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## Compilation of "Disaster Prevention Handbook for People with Autism" and its Use in the Great East Japan Earthquake

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**Purpose:** This article describes the general plan and the effectiveness of "Disaster Prevention Handbooks", both "for service providers" and "for people with autism and their families" published by Autism Society Japan Publishing Department.

**Background:** The handbooks have been developed because special strategies suitable for the characteristics of autism are required for service providers to help people with autism at the time of disasters. Planning own evacuation plans are also required for people with autism and their families, and copies of handbooks have been distributed free of charge to the related organizations and through the Internet.

**At the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011:** The next day of the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011, Autism Society Japan set up an earthquake disaster page on the web site and made the "Disaster Prevention Handbook" available to be downloaded on cellular phones. The highest number of access to the web site was nearly 25,000 a day.

**Revision of the handbook:** Although the effectiveness of the handbooks have been proven in the Great East Japan Earthquake, they were revised to 1) teach tsunami, 2) offer the disaster prevention education and disaster preparedness drills, 3) set up shelters and individual plans for people with autism, 4) promote mental care, 5) cope with radiation, and 6) prepare at the work place. The Publishing Department aims to make the handbook also useful in daily lives, because "every day is just co like living through a disaster" for people with autism.

**Multimedia DAISY version:** The handbook was also transformed into multimedia DAISY format for persons with print disabilities including visual impairment, dyslexia, autism, intellectual disabilities, upper limb disability who have difficulties to handle books or piece of pages. Educational program to use DAISY version will be developing soon.

**English Version:** The DAISY version handbook is translated into English and will be distributed through the Internet for English Speaking people who live and visit areas that are

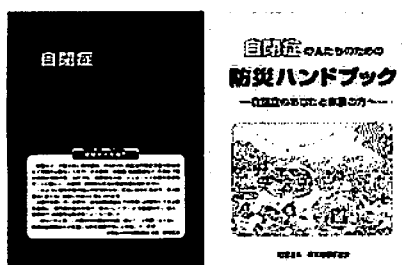


Fig.1 Disaster Preparedness Handbook for Service Providers (Left) and for Persons with Autism and their families (Right).

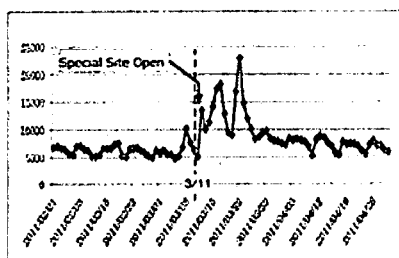


Fig. 2 Numbers of Access to the JAS web site before and after the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011. The number of access was increased significantly soon after the handbook was introduced on one of the major Japanese newspapers.

### Contents

#### Introduction

A variety of natural disasters

In case of Emergency

Evacuation Drill

Register a list of persons who needs some help at the emergency evacuation at local communities.

Q&A

Evacuation Shelter

Health Care including Mental Health

Towards the restoration

Disaster Preparedness in peace time

Disaster Preparedness meeting at home

[Help Me Card]

Fig.3 Contents of the handbook.

### In Case of Emergency

1. Calm down.

Breathe deeply.

Count down up to 3.



2. Keep yourself safe.

In case of an earthquake, protect your head with something such as bags.

Move to the safe place where books, glasswares, and sign boards would be dropped down on yourself.



3. Ask help to anybody.

Call for help loudly.

Blowing a whistle to tell where you are, if you are burned under houses or furnitures.

Call the emergency dial to make contact with your family member.



4. Move to a safe place like a shelter with your family or neighbours.

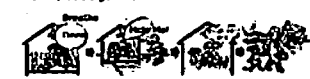


Fig.4 A sample of discriptions in the handbook. The handbook will be demonstrated on iPad.