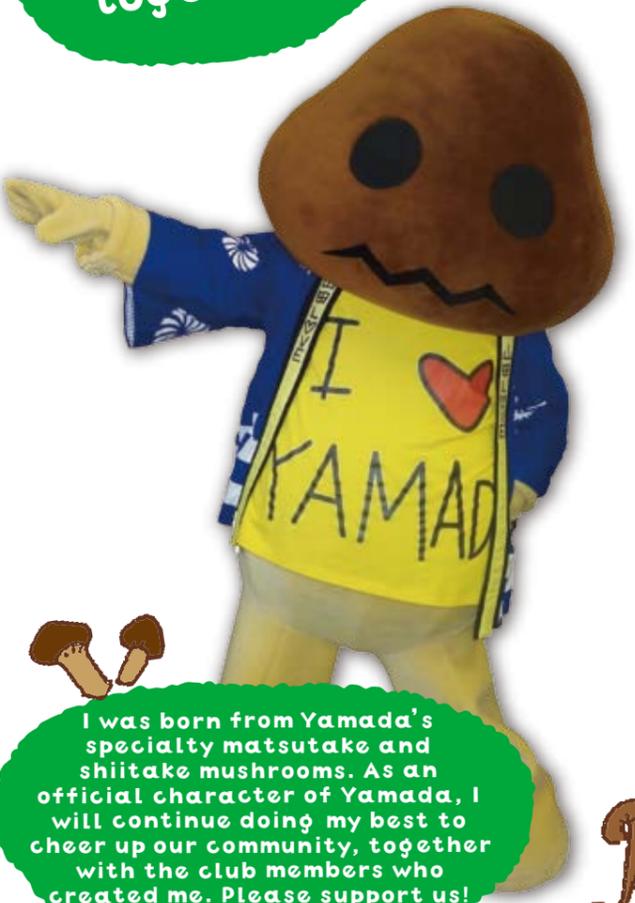
Presented the Dream Compact City Plan to the Mayor!

"Matsushii" participated in a local event

"Matsushii" was authorized as an official character of Yamada!

See below

My name is Matsushii! Let's play together!



I was born from Yamada's specialty matsutake and shiitake mushrooms. As an official character of Yamada, I will continue doing my best to cheer up our community, together with the club members who created me. Please support us!

Voices of the Staff
While conveying Yamada's appeal, KYT members keep working on the recovery of their community. The "Yamada Karuta" project, developed for men and women of all ages to have fun, was a great success. As one member said, "Everyone's smiles and positive reactions gave me a sense of satisfaction!" Through the process of creating "Yamada Karuta," members got to mingle with older generations and recruit new members. While making good use of each member's individuality, the members are also building a rapport with people both within and outside of the community. Please stay updated on the future activities of the club!

Matsushii Talk

June 2014
Created by parents of the club members. I look so yummy!

Matsushii cake Matsushii rolled sushi

August 2014
You can see me on the back of people's cars on the streets of Yamada Town

Ribbon Magnet

August to September 2014
Visited various events!

Local character festival in front of Morioka Sta. Yamada Festival

September to October 2014
Together with other official characters of Yamada, Yamada-chan and Take-chan, I participated in the local character competition!

Yuru-kyara Grand Prix

Check out our videos on our Matsushii KYT YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/KYTmatsushii>

What is Yamada Karuta?

Yamada Karuta was initiated by the members of the Children's Community Building Club in Yamada Town, and created by members of the community. In the summer of 2013, the club members learned about the local Kobe Karuta that was created by community members as a part of the community recovery process after the Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. Inspired by this idea, the club members started working on the Yamada Karuta project in September 2013 and completed it in June 2014. By promoting the attractions of Yamada Town, it aims to help the community re-realize its own appeal and to attract more people to come and visit.

Voices of the Adults
"Yamada Karuta" encompasses the various aspects of Yamada town, such as its history, culture, tourism and dialect. It is very articulate and is filled with love for the community as it involved a large number of community members in its making. Many adult members of our community grew up without knowing about Yamada Town, and it provides them with a great opportunity to learn with our town and to recognize its attractions. I believe that we can encourage more people through this activity to re-recognize the beauty of our community and grow together to realize "the work community filled with love." (Satoshi Minato, Tourist Association of Yamada Town)

Designs and haiku are all amazing!

Timeline:

- 2013 Oct: Launched the project
- 2013 Oct: Started inviting opinions on the attractions of Yamada Town
- 2013 Nov: Began inviting haiku for Karuta cards (Japanese poems)
- 2013 Dec: Made card selections with community members
- 2014 Feb: Designed picture cards with the help of community members
- 2014 Mar: Created explanations to be printed on the back of the cards
- 2014 Apr: Discussed design concepts for completion of the Yamada Karuta
- 2014 Jul: Distributed the Karuta both within and outside of the community
- 2014 Aug: Played Karuta competitions with community members
- 2014 Jun: "Yamada Karuta" completed!

Voice of Children
While making our activities known, we will make a new Takata!



Started the Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City! Developed the "Dream Community Plan"



Presented the "Dream Community Plan" at the Area Meeting to Report an Activities and Projects



Completed a miniature model of "Dream Community Plan"

Started the "Mini Tree of Light" project



Shared opinions with people in the temporary shopping street



Painted with members of the community



Completed the "Mini Tree of Light"♪

Started developing the "Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Talk" project!



Discussions with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and the President of the City Council



Recorded a radio show in the temporary shopping street



Started interviewing community members so that we won't forget what happened



Broadcast a summary of the interviews to the public via Takata Disaster FM

See below

Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Photo★

"Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Photo" (or "Machi Photo") aims to convey the here and now of Takata City to people both within and outside of the Tohoku region through pictures taken by children. The project was launched in October 2013, and 19 students (from 6th graders to high school seniors) participated.



2013

Oct. Discussed the project's title and theme



Nov. Workshop with the photojournalist, Kei Sato



Nov. Studied possible photo-shoot sites using a map



Nov. Took photos within the community



Dec. Discussed methods of delivering our messages, and decided to use clear file folders



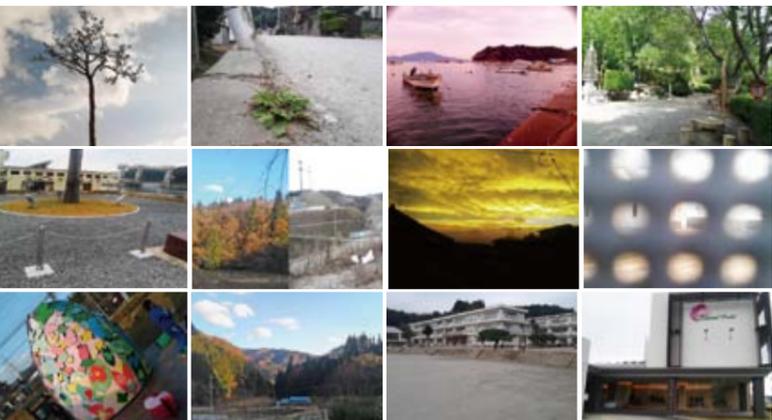
Dec. Presented photos with message at the Area Meeting to Report an Activities and Projects



Completed making the file folders!
Distributed them both within and outside of the Tohoku region!



一望できる景色
Panoramic View
This is a view from the Capital Hotel. I thought it captured how much the disaster has changed our community. Azu
あず



Stairs in the Sky of Matsubara
While reconstruction is continuing, the light shines down upon the town. I hope it lights up the people too. I want this picture, which captures the light looking like stairs in the sky that connected to the world, to help people remember our community. Ayumin
あゆみん



Voices of the Adults
I remember the days that I was assisting on the project, "Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Photo," as if it was yesterday. Currently, there is an unprecedented amount of reclamation work taking place in the city area. Without the pine trees, sea breeze, or tranquil cityscape, it seems dreary. However, I saw not only the scars left by the disaster that we must not forget, but also our hope through a camera lens. I learned a lot from the children's viewpoints. I will support the children, who are the path towards the future! (Kei Sato, photojournalist)

Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Talk★

2014 March



Susume! Takataako! Machizukuri Talk (or Machi-talks★) was launched in 2013 with the purpose of delivering our messages about the recovery to the Mayor and other policy makers.



The second "Machi-talks" was held in March 2014 with our Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Board of Education Superintendent, and the City Council members to discuss ideas for the new library!

We are really making it happen! I am so excited!

Please have a meeting among the club members to summarize your opinions and submit a proposal to us, says Mayor Toba.

Study tour to libraries both within and outside of our community



2014 Jun. to Aug. Visited libraries in the city I



Jun. to Aug. Visited libraries in the city II



Aug. Visited libraries in the metropolitan area



Sep. Held discussions with the Mayor and library staff in the briefing session



Oct. Borrowed books from the library and created flashcards



Nov. Visited libraries in Iwate Prefecture

09 Collecting ideas for a new library

Voices of the Staff
The members are tightly bound together although they vary in age and come from different areas. They all have busy schedules, even on weekends, with afterschool club activities or sports clubs. Regardless of their busy lives however, they still manage to make time for the club discussions and take part in community building activities. While continuing their discussions with the government, they are currently working on realizing a "community where we can live in affluence." I am certain that the members will keep verbalizing their opinions and feelings as they continue to be extremely passionate about the recovery of Takata and community building!

2011 7 9 11 2012 1 3 7 10 2013 3 6 9 12

- 7: Started the Children's Community Building Club in Ishinomaki City! Developed the "Dream Community Plan"
- 9: Presented the "Dream Community Plan" at the Area Meeting to Report on Activities and Projects
- 11: Completed the miniature model of the "Dream Community Plan"
- 1: Started planning and designing the Ishinomaki City Children's Center Project!
- 3: Created the miniature model
- 7: Interviewed children in the community to get new ideas for the Center
- 10: Finalized the basic draft plan of the Center
- 3: Developed a draft of the preamble for the ordinance
- 6: Submitted a petition to the Mayor about our draft preamble for the ordinance
- 9: Our draft was officially adopted by the city councilors
- 12: Completion of the Center!

Ishinomaki City Children's Center
RAITSU
石巻市子どもセンター



Since the fall of 2011, we had been working on the plan and design of the Ishinomaki City Children's Center, which was finally completed in December 2013! The Center aims to provide the community with a facility, developed and run by children that can help revitalize the community. While serving as a base to transmit children's thoughts to the world, it also aims to provide a place where everybody can have a good time. We are hoping that the Center will help children to think seriously about the recovery and make our feelings and opinions known.



The Children's Center, realized by the children's actions, is a symbol of the recovery of Ishinomaki, says the Mayor.



We will continue supporting our loving hometown, Ishinomaki, by staying here. We will never forget our experiences and will pass them onto the next generation. From Ishinomaki City Children's Center, the base of our activities, we will keep working on the recovery of our community. Please come and visit us, says the members of the Children's Community Building Clubs.

★ For the better management of the center



Both children and adults participated in the management meeting and shared their opinions



We held a gathering with members of the Children's Council in order to make the Center more exciting!

HONOBONO
Machiaruki
Development of a map of Tachimachi O-dori shopping district

Although a large number of people come to visit our Center located in the shopping district, we have heard many of them say, "I don't really know about the shopping district." We thought it might contribute towards the revitalization of the district if we provided them with a map to teach them about the stores nearby.

Voices of the Adults

I was amazed by the children's affluent ideas. They interviewed all the shops in the district, one by one, to create a fancy map. They have firm characters in their speech, action and thought. We all have to keep learning and take in the children's viewpoints, voices, and thoughts that we all once had ourselves. We must keep chasing our dreams - that's what they made me realize. Through the club's activities over the past year, the children have officially become members of the community. The hands-on "Ishinomaki City Halloween Festival" was very successful. The children shine, which revitalizes the whole community. The children are the future of our community. Go for it! (Mie Takahashi, Chairman of the Board, Tachimachi O-dori Shopping District Promotion Association)

completed!

HONO BONO

2014 2 Feb. 3 Mar. 6 Jun. 10 Oct.

- 2: Started developing a plan
- 3: Started visiting nearby stores to collect material
- 6: Walking down the street with participants of the Area Meeting to Report on Activities and Projects
- 10: Finished interviewing all 37 stores, and finalized a design!



The map is ready to be distributed at the "Ishinomaki Halloween Festival!"

Voices of the Staff

The members might have been bewildered as well as feeling happy, as their big "RAITSU" project was completed and the club became a part of the project run by Ishinomaki Children's Center. However, I was struck when seeing you tackle the issues of community building from "RAITSU" by how mature you have all become. As your title, "THE Rolling Stones" suggests, you guys are very energetic and cheerful. By making good use of your strengths, you have been working towards the recovery of our community, in cooperation with the visitors of "RAITSU" and people from the shopping district. I can't wait to see what else you will be doing by utilizing your positivity and great imagination. (Tomoko Shinji, staff, Ishinomaki City Children's Center)

The members of the Children's Community Building Club in Ishinomaki City started creating their "Dream Community Plan" in the summer of 2011, and it was finally realized two and a half years later. It is a facility for children by children, and the members developed the preamble of its bylaws. After its completion in December 2013, it was handed over to Ishinomaki City in January 2014, and is currently co-managed by the government and children.

As of October 2014, over 26,000 people have visited our center! We offer a variety of projects for children of all ages, from families with infants to high school students!

★ What is the Children's Center like?

Practicing guitar in the rock-themed room



2nd Floor: Room 3

What's "RAITSU"?

We named the Center "RAITSU" after "rights" to be a base for children's rights, and "lights" so as to shine a light for the future.

The Children's Community Building Club bases its activities in this room



2nd Floor: Room 4

Various activities, in cooperation with the community, take place here. Some of the workshops are run by high school students!



1st Floor: Gallery



Front: South Garden

Anybody can get a workout by playing sports such as basketball or table tennis!



1st Floor: Gym

A cosplay show run by the children!



1st Floor: Yuttari (spacious) square

Since the opening of the Center, it has been supporting our community building processes as well as the children, the shopping district, and NPOs that support child-raising, by serving as a base for the club's activities and providing children with a place they can belong in. The Center will continue sending out children's voices so that they will be reflected in our community building process and help in the revitalization of our community. Eventually it will create a child-friendly community. In order to realize this, it's also important for the government to support both children and the community by recognizing children's feelings more so as to bring out their natural power, and training staff in how to empower children. (Kazuya Monma, Chief Investigator, Ishinomaki City Child-Care Support Section)

In the morning, our visitors are families with infants, and in the evening, elementary school students come to play after school. Then, we have junior high and high school students who have just finished afterschool club activities stopping by to chat or play sports with their friends. It looks like an ordinary child center, but our management of the Center is totally different. Through our system of listening to children's voices, the Center reflects children's opinions regarding the usage of the Center and its activities. To help revitalize the community, the Child Council (made up of children), develops ideas on how to use the facility. The Children's Community Building Club then acts upon these ideas. You can see the confident smiles on the children's faces here. The Center is functioning as a base to send out children's messages. (Kyoko Hara, Manager, Ishinomaki City Children's Center)

★ Making management better through children's voices

The children play an active management role at the Ishinomaki City Children's Center. The Center functions as a base to promote child rights and child participation, through the "Child Council" where children review the usage of the center, the "Management Meetings" where adults and children discuss management together, and "Big Voice ~Let's Deliver Our Voice~" where the children listen to opinions from children and their parents who use the center. Here, the children have been speaking out on projects and management.



The Child Council consists of children from the 4th grade to high school students.



The Management Meetings include children, representatives from the Board of Education, the Council of Social Welfare, NPOs that support child-raising, concerned parties from the shopping district, and Community Building officials.



Children's Community Building Leaders Tour 2014

"Children's Community Building Leaders Tour 2014" in the Metropolitan Area

August 8 - 10, 2014 39 participants

The members of the Children's Community Building Clubs in Yamada Town and Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture, and Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, took a field trip to the metropolitan area. They visited related facilities and engaged in activities led by children around their own age to enhance their own clubs' activities. While building a rapport among members, they also collected ideas to improve their own recovery efforts.

● Day 1: Orientation



Children from three regions gather again for the first time in three months!



Learning from a community building specialist



Reporting past activities to people in the metropolitan area!

● Day 2: Fieldwork - Let's find ideas that we can utilize for our own community building!



Visiting the Children's Dream Park where children's opinions are highly respected



Visiting "Play Cities" where only children can become citizens



Visiting "Tachikawa MANGA Park" which stimulates revitalization of the community

● Day 3: Discussion - How to improve our clubs' activities



Sharing opinions on each member's "strengths" discovered during the tour!



Discussing how to make good use of our talents



The past three days were filled with new discoveries!

Voices of Children and Adults

- I want the club to be a place where everybody can relax and feel at home. I want everybody, even first timers and younger children, to be able to engage in activities comfortably. (Female, 15 years old, Yamada Town)
- I will have to think about how I felt and the thoughts behind my own opinions and those of other people. (Female, 12 years old, Rikuzentakata City)
- The lecture from Mr. Nagata (a community building specialist) was so practical that I would like to use it as a reference in our Children's Center. (Female, 16 years old, Ishinomaki City)
- The passion, sincerity and ideas of the children keep amazing me. I am re-motivated to do my best to make their dreams come true. Let's keep working together! (Akio Omae, Chief Engineer, Community Recovery Team, Reconstruction Promotion Section, Yamada Town)
- I saw and heard the children's passion for the recovery and for community building. Their opinions often took me by surprise. I would like to hear their opinions again. (Ryo Monma, Manager of the Education Facility Maintenance Department, Rikuzentakata City Board of Education)
- The tour helped the children realize how capable they have become. It also made them recognize the challenges awaiting them in the future. The children are trying hard to utilize what they have learned to help in our community development. We, as workers of the Children's Center, will keep trying our best to support them. (Shiho Goto, staff, Ishinomaki City Children's Center)



● Facilities/Organizations Visited:

- 1 Saitama Prefecture: Wako Kodomo Café
- 2 Tokyo: Tachikawa MANGA Park
- 3 Tokyo: Musashino Place in Musashino City
- 4 Tokyo: Nakano City High Teen Meeting
- 5 Kanagawa Prefecture: The Kawasaki City Children's Dream Park
- 6 Chiba Prefecture: Sakura Children's City NPO

Tohoku Children's Community Building Summit

The 5th Tohoku Children's Community Building Summit: Towns that grow up with us in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture

May 5, 2014 204 Participants (82 Children and 122 Adults from 14 Prefectures)

In addition to members of the Children's Community Building Clubs from three regions, children from Fukushima, who participated in the "Hear Our Voice" project, participated and made presentations on their past activities towards the recovery process and the current situation of their communities. Joined by the Superintendent of the Board of Education, government officials and other policy makers, the children together with adults engaged in discussions on how to improve their communities.



All the participants, children and adults from all over the county, came together and spoke out on, "What I want to tell people around me" at the summit.



To my co-workers: I want you to know that the hard work of children pushed the government to take action. I want you to feel the affection that we received from children in the affected areas.



To everybody: Everybody would increase their love for our community if there were more opportunities to talk about community building, not only in the affected areas, but in other areas also.

To my friends: You may not be familiar with what has happened, so I want you to take the disaster and recovery more seriously by learning what children around our age are doing in terms of the recovery process here.



To my family: I think our future is renewed due to the equal communication that has occurred between children and adults.



Voices of the Children and Adults

- ⓪ I learned the importance of conveying a message. We can start with those who are around us. (Member of the Children's Community Building Club, female, 16 years old, Yamada Town, Iwate Prefecture)
- ⓪ It made me realize my feelings regarding the disaster were fading away. I think it is important for me to hold onto my opinions and continue to share them. (Female, 15 years old, Nagano Prefecture)
- ⓪ It teaches us the significance of child participation in each community. Schools and the government have to create environments where child participation can take place. (School Official)

Post-summit festival held in the Children's Center on the day following the Summit



Participants reported on the Summit through events and booklets outside of the Tohoku area.

Hear Our Voice 9 ~Survey on Child Participation 2014~

Following "Hear Our Voice 1" in 2011 and "Hear Our Voice 7" in 2012, between September and October 2014, we conducted an "Attitude Survey on Child Participation 2014" for children (4th graders to high school students) and adults in three Tohoku regions (Yamada Town and Rikuzentakata City in Iwate Prefecture, and Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture).

"Do you want to participate in the recovery of your own community?"

A large number of children actually wanted to participate in the recovery of their community, but had found a lack of information and opportunities.

- The results showed that almost 70% of the 14,000 children answered, "I want to participate in the recovery." (Table 1)
- However, only 60% of them responded "yes" to the question, "Have you done anything for the recovery of your community?" This number is smaller than the number of children who wanted to participate. Also, where the above two questions were answered negatively, the most common reasons given were: "Do not know what to do," and, "Never had a chance to." (Table 2)

Table 1

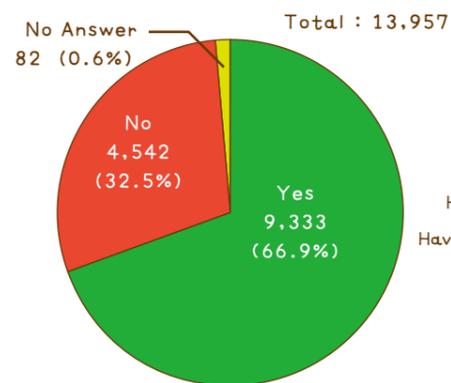
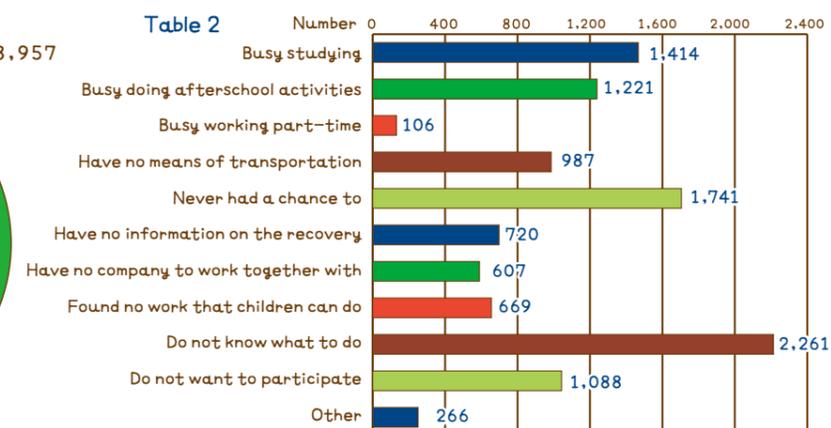


Table 2



Voice of the children

- ⓪ The adults often tell us that there is nothing children can do for the recovery however, there are things that we can do like discussing among ourselves, learning how much the recovery has progressed, and even passing our experiences on to the next generation. Also, there are things that we, as children, can only understand, so please let us participate in the recovery. (5th grade student, female, Ishinomaki City)
- ⓪ There are a lot of things that we can do as children, so we should be more involved through volunteer work and other activities towards the recovery instead of leaving all the responsibilities to be handled by adults. (Junior high school 2nd year, male, Yamada Town)
- ⓪ I really want to know the truth. It's not fair that you are not telling us the truth simply because we are children. Often the adults tell us that we make them hopeful about the future, but honestly, I have no idea what to do. If anything, we should be the ones who need to know the truth, shouldn't we? (Junior high school 2nd year, female, Rikuzentakata City)
- ⓪ We are getting new buildings in Yamada Town. Construction is on going, and it feels like we have fewer parks now. Please revitalize our community without taking away our trees and parks. (Junior high school 2nd year, female, Yamada Town)
- ⓪ It is good to put up new buildings as they bring in more tourists. Some people however, have feelings towards places that were ruined by the earthquake and tsunami and are waiting for them to reopen. I am one of them. It would be nice if the old buildings can be preserved. (High school 3rd year, female, Rikuzentakata City)
- ⓪ It might be difficult, but it would be nice to take care of our mental health while rebuilding our community. We can see the mood changes in adults, like them getting angry, and it confuses us. (Junior high school 1st year, female, Ishinomaki City)

Voice of Staff

This year, 14,000 children spoke out from Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures! Societies where children can speak out and participate are what the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child value the most. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In cooperation with the government and other community members, we will keep supporting children through providing information and opportunities so that they can speak out and participate. Speaking Out From Tohoku!

Hear Our Voice ~Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)~

Children have taken action towards improving disaster risk reduction in the world. Children transmitted their thoughts and opinions based on their own experiences to the world!

●March 30 – 31, 2014 SCJ Workshop for the sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR)

A total of 37 children from Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures participated in the workshop for the sixth AMCDRR held in Thailand to speak out from Tohoku.



“What if I were a Prime Minister?” Each member thought about what the government needs to do in order to minimize the risk of disaster for children. What would you do?



~My Contribution to DRR around the World~

Messages resulting from the passionate exchange and sharing of opinions during discussions at the two-day workshop.

Voice of Children

- ◎ Each participant expressed their opinions, using their own words. (Female, 11 years old, Iwate Prefecture)
- ◎ We were able to express ourselves by writing and talking. (Female, 11 years old, Miyagi Prefecture)
- ◎ I was glad that I participated in this workshop. I started to think that it is actually fun to communicate with other people and to make assertions. (Female, 14 years old, Iwate Prefecture)
- ◎ I could even talk about things that I have never shared with my friends before with other participants who shared my same passion.” (Female, 14 years old, Miyagi Prefecture)
- ◎ I would like to learn more opinions and experiences that other people have had and take them into account. (Male, 14 years old, Fukushima Prefecture)
- ◎ It gave me a great opportunity to think about disaster risk reduction awareness of people in other communities. (Female, 16 years old, Fukushima Prefecture)

2011	2012	2013
12 December	2 February	3 March
Submitted Children's Opinion Papers to three cities in two prefectures	Submitted Children's Opinion Paper to the Reconstruction Agency	Participated in the World Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
	Participated in the World Ministerial Conference on Disaster Reduction	SCJ Workshop for the Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
		5 May
		Participated in the Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

●June 24 – 26, 2014 The Sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

The theme of the conference was to tackle issues around disaster risk reduction in Asia. Three representatives from Tohoku, who were elected by the children attending the SCJ workshop, held on March 30 and 31, participated in the Children and Youth Forum held in Thailand via the Internet and spoke out about their thoughts and opinions.

If I were a Prime Minister, I would establish a global disaster risk reduction organization for children and provide them with opportunities where they can share their opinions, transcending borders. (Female, 16 years old, Yamada Town, Iwate Prefecture)



If I were a Prime Minister, I would place mental health counselors in each area, so they can listen to the voices of children. If the children had someone to talk to like I do, it would benefit a lot of children since they wouldn't have to carry their worries by themselves. (Female, 16 years old, Iwanuma City, Miyagi Prefecture)



If I were a Prime Minister, I would commit to creating a safe environment for the children through the abandonment of nuclear power generation. I would promote recreational programs through which the children can play outside as much as they want and release their concerns and stress as much as possible. Also, I would create opportunities where children can learn more about alternative energy, share their experience of 3.11 and exchange opinions about the future. (Female, 17 years old, Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture)



Preparatory workshops for the Sixth AMCDRR were held in each Asian country. Over 1,000 children participated and held discussions on disaster risk reduction. Our representatives were supposed to attend the forum that took place in Thailand however, because of safety concerns surrounding Thailand's then political instability, they instead participated in a videoconference via the Internet.

If I were a Prime Minister



The conference hall was full of participants from Asian countries



Staff handed out the summary of the children's voices to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction!

Voices of the Child Delegates

- ◎ I was able to play the role of representative because Save the Children staff, club members, and friends of mine gave me advice and support. My presentation went well because of you, and my appreciation will stay with me for the rest of my life. If I have an opportunity like this again, I would challenge myself to see how well I could do overseas. I would like to see the situation in other countries, study them, and inform those who are around me. (Female, 16 years old, Yamada Town, Iwate Prefecture)
- ◎ I was so nervous that I thought I might pass out on the day of our presentation. As the representatives from other countries pointed out during the question and answer period, this conference will be in vain unless our voices are reflected. The discussions on issues that each country is facing struck me the most. (Female, 14 years old, Iwanuma City, Miyagi Prefecture)
- ◎ When I was elected as a representative, I was happy that I could speak out, but at the same time, I was really worried if I could handle it. It was unfortunate that we couldn't make it to Thailand, but we managed to figure out how to deliver our messages in the limited time before the conference. I was happy when they gave us a big round of applause after our speech. I will keep believing in myself and continue to speak out. (Female, 17 years old, Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture)

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in Sendai City in March 2015, and a global action plan as a framework, which follows the “Hyogo Framework for Action,” will be developed. Based on their personal experience, children from Tohoku will keep participating and speaking out to the world!

■Voice of Children ~Looking Back on our Activity~ ■

Yamada



I joined the club when I was a 4th grader, hoping to be able to speak like my brother who was already a member. My mother used to ask me if I could make a public presentation or keep up with the club's activities. Now that I've been a member for a while and we have younger members, I feel the need to teach them what we have achieved. We have been working on the "Yamada Karuta" project since November 2013. When they first suggested that I make a presentation about the project at my school, I didn't think I could do it. I remember that my mother was worried, and wondered if I could make a public speech. I also remembered, however, that I was actually ok being an emcee for the 4th Children's Community Building Clubs of Tohoku Summit. I think it's harder to make a speech in front of people you are close to, but it was great! Since I joined the club, I have become more capable of doing things than before. I want to continue making public speeches. It is because I don't want adults to tell us children that we can't do anything on our own. (12 years old, female, membership 30 months)

Rikuzentakata



I first learned about the club at "Machi Talk★" back in 2013. I participated because I wanted to know about child-led community building. I kept on participating as I enjoyed it so much. The other club members and staff are very cheerful and we have been sharing opinions about a lot of things. To me the club is a place of "smiles." We put smiles on those who come to our area meeting or the Children's Community Building Clubs in Tohoku Summits. I also believe our activities bring smiles to the community. The club's activities have convinced me that I want to engage in work to create an environment for children to convey their messages in the future. In order to bring a smile to our community, I will try my best and do whatever I can do at my age. (13 years old, male, membership 20 months)

Ishinomaki



When I joined the club, I wondered if I should remain with the club or what would happen to our community. Although there were times we were really busy, I was able to build a rapport with various people that I met through the club's activities. I also learned a lot of things over the past three years. I am grateful for that. What I learned by being a club member was the current situation and activities of other areas, methods of community building that we don't learn at school, and the role of children such as being able to provide inputs that are different from those of adults. From now on, I want to watch the younger members, while conveying messages to the public and leading others. It is because they will most likely stay involved with the community while I may leave this prefecture to study somewhere else. (15 years old, male, membership 39 months)

It's been three and a half years since the disaster. The construction has visibly been going on, however, I do not feel that our community has recovered or been rejuvenated. We are worried about our future, but we have to be the ones to figure it out. Even though they are just small changes, I want to make a difference each day and achieve the recovery and rejuvenation of our community. (14 years old, male, membership 39 months)



I used to have real low self-esteem before joining the club and even hated to see myself in the mirror. I was always walking with my head down. At school, I couldn't speak out, and I would rather follow my friends instead of voicing my own opinions. However, our club has three promises that the members have to keep: "participate" "respect," and "keeping confidentiality." Based on these, the other club members listened to my opinions without being critical of me when I talked. I became more positive and started to feel like I needed to express myself more. That's why the club is a place where I can be myself. In the beginning, "Matsushii" was just a rough sketch that I drew on a post-it note. Later, it was adopted as an official character of Yamada Town. It convinced me that dreams can come true if we work hard at them. As I spend more time thinking about community building, I find myself falling in love with my community. I want to keep working on making my community better, which consequently, will attract more people to come and visit. I am very grateful that I can be a part of the club as it provides me with the opportunity to express myself, which I didn't have before. (17 years old, female, membership 30 months)

"Role" is a word that you could not previously find in my vocabulary. I think I might have learned it through sharing opinions with the other club members. I can't play a role and that is my weak point. Our Mayor told us that we, the children, are the ones to change our post-disaster community. I tried to figure out what our "roles" as children are, but I still could not play my role. There is a difference between realistic and existential roles. After hearing the words of the mayor, "That the children create the future," I started feeling that I wanted to challenge myself to achieve just that. During our "Machi Talk★" activities, someone pointed out to us that now is the time for us to play our existential roles, here, in Japan. With the help from Save the Children and community members, I would like to revitalize our community. Once again, "role" is not in my vocabulary, nor is "responsibility," however, I know the word "achieve." I wonder if our club and I will be "achieving" the dream? (14 years old, female, membership 28 months)

It was difficult for me to continue club activities while studying hard and engaging in afterschool club activities. The concept of children-led activities like our club is new to people around me, and also to myself, so they understood neither the purpose of the club nor my passion for it. They were worried that the community-building club might interfere with my academic achievement or afterschool club activities. However, since I am stubborn, I just keep telling people that I have to go anyway. At first, they told me that it was not a place we should visit that often, but as time went by, they gradually changed their attitude and started encouraging me whenever I left for the club. I started to think that I wanted to work for a social service organization. Our club currently has a lot of elementary school students, and they often surprise us with their unique opinions. Despite the fact that we have so many different members with varying opinions, all the members cooperate with each other to realize each other's visions. This always amazes me. Since I am from the countryside, I only had contact with a handful of people before I joined the club. By joining the club, my horizons were broadened and I got to work with and know people from Yamada Town and Ishinomaki City. Places I wouldn't usually visit. It's been like a revolution to me. (17 years old, female, membership 39 months)

The Tohoku region, our home, suffered severe damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. A month after the disaster, we were still dealing with the aftermath, and in fact, some places were still filled with mud left by the tsunami, which forced people to wear rubber boots just to walk. All I could do was to accept what was happening, and I was feeling completely helpless. This has changed since I joined the club in 2011, which became my foundation. I started to enjoy thinking, talking, and speaking out. Through communicating with others, I started to think about my future and developed a desire to go to university. The reason why I, being a person with a short attention span, could stay involved in the club for over three years was the fact that the club gave me a different kind of joy each time I attended. I enjoyed seeing things that I had never seen before and hearing about things that I had never even imagined. In order to make changes towards a better recovery, I think we, as survivors of the disaster, need to speak out. I believe the only way to let the government know what we really want is through submitting an actual request. I think that it's not right to complain without taking any action, and that it is our responsibility to tell them our needs. Thus, I believe our role is to keep sending out our messages so that more people become interested in our activities. (16 years old, female, membership 36 months)

I am not good at expressing my opinions, so I tend to just go along with other people's opinions. I was never confident, and always worried too much about if my opinion was right or not, so I never spoke out. After the disaster, I was very sad to see what had happened to our community and was worried, wondering if we could stay here. I couldn't think about the future. Then, I started to feel like, "I should do something if there is anything I can do," and that was when I learned about the Children's Community Building Club. Right after I joined the club, I was still unable to say anything whenever I was asked to speak out. I got frustrated, and wondered why I had joined the club, and it pushed me to start expressing myself. After trying several times, I became more confident. I even submitted my writing to a competition and applied to a program to study abroad and made it happen. I never even dreamt of being capable of this drastic change over three to four years. Also, I started doing volunteer work outside of the club's activities. It convinced me that we can do anything if we try. The Children's Center, having started out as just a plan for our dream town, has now been realized and has become the symbol of our recovery. This should not be the end, rather, we need to discuss more about the recovery and how to make a better community. (15 years old, female, membership 39 months)

★ This is a summary of the voices of children who participated in the panel discussion at the Children's Community Building Leaders Tour in 2014, or who were present in the roundtable discussions.



Voices of the Youth ~Looking Back on Past Activities~

Here are voices of ex-members who graduated from the clubs as they graduated from high school in the spring of 2014.

The activities of the Children's Community Building Club expanded my world. I am studying psychology and community building through information media in university. Meeting with a lot of people from a variety of backgrounds through the club's activities actually helped me to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. It taught me that we could all be unique in our opinions and ways of doing things, but we can still join forces to accomplish something as long as we share the same goals. Nobody is wrong, we are just different. It also taught me the joy of realizing our dreams. I learned the importance of trying things without hesitation. I will remember what I learned from the club and would like to keep watching the activities of the Children's Community Building Clubs.



Nobuhiro Takahashi
ex-member of Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City

My experience at the Children's Community Building Club helped guide my decisions regarding my future plans. I chose to go to a university in Iwate Prefecture, and I want to go back to my hometown when I start a family. This is because I re-discovered the endless appeal of my community through the club's activities. I was fortunate that we, together with other community members, contributed to making our community more appealing. I will never forget my experiences in the club. Hopefully, I can create a comfortable place for everybody to share opinions about our community and our lives, and work there in the future. I will keep supporting the club's activities. Keep going!



Akari Otomo
ex-member of Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City

Voice of a Specialist

The projects of the Children's Community Building Clubs, such as the Ishinomaki City Children's Center, "Yamada Karuta," and "Machi talk★," have been surely but slowly beginning to take shape. Considering these were just vague ideas in 2011, it's such a huge change. Post Traumatic Growth (PTG), is the experience of positive change that occurs as a result of struggle with highly challenging life crises (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, pp.1-18). "Before the disaster, I used to think it was no use talking with adults." "My experience at the club made me want to share my opinions with adults." These are the actual voices of children. They came to the realization that there are adults who are eager to listen to them, which brings a positive change to the community. That is something that they never even dreamt of before the disaster. They matured through their hardship. It is not quite the same as going back to the pre-disaster state, as they are striving to improve the community by speaking out and letting their voices be heard. "I want to study community building in university." "I want to let the world know about our community." Some club members reevaluate their values and have started questioning themselves about why and what they want to study. Those questions were brought to them after they



exchanged opinions with different people of varying backgrounds through the clubs' activities. In school, everything appears to have returned to normal, and some people claim that all the children need to do now is study. So, do children now need to focus on academia and only think about community building when they become an adult? I would disagree. I believe that involving children in the imminent issues of building our communities is the first step to revealing the future, although it may seem to be a diversion. I see a huge potential in the communities that realize child participation.

Yoshie Abe

Visiting Research Scholar, Research Institute for Letters, Arts and Science, Waseda University

Poster by the Children who have been Engaged in the Recovery Effort in Tohoku



This year will mark the four-year anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami that occurred on March 11, 2011. The children are living out today while striving to achieve the recovery of their communities. For the world to see them and hear their voices, we, together with the children, created a poster. It was posted inside trains and on the walls of major stations of the Tokyo Metropolitan Subway for free from the 7th to 23rd of April 2014, as a part of Tokyo's Recovery Relief Support project. People from all over the country helped us, and the poster was seen in 14 prefectures.

Voices of the Adults ~Looking Back on the Children's Activity~

Yamada

It's encouraging to see our children growing up. They are maturing by overcoming numerous obstacles. I remember hearing the students' representative at their graduation ceremony saying, "Although we, the children of Yamada Town, lost a lot of things, at the same time, it taught us a lot of things." Hearing this made me believe that they are moving forward. Every time I hear an activity report of the Children's Community Building Club in Yamada Town, I realize how much they have grown and how strong they have become. I thank the staff members so much for supporting the club's activities over the past three years!



Shimitsu Sato, Mayor
Yamada Town

I am a big supporter of the KYT members. Their unique approach of "planning, processing, process-goal, monitoring, and stepping-up" has taught me a lot of things. I am glad to see that their continuous efforts have led to an increase in club membership. It gives me hope to see the children of Yamada Town joining forces together to tackle the issues of "what can we do now" and I will keep supporting you!



Hiroyuki Abe, Director
Yamada Town Social Welfare Council Recovery Sasaei Center

We have finally completed the "Yamada Karuta" project! I am filled with deep emotion as it was created by community members, under the leadership of the members of the Children's Community Building Club. Through playing Yamada Karuta, I feel love for our magnificent nature, our history and our culture that we have nurtured for the past 7,000 years. To talk about community building, we must know our community. I have so much hope in "Yamada Karuta," that bridges the past, present and future of Yamada Town!



Minako Kawamukai, Chief
Yamada-town Board of Education, the Lifelong Learning Division

When my daughter told me that she wanted to join the Children's Community Building Club, KYT, I encouraged her even though I was worried about if she could keep up with the club's activities. However, she did a great job, being actively involved in the activities with older students, participating in the summits and even emceeing last year. This year, they created "Yamada Karuta" and introduced it to the community. It seems that their opinions are finally being reflected in the recovery process of Yamada Town. Please keep giving your opinions even louder so that your messages can be delivered to more people. You go, KYT!



Noriko Onodera
Caregiver

Rikuzentakata

Our children are taking the recovery and rebuilding of our community seriously. This year, they stayed involved in important discussions regarding building a new library. They went to tour libraries both within and outside of our city, asked for input from various experts, summarized their opinions and new ideas, and finally presented the results of these discussions to our city. I am moved and encouraged by their actions. I hope that they keep playing an active role in the recovery process as we work towards realizing "a town we can not only survive in but live in harmony." The future of Rikuzentakata rests upon their shoulders.



Futoshi Toba, Mayor
City of Rikuzentakata

It is about time to realize "the town we can live in affluence," which has previously been just a vague image to us. Although our expectations from our community may vary, such as wanting to play, talk, or study, we all are going to be happy as long as there is a place to make it happen. I hope the club members keep realizing what they want their community to be. Also, I want them to speak out as much as possible about the development and management of the new library, not just from the children's viewpoint, but as a part of our community. By exchanging opinions, I myself will keep working for the betterment of our community.



Akinari Ota, Manager
Café & Food Bar "Waiwai"

Through a year of participating in the Children's Community Building Club in Rikuzentakata City, I got to see the children grow. I must say it is reassuring. This year, we visited some libraries within and outside of the city to study their facilities, and shared opinions about how to work together with the community. As I spend more time with them, I see them getting better and better in the ways they express their opinions and communicate with each other. Also, their passion to participate in the community building process has become stronger. I hope they can keep their activities and passion alive.



Hiroaki Okubo, Deputy
Manager, Education Department,
Rikuzentakata City Board of
Education

We have gone through so much pain, and I just wanted to forget all about it. I even got used to the dreary scenery of the town, and found myself thinking that's the way our community had been for a long time. That was when I learned that the children were transmitting the "here and now of Rikuzentakata" both within and outside of our community in order to keep our memory of the disaster alive. It made me wonder about myself and realize that I have been too busy with everyday life to think about anything. We must not repeat our mistakes if a tsunami hits again. The children taught me the significance of passing on information to the next generation in order to save lives. I hope that their voices are reflected in the development of our new library and it is made unique. From now on, I would like to support the children with their community work as much as I can.



Takako Kumagai
Caregiver

