



Newsletter Vol.40 (February 2025)

Japan Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Center

Thank you for subscribing to the newsletter of Japan Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Center (JSCP). This issue presents the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's announcement of the provisional number of annual suicides for 2024. It also covers Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Takamaro Fukuoka's visit to JSCP and the NPO LIFELINK Suicide Prevention Support Center, where they observed suicide countermeasures firsthand. Additionally, there is a report on a Training Session on Care of Suicide Attempt Survivors for Emergency Settings.

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1. **[Suicide Countermeasures] Announcement of the provisional number of annual suicides for 2024**

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has announced the provisional number of annual suicides for 2024. The cumulative number of suicides from January to December was 20,268, a decrease of 1,569 from the previous year (confirmed figure), the second lowest since suicide statistics began in 1978 (the lowest on record is 20,169 in 2019). By gender, there were 13,763 men (down 1,099 from the previous year) and 6,505 women (down 470 from the previous year).

In addition, by age, there was a decrease in all age groups, from those under 20 to those over 80. By occupation, the number of suicides has also decreased in all categories except students, etc. This includes employed persons, housewives/househusbands, unemployed persons, and those receiving pensions or employment insurance. However, the number of suicides among elementary, junior high, and high school students, which has been on the rise in recent years, was 527, exceeding 514 from the year before last and setting a new record. On average, 10 plus people are dying every week, so the state of emergency continues.

The increase in suicides among female junior and senior high school students was particularly notable (female junior high school students: an increase of 19 people, from 80 to 99; female high school students: an increase of 17 people, from 166 to 183). In particular, the number of suicides among female high school students enrolled in “part-time and correspondence courses” increased by approximately 23% (15 people). This is a significant increase of 72% (34 people) from 2022.

■ Click [here](#) for documents from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

2. [Visit] Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Takamaro Fukuoka visit JSCP

On January 21, 2025, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Takamaro Fukuoka visited JSCP and the NPO LIFELINK Suicide Prevention Support Center and observed suicide countermeasures firsthand. In Japan, there’s a serious increase in the number of suicides among children and youth, and stronger measures are urgently needed. Prime Minister Ishiba and Minister Fukuoka first visited LIFELINK to see the SNS-based consultation service in action, and tried out the “KAKUREGA”, a hide way in Japanese online space for children and youth who are struggling with life.

Afterward, they met with Representative Director Yasuyuki Shimizu and others at JSCP. Shimizu explained the profiles of local suicide status and support for local areas (local governments, etc.) that JSCP provides to local governments nationwide, and participants had the opportunity to try out RAMPS, a tool for “screening suicide risk by using one device per person,” which is included in the “Emergency Enhanced Plan for Child Suicide Countermeasures.”

After the visit, Prime Minister Ishiba told reporters, “The increase in suicides among children is a huge issue. We have learned that by combining new technologies such as generative AI, we can respond to the feelings of people who want someone to listen to them. By providing each student with a device in schools, we can improve the system so that people can seek advice from anywhere, and I believe that there are many things the government needs to work on from the perspective of ‘saving lives.’”



Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba (center) and Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Takamaro Fukuoka (left) receive an explanation on how to use RAMPS from JSCP Representative Director Yasuyuki Shimizu (right) at the JSCP office.

■ Click [here](#) for more information

3. [Event Report] Held FY2024 Training Session on Care of Suicide Attempt Survivors, 2nd “For Emergency Settings”

On January 19, 2025, the JSCP held the FY2024 Training Session on Care of Suicide Attempt Survivors, 2nd “For Emergency Settings” in Tokyo (hosted by the JSCP, co-hosted by the Japanese Society for Emergency Medicine and The Japanese Association for Emergency Psychiatry). The training session included a pre-event e-learning format. Participants completed online lectures in advance, and on the event day, they participated in an in-person multi-disciplinary workshop.

The training session was aimed at doctors, nurses, social workers, emergency medical technicians, public health nurses, and others involved in local emergency medical care and local mental health and welfare, with approximately 50 people participating. They were divided into eight groups and discussed specific cases. In the survey conducted after the training session, we received positive feedback such as: “The lectures were easy to understand, and the workshop was very helpful.” “The welcoming atmosphere allowed me to learn stress-free.” “I could feel the passion of the instructors and facilitators for supporting suicide attempt survivors and their commitment to spreading awareness.”

Please check [here](#) for upcoming “Training Session on Care of Suicide Attempt Survivors” schedules.



In the workshop, participants were divided into groups for discussion

■ Click [here](#) for the detailed report

4. [Publication Report] Research paper on suicide among preteens (ages 8 to 12) published

A research paper by the JSCP research group concerning the status of preteen (aged 8 to 12) suicides in Japan, titled “[Characteristics of Preteen Suicide in Japan](#),” was published in the American medical journal JAMA Network Open (January 22, 2025: Eastern Standard Time). The paper reveals that between 2009 and 2023, there has been an increase in suicides among children in this age group, with the suicide mortality rate being particularly high among 12-year-olds, a notable increase among girls, and that a significant increase occurred between April and June.

This analysis was based on suicide statistics from the National Police Agency, with reference to a similar report from the United States ([JAMA Netw Open. 2024;7\(7\):e2424664](#)). The number of suicide deaths among Japanese children aged 8 to 12 during the period analyzed was 283. Comparing the suicide mortality rates in the first half of the period (2009 to 2015) and the second half (2016 to 2023), there was a 42% increase in the second half, with a particularly notable 98% increase for girls.

Compared by quarter, the highest suicide mortality rate was from July to September, and this trend was consistent regardless of whether it was the first or second half of the period. On the other hand, the suicide mortality rate from April to June increased by 93% in the second half of the period compared to the first half.

This result underscores the urgent need to comprehend the reality of suicide among children, including elementary school students, and to strengthen suicide countermeasures.

- Click [here](#) for more information
- The paper is posted [here](#) (in JAMA Network Open)

5. [Awareness-Raising] Awareness-raising content that can be used during the Suicide Countermeasures Strengthening Month in March

March is the Suicide Countermeasures Strengthening Month as stipulated in the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures. The General Principles of Suicide Countermeasures Policy states that the national government, local governments, related organizations, private organizations, and others will work together to promote awareness-raising activities based on the philosophy of “suicide countermeasures that support living.”

JSCP has created the following awareness-raising videos, websites, posters, etc. that can be used during Suicide Countermeasures Strengthening Month. JSCP collectively manages the copyrights for all these materials, and they can be used in a wide range of formats, including publication in print media, broadcasting, and screening in public facilities, as well as publication online and on social media.

They have been featured by many media outlets and local government platforms, and have received a positive response. Please feel free to contact us or make use of them.

- (1) [Children and Youth] “#Nigekatsu(escape activities): Here is a place of escape for your heart” toolkit
- (2) [Children and Youth] “Student Short Film Contest on Suicide Prevention 2023”
30-second videos - four excellence award winners
- (3) [Children and Youth] “#chatsafe for parents and carers” digest version and others
- (4) Website for self-care: [“Online Sanctuary for Mental Health”](#)
- (5) Awareness-raising content to prevent suicide among middle-aged and older men
- (6) Related video: “Step Closer”—Creating Hope Through Action

- The above content is available for download on [this page](#)

6. [Publication Information] Report on a study session for film and stage professionals posted

A detailed event report on the “Study Session for Film and Stage Professionals on the Representation of Suicide: Points to Understand When Planning, Producing, or Expressing Matters Related to Suicide or Self-Harm” (held on November 8, 2024), which was briefly introduced in Issue 38 (published on December 5, 2024), has been posted on the JSCP website.

This was a very in-depth study session, where we invited guests who have actually been involved in the production of dramas that depict suicide and self-harm to discuss, based on specific examples, the challenges and considerations when planning and producing works that depict suicide or self-harm. Please take a look.

- Click [here](#) for the detailed report

7. [Reference Information] Applications are now being accepted for the Japanese Society of Comprehensive Suicide Countermeasures Event “4th Conference: Considering Loneliness and Isolation”

The Japanese Society of Comprehensive Suicide Countermeasures will hold the “4th Conference: Considering Loneliness and Isolation” online on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 (co-hosted by the Research Center for Medical and Health Data Science, The Institute of Statistical Mathematics, under the Research Organization of Information and Systems (planned); sponsored by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and JSCP).

Since the last fiscal year, the Japanese Society of Comprehensive Suicide Countermeasures has been holding policy study groups, lectures, and conference sessions to respond to feedback from those on the front lines of suicide countermeasures. These events present the efforts of local governments and support groups, share their concerns, and facilitate discussions that contribute to solutions. So far, the focus has been on how to utilize personal information and how to address the negative aspects of family life that lead to loneliness and isolation. Efforts are being made to connect first-hand knowledge with the expertise of various specialists to contribute modestly to improving frontline practices.

The theme of this fourth conference is “Considering Loneliness and Isolation,” and two sessions are planned: one to present firsthand knowledge about countermeasures to the “loneliness and isolation” that elevate the risk of suicide among youth, and the other to present expertise derived from practical research related to this issue.

Session I: Considering Loneliness and Isolation Among Children and Youth on the Front Lines

Session II: Practical Research for Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

For details on the event and how to register to participate, please see the information of the Japanese Society of Comprehensive Suicide Countermeasures. In addition to society members, anyone with an interest in suicide countermeasures is welcome to participate (participation is free of charge). The application deadline is Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

■ Click [here](#) for the detailed report

■ Training videos are gradually being uploaded to the YouTube “JSCP_PR Office” channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNWP2O5zTuul-j8GITeKzHQ>

■ JSCP shares articles on suicide issues and countermeasures via Yahoo! News Expert

(Written by Ms. Kaoru Yamadera, Head of Public Relations Office at JSCP)

<https://news.yahoo.co.jp/expert/authors/yamaderaakaoru>

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Japan Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Center (JSCP)

Designated by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, General Incorporated Association

Public Relations Office news@jscp.or.jp



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