

English

英語

# Do you have concerns about your child's development?

~For parents raising children in Japan~



National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities  
Information and Support Center for Persons  
with Developmental Disorders

# Introduction

Japan has been seeing an increase in the number of foreign people living and raising their children in the country. This brochure is aimed at parents with foreign background who are:

- Struggling with parenting in a country with a different culture and lifestyle
- Concerned about their child's development
- Having difficulty in finding the information they need for their child because of a language barrier
- In need of child-rearing support

If you are currently worried about your child's development, you may feel lost, not knowing where to go or whom to ask for help. Japan does have institutions around the country that provide support for parents who are concerned about their child's development. We hope this brochure helps you connect to information and support that you may need.

National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities  
Information and Support Center for Persons  
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# To learn about your child's development

You may notice that your child...

From birth to 3 years old

- Shows delay in language development

- Has stopped using words s/he was using

- Is difficult to communicate with, or communicates one-way

- Always engages in the same play activity

- Shows strong aversion to a specific thing or place
- Sticks to the "sameness" (same things, same routines, etc.)

- Often has major tantrums that last a long time

- Repeats self-harming behaviors (hitting his/her head, biting his/her arm, etc.)



- Cries terribly at night for months
- Does not take a nap and/or has difficulty falling asleep
- Picky about food and/or drink



- Does not or rarely make eye contact
- Does not like to be held
- Does not show much change in facial expression
- Does not respond to name



- Slow in motor development such as holding up his/her head, sitting, and walking
- Has soft muscles, and/or difficulty in maintaining

- Is very restless
- Always moves around and needs constant attention
- Is distracted very easily



- Does not respond to sounds
- Is very sensitive to sounds (covers the ears)



## From 3 to 6 years old (school age)

- Not interested in other children and/or does not play with other children
- Has limited interests (in certain colors, trademarks, symbols, letters, numbers, etc.)
- Repeats the same questions or same topics
- Often spends time alone



- Does not care about rules or promises
- Starts one-sided conversation and stops when s/he is done
- Not good at playing with friends and/or gets violent with them
- Is restless and is in constant motion
- Wanders off on his/her own
- Does not listen to directions/explanations till the end



- Is often not aware of others talking to him/her
- Does not understand letters or numbers well
- Has something s/he is very good at, and something very bad at



- Does not act like other children in a group activity
- Takes a lot of time preparing or tidying up
- Not good at drawing and/or using scissors
- Does not like being touched
- Is delayed in learning self-care activities such as toileting and changing clothes



**A child's behaviors and tendencies like these can be a source of parental concerns**

You and your family may be frustrated and think of him/her troublesome, or feel anxious wondering that your parenting might be going wrong.

While such behaviors can be temporary, it is also possible that your child has developmental problems or a developmental disorder.

# Utilize the Health Checkup

Every local government provides complimentary baby health checkups. Please make use of the checkup because it is an important opportunity to learn about your child's health and development.

For the details of the checkup schedule, please contact your local government as each area follows different schedules.

## Infant checkup

**When to get?** When your child is 3 to 4 months old

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**What to expect?**

- Examination by a doctor
- Height and weight check
- Consultation with a public health nurse if you have any concerns
- Nutritionist's recommendations

## 18-month checkup

**When to get?** After your child has turned 18 months and before turning 24 months

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**What to expect?**

- Examination by a doctor
- Examination by a dentist
- Height and weight check
- Consultation with a public health nurse



## 3-year checkup

### When to get?

After your child has turned 3 and before turning 4

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### What to expect?

- Examination by a doctor
- Examination by a dentist
- Height and weight check
- Urinary test
- Vision and auditory tests
- Consultation with a public health nurse, a nutritionist, or a psychologist if you have any concerns



#### ● Vision test

Eyesight continues to develop until about age six. Early detection and treatment of eyesight problems or squints can improve the prognosis.

#### ● Auditory test

This test examines whether your child has hearing problems and/or ear diseases. Early detection is important because hearing affects language development.



- ☐ Each checkup is only available when your child is within the specified age range.
- ☐ Every checkup is free of charge; there are no additional fees for consultation.
- ☐ Please contact your local government office if you missed the assigned checkup dates.

## Health checkup on admission to school

**When to get?** You will be notified by the local board of education around September of the year before starting school, as children enter school in the April following their 6th birthday. (Please note that an application needs to be submitted to the local board to enter a Japanese elementary school, if the child is stateless or of foreign nationality.)

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**What to expect?**

- Held at the elementary school your child is entering
- Examination by a doctor
- Examination by a dentist
- Height and weight check
- Vision and auditory tests
- Brief intelligence test

## School entry

The local board of education or education center offers consultations for children with disabilities or concerns about elementary school life. Teachers of your preschool or kindergarten may also recommend you consult with the board.

School entry consultation is by appointment only. Please contact your local board of education for an appointment.

### ● Education for children with disabilities

The board of education decides what type of schooling is best suited for a child while respecting the parents' and child's wishes as much as possible.

Elementary schools have “**special classes**” for children with various educational needs and/or “**resource rooms**” where children receive special instructions while enrolling in regular classes. There are also “**schools for special needs education**” for children with severe disabilities.

You can take a tour of the special class or the school for special needs education. Please contact your local board of education for more information.

## Schooling options for children with special needs

### Elementary and Junior High

#### Regular classroom

Children with special needs receive extra attention and support in a mainstream setting.

#### Resource room for special instructions

Special instructions are provided a few times a week or month in the resource room while rest of the curriculums are provided in regular classrooms.

Children can take individual lessons to work on academic or daily life skills for everyday life.

#### Special classes

The class sizes are small.

There are seven types of special classes based on the type of disability: intellectual disability, physical disability, health impairment, low vision, hearing impairment, speech and language disorders, autism and emotional disturbance. The types and number of classes differ among schools.

**Note: Not every school has the resource room system or special needs classrooms.**

### Schools for Special Needs

These are schools for children with visual impairments, auditory impairments, physical disabilities, health impairments, or intellectual disabilities. Schools for intellectual disabilities also accommodate children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who have comorbid intellectual disabilities.

The class sizes are small, and the curriculum is designed for each disability.

# To consult about your child's development

## Utilize consultation services



Personality traits and developmental trajectories differ from child to child. It is important to consult early when you have any concerns so that you can address them appropriately.

- For concerns related to parenting and/or development of your child, consult a public health nurse working for the local government.
- If your child attends preschool or kindergarten, discuss with the teachers on regular basis how s/he is doing in classroom.
- Your local government may offer individual consultations or on-site consultations at your child's preschool or kindergarten by dispatching development counselors.
- Your local government may offer group workshops for parents and their children to learn how to interact with your child in a way appropriate for the child's developmental stage.

## Other consultation options

- Public health institute, public health center
- Support Center for Child Development
- Parenting support center, children & parents gathering (tsudoi-no hiroba)

Note: Details of consultation services vary among local governments. Please contact a public health nurse at your local public health institute/center for more information.

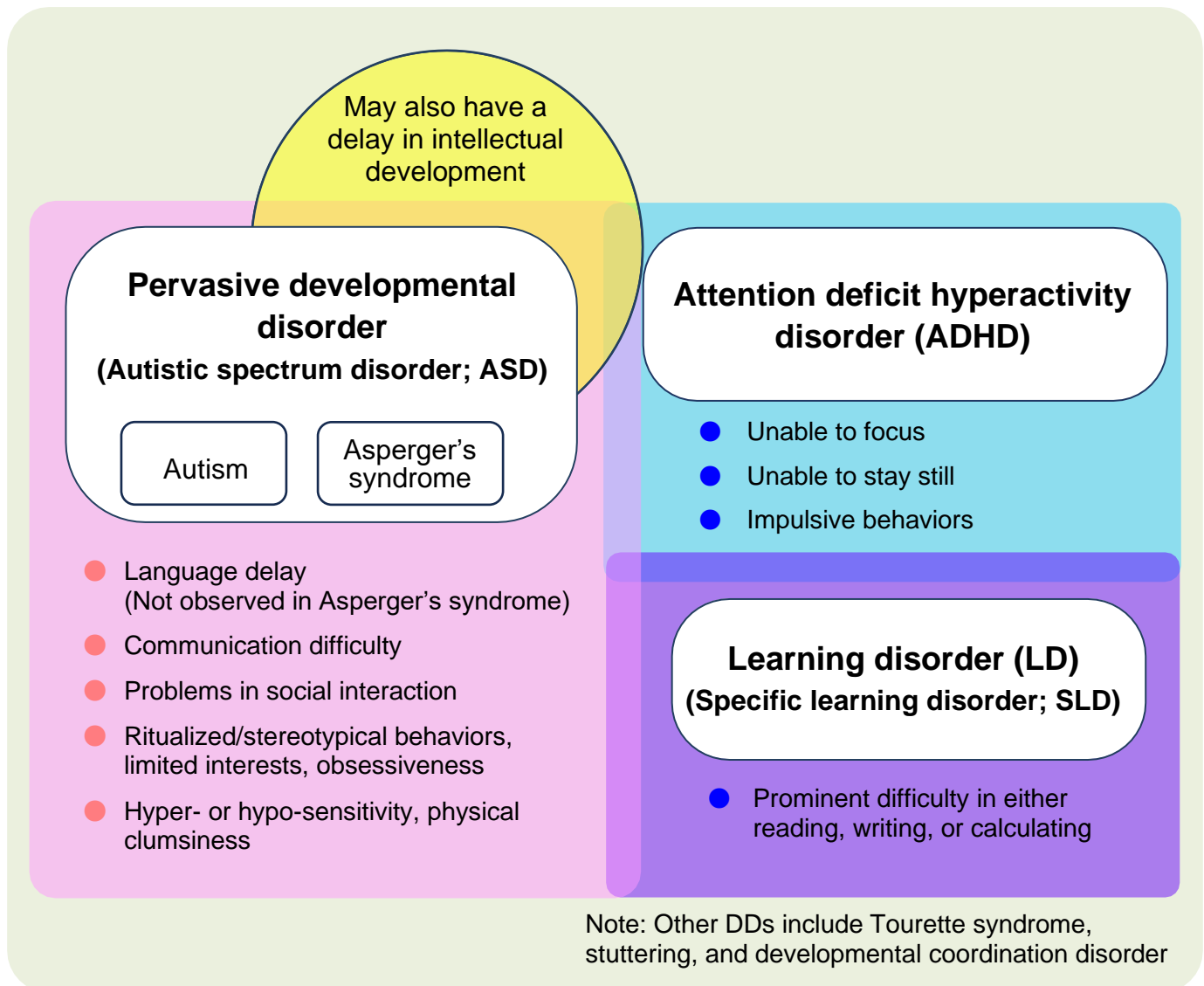
## Consultation options where you live

Each local government has various options for consultation.  
Please make use of those services if you have any concerns about your child.

Institution	Intended consultee	Opening hours	Phone	Translator
	Areas of consultation			
[Example] XYZ City Child Development Center	Children under 18 and parents	Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. Closed on public holidays	(04) 000-000	△ Partially available (Languages)
	E.g., Child development, developmental assessments, pregnancy, childbirth, parenting			

# What are developmental disorders?

Developmental disorders (DDs) are characterized by deficits in the development of brain functions and are congenital in many cases. There are different types of DDs as shown below. Even people with the same disorder show different manifestations. It is also possible to have more than one type of DD.



## Definition of developmental disorders in the Act on Support for Persons with Developmental Disorders:

"Developmental disorders include deficits in brain functions, such as autism, Asperger's syndrome, and other pervasive developmental disorders, learning disorders, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, onset of which is at an early age". The persons with DDs are those "who are subject to limitations due to DDs and social barriers in their daily or social lives".

Note: Another way to define DDs is the disorders numbered as F80-98 in ICD-10.

## The Act on Support for Persons with Developmental Disorders

The Act on Support for Persons with Developmental Disorders is a Japanese law established for the purpose of providing support to children with DDs (regardless of their age) and their families.

The act aims to achieve a society where children with DDs can realize their potential and families can raise them with a sense of security.

## Support Centers for Persons with Developmental Disorders

There are various organizations that offer consultation services for people with DDs and their families in Japan. Every prefecture and ordinance-designated city has a Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders, which plays a central role in providing information and support.

Please refer to the following website for information on the support centers across the country:

### **Information and Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders**

<https://www.rehab.go.jp/ddis/>



#### **【Support Center for Persons with DDs in your region】**

Name:

Contact:

## To see a doctor

### Seeing a doctor



In Japan, diagnosis of DDs is made by a specialist such as pediatrician or child psychiatrist. If you wish to see a doctor, it is a good idea to:

- Ask your local public health nurses or the Support Center for Persons with DDs, where you can find DDs specialists. (Please note that many hospitals require an appointment.)
- Bring your child's health insurance card and the Maternal and Child Health Handbook with you on the first doctor's visit.
- Write down your concerns and how your child is at home and/or preschool to share with the doctor.

### Assessment and therapy



The doctor may want your child to take assessments and/or get individual therapies by specialized staff. The decision will be based on your child's needs and conditions.

Assessments include intelligence/developmental tests, an auditory test, and electroencephalography. Individual therapies include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language-hearing therapy, and psychotherapy.

### If your child is diagnosed with a DD...

It can be very worrying to find out that your child has a DD. However, his/her developmental outcome can be positively affected by adjusting the environments and your interactions with him/her. Please discuss and find out what will work for your child with the doctor and specialized staff.

## Using medication

The doctor may suggest your child take medication to help him/her be more comfortable. Discuss the effects and side effects of the suggested medication.

Medication does not cure DDs, but it can ease some of the symptoms commonly found in children with DDs.

### **[Frequently used medications]**

- Central nervous system stimulants: Help reduce hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and impulsiveness of ADHD
- Anti-anxiety medications: Ease anxiety and other uneasy feelings
- Antipsychotic medications: Ease severe agitations and delusions
- Antiepileptic medications: Help control epileptic seizures
- Sleeping pills: Establishing healthy sleep habits

Medication can help your child live their life more comfortably by alleviating symptoms. Please make sure to follow the instructed frequency and dosage.

- ☆ Please do not hesitate to ask the doctor or specialized staff questions if you are unsure about their explanations.
- ☆ You can also ask for advice from public health nurses and preschool or kindergarten teachers. Regularly share and discuss how your child is doing so that you can monitor your child together with them.

# To learn about disability certificates

## Certificates for Persons with Disabilities

Having the Certification for Person with Disabilities allows access to various welfare services and allowances depending on the kind and severity of the disability. You must obtain the certificate from your local government office.

There are three types of certificate corresponding to the types of disability: The Intellectual Disability Certificate (Rehabilitation Certificate), the Mental Disability Certificate, and the Physical Disability Certificate.

- ☐ Having a certificate simplifies the procedure to receive welfare services.
- ☐ The amount of allowance depends on the type and severity of disability.
- ☐ Individual welfare services, such as eligibility, differ among local governments.

For more information, please contact the local government division in charge of welfare.

### [Examples of benefits]

- Allowance
  - Partial reimbursement of medical expenses
  - Tax reduction
  - Discounts on train, bus, and domestic airplane fares
  - Discounts on toll roads
- ...and more

# Intellectual Disability Certificate

## Who is eligible

- Individuals with intellectual disability
- Individuals with both a DD and intellectual disability



## How to apply

- Take assessment tests to determine severity at the Child Guidance Center for those aged under 18, and at the Rehabilitation Counseling Center for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities for those aged 18 or older.

**Note:** As the severity of one's intellectual disability may change over time, it is necessary to reassess the severity at certain intervals designated by each prefecture.

# Mental Disability Certificate

## Who is eligible

- Individuals who are in need of livelihood support due to a mental disability such as:
  - Developmental disorders
  - Schizophrenia
  - Mood disorders (e.g., depression, bipolar disorder)
  - Epilepsy
  - Drug addiction
  - Higher brain dysfunction
  - Other psychiatric disorders (e.g., stress-related disorder)

## How to apply

- Go to the welfare department at the local government office
- Bring the following documents with you:
  - 1) Medical certificate (or recipient certificate of disability pension if applicable)
  - 2) Picture of the applicant
- Fill in the application form (available at the counter)

**Note:** The certificate must be renewed every two years. Please prepare the latest medical certificate for each renewal.

## Additional information

Some hospitals and consulting organizations have staff who speak foreign languages or adopt a translation app to accommodate families with a foreign background.

There may also be a public service to arrange a translator.

### Consultation in foreign languages

Various telephone consultation services are available to foreign residents. Though they are not specialized in DDs, they can provide pieces of advice on which medical institutions have staff who speak foreign languages and how to find a translator of your language.

#### ◆ A Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals

This PORTAL contains a variety of information addressing the different needs you are likely to have while living in Japan. You can look up a consultation service in your area.

<http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/portal/index.html>



#### ◆ AMDA International Medical Information Center

This is a telephone information service for foreign residents that provides information on medical facilities where you can see a doctor in your native language and about the medical welfare system. The operator speaks simple (easy to understand) Japanese.

**Tokyo Office**

**Phone: 03-6233-9266 (Mon-Fri, 10:00-15:00)**

<https://www.amdamedicalcenter.com/>



# Translation apps

## ◆ VoiceTra by the National Institute of Information and Communications

This is a Japanese speech translation app for 31 languages.  
You can download and use this app free of charge.

<http://voicetra.nict.go.jp/>



## Information on school education

### ◆ Informational websites by MEXT

#### ○ CLARINET (in Japanese)

Provides educational information for Japanese children living abroad, Japanese returnees from overseas, and those with foreign backgrounds.

[https://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/clarinet/main7\\_a2.htm](https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/main7_a2.htm)



#### ○ CASTA-NET (in Japanese)

Educational information search website for the purpose of supporting the learning of returnee and foreign students.

<https://casta-net.mext.go.jp/>



#### ○ Project MUSE (Multilingual Support for Education) (in Japanese)

Provides resources to create multilingual materials for the purpose of connecting school and families with foreign backgrounds.

<https://data.casta-net.mext.go.jp/tagengo-gakko.jp/index.html>



## Information on Developmental Disorders

#### ○ Information and Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders (in Japanese)

Provides the latest information on DDs, their characteristics and strategies to deal with them, support systems for individuals with DDs, and domestic and global trends.

<https://www.rehab.go.jp/ddis/>



#### ○ Promotion Center of Education for Persons with Developmental Disorders (in Japanese)

Provides information on teaching strategies, materials, and assistive devices for children with DDs, research on DDs, video lectures for teachers, and related governmental policies and regulations.

[http://icedd\\_new.nise.go.jp/](http://icedd_new.nise.go.jp/)



# English-Japanese glossary

	English	Japanese in alphabet	Japanese with furigana
A	Act on Support for Persons with Developmental Disorders	Hattatsu shōgai sha shien hō	発達障害者支援法 はったつしょうがいしゃしえんほう
	ADHD	Chūi kekkan tadōsē shōgai/ADHD	注意欠陥多動性障害／ADHD ちゅういけつかんたどうせいしょうがい
	Allowance	Teate	てあて 手当
	Anti-anxiety medication	Kō fuan yaku	こうふあんやく 抗不安薬
	Antiepileptic medication	Kō tenkan yaku	こうてんかんやく 抗てんかん薬
	Antipsychotic medication	Kō seishinbyō yaku	こうせいしんびょうやく 抗精神病薬
	Appointment	Yoyaku	よやく 予約
	Assessment	Kensa	けんさ 検査
	Auditory test	Chōkaku kensa	ちょうかくけんさ 聴覚検査
	Autism/autism spectrum disorder	Jiheishō/ASD	自閉症／ASD じへいしょう
B	Baby health checkup (checkup)	Nyūyōji kenkō shinsa (kenshin)	乳幼児健康診査(健診) にゅうようじけんこうしんさ けんしん
	Bipolar disorder	Sōkyokusē shōgai	双極性障害 そうきょくせいしょうがい
	Board of education	Kyōiku iinkai	きょういくいんかい 教育委員会
C	Central nervous system stimulants	Chūsū shinkei shigeki yaku	ちゅうすいしんけいしげきやく 中枢神経刺激薬
	Certificate for Persons with Disabilities	Shōgaisha techō	しょうがいしゃてちょう 障害者手帳
	Child Guidance Center	Jidō sōdanjo	じどうそうだんじょ 児童相談所
	Child psychiatrist	Jidō seishinkai	じどうせいしんかい 児童精神科医
	Consultation	Sōdan	そうだん 相談
D	Dentist	Shikaishi/haisha	しかいし はいしゃ 歯科医師／歯医者
	Depression	Utsu	うつ
	Development	Hattatsu	はったつ 発達
	Developmental coordination disorder	Hattatsu sē kyōchō undō shōgai	はったつせいぎょうちようどうしやうがい 発達性協調運動障害
	Developmental disorders	Hattatsu shōgai	はったつしょうがい 発達障害
	Developmental test	Hattatsu kensa	はったつけんさ 発達検査
	Diagnosis	Shindan	しんだん 診断
	Disability	Shōgai	しょうがい 障害
	Disability pension	Shōgai nenkin	しょうがいねんきん 障害年金
	Doctor (physician)	Ishi/isha	いし いしゃ 医師／医者
	Drug addiction	Yakubutsu izon shō	やくぶついぞんしょう 薬物依存症
E	Education center	Kyōiku sentā	きょういくせんたー 教育センター
	Effects	Kōka/sayō	こうか さよう 効果／作用
	Eighteen-month (1 year and a half) checkup	Issai rokkagetsuji kenkō shinsa (kenshin)	さい げつ じ けんこうしんさ けんしん 1歳6か月児健康診査(健診)
	Electroencephalography	Nōha kensa	のうはけんさ 脳波検査
	Elementary school	Shōgakkō	しょうがっこう 小学校

	Emotional disturbance	Jōcho shōgai	じょうししょうがい 情緒障害
	Epilepsy	Tenkan	てんかん
H	Health checkup on admission to school	Shūgakuji kenkō shindan	しゅうがくけんこうしんだん 就学時健康診断
	Health impairment	Byōjaku/Shintai kyojaku	びょうじゃく しんたいきょじゃく 病弱/身体虚弱
	Health insurance card	Hoken shō	ほけんしょう 保険証
	Hearing impairment	Nanchō	なんちょう 難聴
	Higher brain dysfunction	Kōjinō kinō shōgai	こうじのうきのうしょうがい 高次脳機能障害
	Hospital	Byōin	びょういん 病院
I	Individual consultation	Kobetsu sōdan	こべつそうだん 個別相談
	Infant checkup	Nyūji kenshin	にゅうじけんしん 乳児健診
	Information and Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders	Hattatsu shōgai jōhō shien sentā	はつたつしょうがいじょうほう しえん せん たー 発達障害情報・支援センター
	Intellectual Disability Certificate (Rehabilitation Certificate)	Ryōiku techō	りょういくてちょう 療育手帳
	Intellectual disability	Chiteki shōgai	ちてきしょうがい 知的障害
	Intelligence test	Chinō kensa	ちのうけんさ 知能検査
J	Junior high school	Chūgakkō	ちゅうがっこう 中学校
K	Kindergarten	Yōchien	ようちえん 幼稚園
L	Learning disorder	Gakushū shōgai/LD	がくしゅうしょうがい 学習障害/LD
	Low vision	Jakushi	じゃくし 弱視
M	Maternal and Child Health Handbook	Boshi kenkō techō ( Boshi techō)	ぼ し けんこうてちょう ぼ し てちょう 母子健康手帳(母子手帳)
	Medical certificate/medical card	Shindansho	しんだんしょ 診断書
	Medication	Kusuri	くすり 薬
	Mental Disability Certificate	Seishin shōgaisha hoken fukushi techō	せいしんしょうがいしゃほけんふくし てちょう 精神障害者保健福祉手帳
	Mood disorders	Kibun shōgai	きぶ んしょうがい 気分障害
N	Nutritionist	Eiyōshi	えいようし 栄養士
O	Occupational therapy	Sagyō ryōhō	さぎょうりょうほう 作業療法
	On-site consultation	Junkai sōdan	じゅんかいそうだん 巡回相談
P	Parenting support center	Kosodate shien sentā	こそだてしえん せん たー 子育て支援センター
	Pediatrician	Shōnikai	しょうにかい 小児科医
	Physical disability	Shitai fujiyū/shintai shōgai	しんたいふじゆう しんたいしょうがい 身体不自由/身体障害
	Physical Disability Certificate	Shintai shōgaisha techō	しんたいしょうがいしゃてちょう 身体障害者手帳
	Physical therapy	Rigaku ryōhō	りがくりょうほう 理学療法
	Preschool	Hoikuen	ほいくえん 保育園
	Preschool teacher	Hoikushi	ほいくし 保育士
	Promotion Center of Education for Persons with Developmental Disorders	Hattatsu shōgai kyōiku suishin sentā	はつたつしょうがいきょういくすいしん せん たー 発達障害教育推進センター
	Psychologist	Shinrishi	しんりし 心理士
	Psychotherapy	Shinri ryōhō	しんりりょうほう 心理療法
	Public health nurse	Hokenshi	ほけんし 保健師

	Public health center	Hoken sentā	ほけんせんたー 保健センター
R	Rehabilitation Counseling Center for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities	Chiteki shōgaisha kōsei sōdanjo	ちてきしょうがいしゃこうせいそうだんじょ 知的障害者更生相談所
	Resource room	Tsūkyū shidō kyōshitsu	つうきゅうしどうきょうしつ 通級指導教室
	Regular classroom	Tsūjō gakkū	通常学級
S	Schizophrenia	Tōgō shicchō shō	とうこうしつちょうしやう 統合失調症
	School entry	Shūgaku sōdan	しやうがくそうだん 就学相談
	School for special-needs education	Tokubetsu shien gakkō	とくべつしえんがっこう 特別支援学校
	Side effects	Fuku sayō	ふくさよう 副作用
	Sleeping pills	Suimin yaku	すいみんやく 睡眠薬
	Specialized staff	Senmon sutaffu	せんもんすたっふ 専門スタッフ
	Special-needs classroom	Tokubetsu shien gakkū	とくべつしえんがっきう 特別支援学級
	Speech and language disorders	Gengo shōgai	げんごしょうがい 言語障害
	Speech-language-hearing therapy	Gengo chōkaku ryōhō	げんごちやうかくりやうほう 言語聴覚療法
	Stress-related disorder	Sutoresu sē shōgai	すとれすせいしょうがい ストレス性障害
	Stuttering	Kitsuon	きつおん 吃音
	Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders	Hattatsu shōgai sha shien sentā	はったつしょうがいしゃしえんせんたー 発達障害者支援センター
	Support center for child development	Kodomo hattatsu shien sentā	はったつしえんせんたー こども発達支援センター
T	Three-year checkup	Sansai ji kenkō shinsa (kenshin)	さいじけんこうしんさ けんしん 3歳児健康診査(健診)
	Tourette syndrome	Turetto shōkōgun	とうれつしょうこうぐん トゥレット症候群
	Translator (with oral language)	Tsūyaku	つうやく 通訳
V	Vision test	Shikaku kensa	しかくけんさ 視覚検査
W	Welfare service	Fukushi sābisu	ふくしサービス 福祉サービス



# Do you have concerns about your child's development? ～For parents raising children in Japan～ [English]

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## **Editorial supervisor**

Dr. Osamu Takahashi, Board Chairperson, Toyota Municipal Social Welfare Corporation

## **Cooperator**

Community Intervention Consulting Room, Toyota Child Development Center

## **Editors and producers**

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Information and Support Center for Persons with Developmental Disorders,

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