



## Newsletter Vol.44 (June 2025)

### Japan Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Center



Thank you for subscribing to the newsletter of Japan Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Center (JSCP). This issue features a bulletin on the amended Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures, enacted on June 5, a report on the Training Seminar for New Employees in Charge of Suicide Countermeasures at Local Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Centers held in May, and the publication of an article based on the results of an analysis of the “Suicide Situation among University Students” compiled by the JSCP, and other related content.

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#### 1. **[Bulletin] Amended Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures Passed and Enacted**

The amendment bill to the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures, submitted as a Diet member-initiated bill during the 217th Ordinary Diet Session, was passed at the House of Representatives plenary session on June 5 and has now been enacted into law. This marks the second amendment to the Basic Act since its enactment in 2006, with the previous one occurring in 2016.

This amendment, the first in nearly a decade, clearly states that society as a whole will work to address child suicide, which has continued to rise in recent years and has become an urgent issue. Article 2 (Basic Principles) has been amended to add Paragraph 7, which stipulates that “Suicide countermeasures for children must be implemented based on the principle that society as a whole works together to realize a society in which all children can grow up equally in good health as independent individuals, where their rights and interests are protected regardless of their physical or mental condition or the environment in which they are placed, and where they can lead healthy and fulfilling lives in the future.” In addition, Article 3 (Responsibilities of the National Government) has been amended to include Paragraph 2, which states that “With regard to suicide countermeasures for children, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare must each promote policies within their respective jurisdictions, while working in close cooperation with one another and with the heads of relevant administrative organs, to ensure that such countermeasures are appropriately and effectively formulated and implemented, taking into account the actual circumstances of suicide and other relevant factors.”

To implement suicide countermeasures for children in a concrete manner, the amendment clarifies the responsibilities of schools engaged in suicide prevention efforts targeting children (Article 5). It also introduces a provision regarding medical

examinations, health guidance, and other measures to maintain mental well-being, as well as efforts to enhance knowledge related to mental health (Article 17, Paragraph 3). Furthermore, local governments may establish “councils” composed of relevant stakeholders, such as schools, boards of education, child guidance centers, mental health and welfare centers, medical institutions, police stations, and private organizations, in order to prevent suicide and provide support to suicide attempt survivors (Articles 23 to 25; Council members are required to maintain confidentiality).

In addition, the amendment also includes provisions on the appropriate use of digital technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and other related tools in suicide countermeasures, as well as on promoting efforts to encourage consideration of the impact of online information, including content on social media. The amended act will come into effect within six months of its promulgation. However, Paragraph 3 of Article 17 and the provisions concerning councils will come into effect on April 1, 2026.

※This newsletter will provide coverage of the operation of these “councils” as soon as the details are finalized.

## Summary of the Bill for the Act Partially Amending the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures

### Purpose of the amendment

- Although the total number of suicides in Japan has been declining since the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures came into effect in 2006, the number of suicides among children has been increasing in recent years. In 2024, the number of suicides among school children reached a record high of 529 (an increase of approximately 43% since 2018 and about 2.7 times the number in 1993, when the figure was at its lowest). Japan is the only G7 country where suicide is the leading cause of death among teenagers.
- To address this extremely serious situation, the amendment introduces provisions for the development of a framework and measures to promote suicide countermeasures for children. It also introduces provisions for the implementation of policies that leverage digital technology, the rapid identification of suicide risk information, countermeasures against suicide-promoting content, facilities, and other related elements, and enhanced support for suicide attempt survivors, bereaved families, and others affected by suicide.

### Overview of the amendment

#### 1. Addition of basic principles (Article 2, Paragraphs 6 & 7)

- The amendment states that suicide countermeasures will be implemented in ways that reflect the advancement of the digital society, ensuring the appropriate use of information and communication technology, artificial intelligence-related technologies, and other such tools. It also states the need to pay special attention to promoting initiatives aimed at ensuring appropriate consideration of the impact of suicide-related information distributed via the internet and other related means.
- The amendment states that suicide countermeasures for children must be implemented through the collective efforts of society as a whole, aiming to realize a society in which all children can grow up equally in good health as independent individuals, where their rights and interests are protected regardless of their physical or mental condition or the environment in which they are placed, and where they can lead healthy and fulfilling lives in the future.

#### 2. Revision of the responsibilities of the national government in preventing child suicide and addition of the responsibilities of schools

- The amendment states that, with regard to suicide countermeasures for children, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare must each promote policies within their respective jurisdictions, while working in close cooperation with one another and with the heads of relevant administrative organs, to ensure that such countermeasures are appropriately and effectively formulated and implemented, taking into account the actual circumstances of suicide and other relevant factors (Article 3, Paragraph 2).

- Regarding schools, the amendment states that, in line with the basic principles, they must make efforts to prevent suicide among children while working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders (Article 5).

#### 3. Expansion of basic policies

- The amendment introduces a provision, from the perspective of suicide prevention, regarding measures such as medical examinations at schools to maintain mental well-being, as well as efforts to enhance knowledge related to mental health (Article 17, Paragraph 3).
- The amendment introduces a provision to ensure opportunities for training on suicide prevention and related topics for psychiatrists and other healthcare professionals (Article 18).
- The amendment introduces a provision for measures to ensure that information necessary for the appropriate prevention of suicide is provided swiftly and effectively to relevant institutions and organizations (Article 19, Paragraph 2).
- The amendment introduces a provision for measures to raise awareness about the need for appropriate management, consideration, and other relevant actions regarding information, goods, facilities, and other elements that could contribute to the promotion of suicide (Article 19, Paragraph 3).
- The amendment states that continuous support shall be provided to suicide attempt survivors and others in similar circumstances (Article 20) and introduces a provision for comprehensive support for bereaved families and others affected by suicide, including measures to alleviate anxieties related to daily life (Article 21).

#### 4. Councils (Chapter 4)

- The amendment states that, when implementing child-related measures under Article 19 (Development of a Framework and Related Measures for Preventing Suicide) and Article 20 (Support for Suicide Attempt Survivors and Others in Similar Circumstances), local governments may establish a council composed of relevant institutions, such as schools, boards of education, child guidance centers, mental health and welfare centers, medical institutions, police stations, and private organizations and other entities engaged in suicide countermeasure activities. These councils are to exchange information on the prevention of child suicide and other related matters and to discuss necessary responses and other related measures.

#### 5. Review based on changing circumstances and other relevant factors (Supplementary Provisions, Article 2)

- The amendment states that necessary reviews and other related measures shall be undertaken in light of changes in the situation surrounding suicide, as well as the status and other relevant aspects of the implementation of various suicide countermeasures.

#### 6. Addition of affairs under the jurisdiction of the Children and Families Agency (Amended Act, Supplementary Provisions, Paragraph 3)

- The amendment states that suicide countermeasures for children fall under the jurisdiction of the Children and Families Agency.

Effective Date: The date specified by government ordinance within six months from the date of promulgation. However, Items 3 (pertaining to Article 17, Paragraph 3), 4, and 6 shall come into effect on April 1, 2026.

■ [The amendment bill to the Basic Act on Suicide Countermeasures](#)

■ [Comparison table for old and new versions](#)

■ [Outline](#)

## 2. [Event Report] Held the FY2025 Training Seminar for New Employees in Charge of Suicide Countermeasures at Local Suicide Countermeasures Promotion Centers

On May 29, 2025, JSCP held an online training seminar for new employees in charge of suicide countermeasures at local suicide countermeasures promotion centers (hereinafter, “Local Centers”) located in each prefecture and in some ordinance-designated cities across Japan. This year, approximately 60 participants from 33 prefectures and 15 ordinance-designated cities took part in the seminar.

At the training seminar, after a lecture by JSCP Representative Director Yasuyuki Shimizu, participants split into groups for discussions. They exchanged opinions on topics such as, “How are you collaborating with relevant departments, institutions, other local governments, and so on in promoting suicide countermeasures as part of comprehensive support for living?”

Many participants noted that the training was helpful in advancing future efforts. Comments included, “It was a catalyst for changing how I perceive the number of suicides,” and “I was able to get an idea of which relevant institutions would be

beneficial to collaborate with.”

■Click [here](#) to see a detailed report on the training.



**JSCP Representative Director Yasuyuki Shimizu (left) and Katsumi Hasegawa, Manager of the Department for Promoting Local Collaboration**

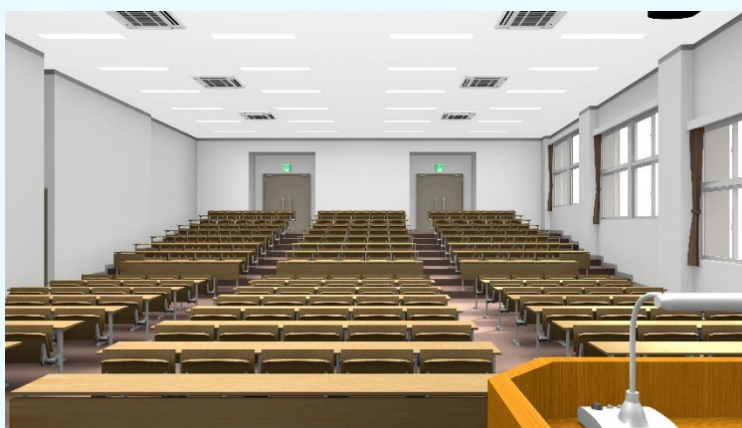
### **3. [Article Published] “Urgent Need for Suicide Countermeasures for University Students: Serious Situation Revealed by Statistical Data and Necessary Countermeasures”**

The following article was created and published based on the results of an analysis compiled by JSCP, titled “[Suicide Situation among University Students](#).” Please take a look.

While suicide among children (elementary, junior high, and high school students) has reached an all-time high and become a serious societal issue, the number of university students dying by suicide has also remained at an alarming level. Are you aware of this?

In 2024, as many as 434 university students lost their lives to suicide. Many young people feel overwhelmed during this critical stage of life when they face major crossroads, such as entering the workforce or pursuing further education. Statistical data and survey results highlight the current situation surrounding university student suicide and expose the inadequacy of existing countermeasures.

■Click [here](#) to read the full article.



(The photo is for illustrative purposes only.)

### **4. [Article Published] Launching a Series of Columns on Suicide Coverage**

A JSCP staff member involved in initiatives related to suicide coverage for media professionals has launched a column series titled “How to Approach Suicide Coverage: Reflections from a Journalist Who Transitioned to Countermeasure Work.” The column is written by Kaoru Yamadera, a public relations officer.

As a former newspaper journalist, Yamadera has experience both in reporting on suicide and in promoting suicide countermeasures. In this series, she shares what she felt and thought as she encountered suicide coverage day after day, along with the insights she has gained since stepping into the front lines of suicide countermeasures.

These articles are primarily intended to help media professionals resolve the doubts and uncertainties they may experience in day-to-day suicide coverage. However, the content is also useful for a wider range of people involved in public communication, including on social media, when sharing information about suicide. Please take a look. The columns will be published from time to time.

■Part 1 “There Is No Single Answer to Suicide Coverage” is available [here](#).

■Part 2 “Are ‘Jumping Off’ and ‘Jumping In’ Just Ordinary Words?” is available [here](#).

## 5. [Interview with JSCP Staff] Katsumi Hasegawa, Manager of the Department for Promoting Local Collaboration

—I want to build a system where everyone can take part in creating a supporting and inclusive community through support that reaches people in real-life settings.



### <Profile> Katsumi Hasegawa

Born in Tokyo. After graduating from the Faculty of Liberal Arts at Saitama University, Hasegawa became an employee of Adachi City in Tokyo. Engaged in on-the-ground work supporting residents' daily lives, including as a public assistance caseworker and in areas such as disability welfare, support for hikikomori (social withdrawal), and the creation of safe and welcoming community spaces. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he was responsible for coordinating with the medical association on matters such as PCR testing centers and vaccinations. From 2017, he was involved for six years in a collaborative project with the Netherlands on parasports. He finds fulfillment in having worked in a municipality where he could directly see and contact the residents. Joined JSCP in April 2025.

### ——What kind of work did you do before working at JSCP?

**Hasegawa)** I worked as a public servant in Adachi City for over 40 years. In my final eight years, I held a position supporting the city mayor.

One of the most memorable experiences was during my first four years working as a caseworker at the welfare office because of the closeness to residents' lives. I was in charge of administrative tasks related to public assistance and childcare admissions.

One event that left a deep impression on me occurred just two months into my tenure, when an elderly man living alone passed away. He had no close relatives, but through inquiries, we discovered he had an older brother in the Tohoku region. When contacted, his brother agreed to collect his remains. However, upon arrival, he told me, “I don’t know where the crematorium is.” So, I guided him there, helped him collect the remains, and accompanied him to the station. At that moment, I truly grasped the meaning of the phrase “from cradle to grave,” realizing that my work would deeply intertwine with people’s lives.

■Click [here](#) to read the full article.

#### ▼Other questions

- What fields did you work in after that?
- When and how did you get involved in suicide countermeasures?
- What are your thoughts on suicide countermeasures, and what do you hope to accomplish in your work going forward?



**We're looking for new JSCP staff to join us  
in working on suicide countermeasures.**

※Click [here](#) for more information.

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■ 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, Public Relations Officer at JSCP)

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

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](mailto:news@jscp.or.jp)



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