



GREETINGS FROM OUR COMMITTEE

Spring is in the air! Welcome sunshine, flowers blooming, trees opening branches everywhere, children playing in Kiwanis Playgrounds, Kiwanis Pancakes Breakfast and more.

You will be especially pleased with our first project article translated in another language, this time Japanese and giving a nod to our international focus. This article was written by one of our committee members, Koji “George” Yoshida from Japan, and tells the story of The Children’s Cafeteria with special services offering children nutritious meals for free or a small amount. The cafeteria also provides safe places to play and socialize. Features include Clubs in Tokyo, Kyoto, Tokushima and others. Thank You, Koji!

Members of our committee are making plans to attend the International Convention in Indianapolis and assist with the Book Drive that has great potential for one of our main areas of emphasis —literacy.

Thank You for all you do and do so very well for our Kiwanis Children. Happy Spring !

Barbara Day and Kelly Boswell
Co-Chairs, Young Children Committee



Barbara Day



Kelly Boswell

IMPORTANT DATES

World Autism Awareness Day

April 2

United Nations’ World Health Day

April 7

Earth Day

April 22

Mother’s Day

May 8

International Day of Families

May 15



FEATURED PROJECT: THE CHILDREN'S CAFETERIA

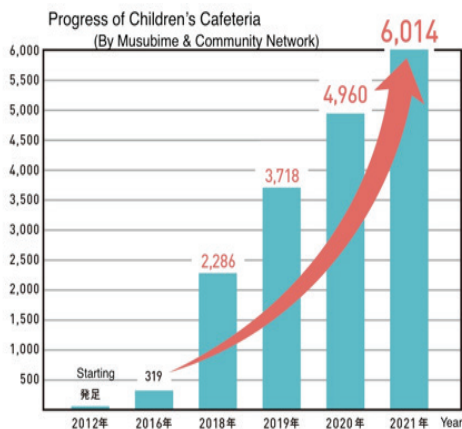
By Past Gov. Koji "George" Yoshida, Japan District

The children's cafeteria is becoming a popular featured service project among Kiwanis clubs in Japan. They are special services offering children nutritious meals for free or a small amount and safe places to socialize.

First, I would like to touch on the significance and history of the children's cafeterias in Japan. They say one in seven children are currently suffering from poverty in Japan. On the other hand, the community has become less connected to residents, and no one can tell for sure who are in poverty. The children's cafeteria is one of the volunteer activities that began in the private sector to save such hidden poor children.

The children's cafeteria is a place where local volunteers provide a nutritious and balanced meal for free or a small amount to children who are not satisfied with the meal their home provides. The advantages include:

1. Homemade, hot, nutritious meals are served for free or at very low price.



2. It is a place for children to communicate with each other, parents, and residents.
3. Children can eat with someone in a homelike atmosphere.

A setting like this becomes an indispensable place for children who are forced to eat solitarily due to family circumstances.

Historically, the children's cafeterias are not such an old activity. They say the first children's cafeteria was triggered by the owner of a grocery store in Ota-ku, Tokyo in 2012. It was the owner of the grocery store who learned that there were a few children who could not eat breakfast and dinner satisfactorily in the neighborhood, and decided to open the cafeteria for them with his own pocket money. Members of a NPO that supported children learned about this activity and incorporated it as one of their programs. Since then, the circle of the program extended to the whole country of Japan in a blink of an eye. In 2016, about 320 children's cafeterias were operated, and thereafter in 2021, 6,000 children's cafeterias were operated. The

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number of the cafeterias increased as much as 20 times just in 5 years. Why could a rapid increase like this be achieved? There seem to be three reasons:

1. The activities that are consistent with the efforts of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) to aim for a better world agreed by the United Nations have captured the sympathy of the Japanese people. In other words, Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere, Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, and Goal 3 : Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, must be an initiative that conforms to the activities.
2. This is because of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami which were unprecedented disasters that struck Japan on March 11, 2011. The loss and damage the disasters have caused to the Japanese people is immeasurable. More than 18,000 people were killed or missing, more than 400,000 homes were lost, vast areas and people suffered from the nuclear disasters caused by the meltdowns at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, and so on so forth. The people felt firsthand the importance of being together and helping each other in the event of such a catastrophe, and they heightened awareness of the importance of living together in everyday life.
3. Local towns and villages are aging, and the number of children in the community is decreasing. These towns and villages are likely on the verge of disappearing soon. When the children's cafeteria is opened, local governments, local companies, volunteer groups, PTAs, the elderly, and other people in the local community who support it will expand the circle of cooperation and try to nurture children. New local relationships arise here, and communication blooms.

In other words, a new positive community is being created. This is one of the reasons why children's cafeterias are rapidly spreading not only in urban areas but also in local communities.

Therefore, the children's cafeteria is not only a place for poverty countermeasures such as feeding children at poverty levels, but also for each citizen, including those who are in a socially vulnerable position, exclusion and friction, it can be an effective means of realizing social inclusion that aims to be a society that supports from loneliness and isolation, incorporates them as a member of the local community, and supports each other.

Some Kiwanis Clubs in Japan have been working on and developing children's cafeteria projects from an early stage, and the Kiwanis Japan District recognizes its significance and have started initiatives to encourages the Kiwanis Clubs to tackle the children's cafeterias in recent years, so that the number of clubs which operate the children's cafeteria is steadily increasing. The spread of children's cafeterias has strengthened the two-way relationship within the community, so that it is supported and appreciated by the parties concerned. I would like to introduce the following examples of Kiwanis Club initiatives.

KIWANIS CLUB OF TOKYO:

Children's Cafeteria: The first children's cafeteria was held in June 2015 with an NPO in Toshima Ward. At that time, there were 41 children who attended. And 19 Kiwanis members participated and supported. In August 2016, it moved to Myohoji Temple in Sugunami Ward, and with the cooperation of Gakushi-Kaikan's

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Restaurant Chef, 230 children were served curry rice, salad and dessert by a top-notch restaurant recipe. Not only serving meals the Tokyo club also provided children with a place to play and communicate. They enjoyed watching a juggling show and a magic show, singing together, and learning Japanese tea ceremony. There appeared a full of joy place to have fun, play card games, and interact each other with children, parents, many collaborators, and Kiwanis members. 17 Kiwanis members and 20 SLP students participated. Since then, it has become an annual event twice a year in spring and summer. At the most, 350 children participated.

Children's Easy Cooking Class: From March 2016, the Tokyo club rents a restaurant at an amusement park in Toshima Ward and has children cook and eat it themselves. Children cook and eat their own meals under the guidance of a professional chef. Because of the fun of making it, children are eating more than usual, and children who want to take another dish come out one after another. After the meal, the children are asked to clean up and then enjoy it fully using the ride ticket specially provided by the amusement park. About 30 children participate in this event every time. About 15 Kiwanis members work together to prepare and clean up. Of course, they eat with children and make efforts to communicate with them across generations. This is also an annual event twice a year.

TERAKOYA (A KIND OF TUTORING SCHOOL):

Since 2017, with the cooperation of Myohoji Temple in Suginami Ward, the Tokyo club has been providing a place for study centered on homework from 9:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays without events at school. The club mainly ask the volunteers of university students in the neighborhood to help children to study. When



the children's study is over before noon, Kiwanis members provide lunch prepared by themselves. The frequency of events is very high, on average, three times a month. About 30 children gather every time. As many as 10 Kiwanis members and volunteers in the neighborhood support each time.

KIWANIS CLUB OF KYOTO:

Since June 2017, the Kyoto club has been holding "Children's Cooking Classes" to encourage elementary and junior high school students from single-parent and double-income families to learn the basics of nutritious and balanced meal cooking. To hold the event, with the cooperation of Osaka Gas, facilities in the Kyoto Research Park have been used. It is a good opportunity for parents to participate in the event and enjoy eating homemade dishes together with their children. The number of participants is around 20 each time.

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KIWANIS CLUB OF TOKUSHIMA:

In July 2019, the club held its first children's cafeteria at weekend-limited restaurant "Saturday/Sunday Restaurant Sky to Sea" in Minamisuehiro-cho, Tokushima City. After that, the kitchen of the public facility became unusable due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the children's cafeteria could not be held. Tokushima Kiwanis Club came to an idea to rent a kitchen car from Tokushima Food Bank and drove it to the facility to offer yakisoba (fried noodles) to students and staff members of the schoolchildren's nursery club. Kiwanis dolls are presented to the students as well. This project was planned and implemented 5 times in fiscal 2020. About 40 elementary school students in grades 1-4 and 8 staff members took part in it, and 10 Kiwanis members worked together for it.

KIWANIS CLUB OF CHIYODA:

In March 2021, the club started a children's cafeteria at Kageoka-no-Ie (Home of Kageoka), a facility for children in Shibuya Ward, Tokyo. In a joint project with the voluntary organization "Goo Choki Par", with the cooperation of the Minato City Social Welfare Council assuming local elementary school students as users, flyers are distributed to local elementary schools, and reservations are made online for participation. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the club has taken the form of handing out lunch boxes so far. At first, about 60 meals were prepared and sold out. It is held once a month. The COVID-19 pandemic is over and the return to the dining room method is longed by the club to gather many children.

KIWANIS CLUB OF KUMAMOTO:

Since 2017, the club has been supporting the Kumamoto Children's Cafeteria Network by providing staff and fundraising.

KIWANIS CLUB OF WAKAYAMA:

The club donated rice (equivalent to 60,000 yen) as ingredients to a children's cafeterias in Wakayama City making efforts to serve despite of the pandemic.

KIWANIS CLUB OF NIIGATA:

The club donated money to the food pantries which distribute bento boxes to support students.



FEATURED PROJECT: 子ども食堂

By Past Gov. Koji “George” Yoshida, Japan District

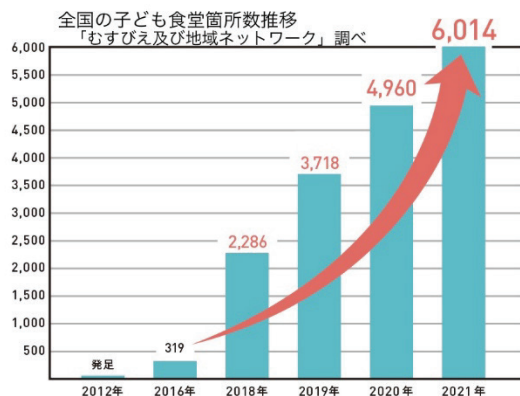
子ども食堂が日本のキワニスクラブの看板プロジェクトとして人気が出てきた

—子ども食堂とは、子ども達に無料ないし少額で栄養価の高い食事を提供し、友だちなどと親しく交際するための安全な場所を提供する特別なボランティア活動である—

まず、日本における子ども食堂の意義と歴史について考えてみたい。現在、日本の子ども達の7人に1人が貧困に苦しんでいるといわれる。一方、地域社会では住民同士のつながりが希薄になって、誰が貧困の状態にあるのか分からなくなっている。そうした隠れた貧困層の子ども達を救うために民間で始まったボランティア活動の一つが子ども食堂である。

子ども食堂とは、食事を満足にとれない子ども達に地域住民のボランティアが無料または少額で栄養バランスの良い食事を提供する場のことである。メリットとしては次のようなことが挙げられる。

1. 手作りの温かい、栄養バランスのとれた食事が無料または格安で食べることが出来る。



2. 子ども同士、親同士そして地域住民同士のコミュニケーションの場となる。
3. アットホームな雰囲気ですぐに誰かと食事が出来る。

こうした場合は、家庭事情から孤食を余儀なくされる子ども達にとってかけがえのない場所となっている。

歴史的にみると子ども食堂は古くからある活動ではない。東京都大田区にある八百屋の店主が2012年に始めたのがきっかけと言われている。近所に朝ごはんや晩ごはんを満足に食べることが出来ない子ども達が少なからずいることを知った店主が自らのポケットマネーで始めたものである。その後、この活動を知った子ども支援のNPOのメンバーが子ども食堂を自分たちの活動に取り入れた。そして、瞬く間にこの活動の輪が日本全国に広がっていった。2016年には約320の子ども食堂が運営されていたが、2021年には約6000もの子ども食堂が運営されている。5年間で約20倍に膨らんだのだ。それではなぜこのように急激な増加を遂げたのであろうか。理由は3つあると思われる。

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1. 子ども食堂は、国際連合で合意されたより良い世界を目指すための持続可能な開発目標 (SDGS) の取り組みに合致する活動であり国民の共感を得た。すなわち、目標1の貧困をなくそう、目標2の飢餓をZEROに、そして目標3、全ての人に健康と福祉を、に合致する取り組みであること。
2. 2011年3月11日に日本を襲った未曾有の大災害である東日本大地震および津波災害の影響によるもの。この災害が日本国民に与えた被害は計り知れない。18,000人を超える死者および行方不明者、400,000戸を超える住宅喪失そして福島第一原子力発電所のメルトダウンによる広範囲の地域を巻き込む原子力災害など枚挙にいとまがない。こうした大災害の際に一緒にいて助け合うことの重要性を国民が肌で感じ、日常のともに過ごす生活の重要性について意識が高まったこと。
3. 地方の町村は高齢化が進んでおり、地域社会のこどもの数も減少している。こうした町村は近い将来消滅する瀬戸際にある。こうした町村に子ども食堂が開設されるとこれをサポートする地域社会の地方公共団体、地場企業、ボランティアグループ、PTA、高齢者などあらゆる層が協力の輪を広げて子ども達を育もうとする。ここに新たな地域の間人関係が生じ、コミュニケーションが活発化し、助け合いの輪が広がる。言い換えると新たな前向きなコミュニティが出来上がってくる。これが都市部のみならず地方の地域社会に子ども食堂が急速に浸透している理由の一つと考えられる。

従って、子ども食堂は貧困レベルにある子ども達への栄養補給といった貧困対策の場であるばかりではなく、社会的に弱い立場にある人々を含め市民ひとりひとりを排除や摩擦、孤独や孤立から援護

し、地域社会の一員として取り込み、支えあう社会を目指す社会的包摂を実現するための有効な手段となり得るのである。

日本のキワニスクラブの中には子ども食堂のプロジェクトに早くから取り組み発展させているクラブがあり、キワニス日本地区もその意義を認識し、子ども食堂を奨励しているので近年取り組みを始めるクラブも増えている。子ども食堂の普及によりコミュニティ内部の双方向の関係が強化されたと利用者並びにコミュニティから感謝されている。以下キワニスクラブの取り組み例についてご紹介したい。

東京キワニスクラブ:

子ども食堂: 東京クラブは、2015年6月最初の子ども食堂を豊島区のNPOと共催で実施した。この時は、41人の子どもの利用者があり、19人のキワニス会員がサポートのため参加した。2016年8月に杉並区の妙法寺に場所を移し、学士会館精養軒のシェフの協力を得て230名の子ども達に一流レストランのカレーライス、サラダ、デザートを提供した。食事提供のみならず、子ども達に遊びとコミュニケーションの場を提供、ジャグリング、マジックを見たり、一緒に歌ったり、日本の茶道を楽しんだり、カードゲームをしたり、子ども、親、協力者とキワニス会員の楽しい交流の場となった。17人のキワニス会員と20人のSLPの学生が参加した。以降春と夏の年2回開催の恒例のイベントとなった。最も多い時で350名の子どもが参加した。

子どもかんたん料理教室: 2016年3月から豊島区の遊園地のレストランを借りて子ども達に自ら料理して食べてもらおうという企画である。子ども達は、プロのシェフの

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指導により自分で料理を作って食べる。作る楽しさもあって子ども達も普段以上に食が進む。料理をお替りする子どもも続出する。食事が終わるとあとかたづけをして、遊園地から特別に提供された乗り物券を使って思う存分楽しむ。毎回30人前後の子ども達がこのイベントに参加する。15人前後のキワニス会員が協力して準備とあとかたづけをする。キワニス会員も子ども達と一緒に食事を取り世代を超えたコミュニケーションを計る。これも年2回の恒例のイベントとなっている。

寺子屋:

東京クラブは2017年から杉並区妙法寺の協力を得て学校でイベントのない土曜日に9時から13時まで宿題を中心とした勉強の場を提供している。勉強を主にみるのは近所の大学生のボランティアである。昼前に子どもの勉強が終わるとキワニス会員が準備した昼食をともに食べる。開催頻度は高く、平均すると週三回のイベントである。毎回30人前後の子ども達が集まる。この活動には、毎回キワニス会員と近所のボランティア10名前後が協力してサポートしている。

京都キワニスクラブ:

京都クラブは2017年6月から一人親や共働き家庭の小中学生らに栄養バランスのとれた食事作りの基本を学んでもらおうと「子ども料理教室」を開催している。開催にあたっては、大阪ガスの協力を得て京都リサーチパーク内の施設を使わせてもらっている。保護者にも参加してもらい、手作りの料理を共に楽しく食する機会となっている。参加人数は毎回20人前後。



徳島キワニスクラブ:

徳島クラブは、2019年7月徳島市南末広町の週末限定レストラン「土日レストラン空と海」において子ども食堂を初めて開催した。その後、コロナ禍により公共施設の調理場が使えなくなり、子ども食堂が開催できなくなった。そこで徳島キワニスクラブは一計を案じ、とくしまフードバンクからキッチンカーを借りて学童保育クラブへ焼きそばを提供してきた。コロナ禍に対応する移動式子ども食堂である。同時にその場で子ども達にキワニスドールをプレゼントする。このユニークなプロジェクトを2020年度中に5回行った。1年生から4年生までの小学生40人前後と職員8人がこのサービスを利用している。キワニス会員10名ほどが力を合わせてこのプロジェクトを実施している。

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千代田キワニスクラブ:

千代田クラブは、2021年3月に渋谷区の子どものための施設「景丘の家」で子ども食堂を開始した。任意団体「グー・チョコキ・パー」との共同プロジェクトで、利用者は地域の小学生である。港区社会福祉協議会の協力を得て、地域の小学校にチラシを配り、利用者にはネットでの予約をお願いしている。コロナ禍のため今のところお弁当を配る形を採っている。最初は60食ほど用意したが、すぐに完売した。月一回の開催である。コロナ禍が収束し、子どもを一堂に集めた食堂方式への復帰が待たれている。

熊本キワニスクラブ:

熊本クラブは、2017年から熊本県こども食堂ネットワークを人的並びに資金的に支援している。

和歌山キワニスクラブ:

和歌山クラブはコロナ禍でも運営に努力する和歌山市内のこども食堂に対し食材として必要なコメ(6万円相当)を寄贈した。

新潟キワニスクラブ:

新潟クラブは、学生を応援する「フードパントリー」の弁当配布のために寄付している。



YOUNG CHILDREN: UPDATE

YOUNG CHILDREN VIDEOS

Check out the first of the committee's **5 Steps to...** series on our youtube channel!



HELPING THE CHILDREN OF UKRAINE

Below is a short list of organizations that are meeting the needs of Ukrainian children:

[UNICEF](#)

[Kiwanis Children's Fund in Europe](#)

[International Committee of the Red Cross](#)

[Save the Children](#)

COMMITTEE RESOURCES

SERVICE PROJECT GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook will be updated periodically, so if you have any projects to contribute, please send them to me.

COMMITTEE BROCHURE

An education piece for your members about the committee's work.

FACEBOOK GROUP

Join the group to view educational articles, resources, and participate in discussions online. This is a private group - so if you need an invitation to join, please let me know.

VIRTUAL CONVENTION TABLE

Downloadable resources for Kiwanis Districts to share at events.

Kiwanis International Committee on Young Children

Barbara Day, Carolinas, Co-Chair

Kelly Boswell, Illinois-Eastern Iowa, Co-Chair

Ava Adams, New England and Bermuda

Alan Penn & Jeri Penn, Ohio

Linda and Steve Steinbrunner, Ohio

Jennifer Wolff, Capital

Koji "George" Yoshida, Japan

Diana Ragbeer Murray, Florida

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