

## 4

## Parenting

## 4-1

## Checkup of infants

Your municipality provides the following health checkups for free:

- 18-month-old checkup
- 3-year-old checkup
- Depending on the municipality, checkups may be provided for infants of other ages.
- \* Checkups include tests of development, height and weight measurement, and parenting consultations. For details, contact your local municipality.

## 4-2

## Vaccinations

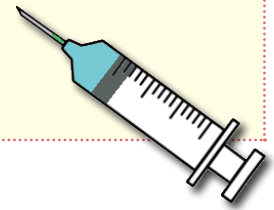
There are some illnesses that can be immunized against with vaccinations. There are two types of vaccinations.

**i. Vaccinations recommended by the municipality**

These vaccinations may be provided for free. For details, contact your local municipality.

**ii. Voluntary vaccinations available by request**

For these vaccinations, you will pay out-of-pocket.  
Consult your doctor before giving your child vaccinations.



## 4-3

## Medical expenses for children

If you are enrolled in a health insurance, you pay 20% of the medical expenses for children up to age six prior to the start of elementary school.

Depending on your local municipality, medical expenses may be free until the end of elementary school or additional aid may be provided.

## 4-4

## Facilities for preschool-aged children

- There are different types of facilities for children up to age six prior to the start of elementary school, such as daycare centers, kindergartens, and centers for early childhood education and care.
- Fees for daycare centers, kindergartens, centers for early childhood education and care, are free for all children aged 3 to 5.

## (1) Day care center (Hoikujo)

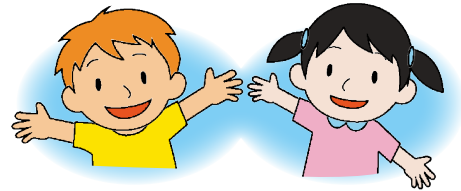
- These facilities care for children in lieu of parents and guardians who are unable to provide care at home for work or other reasons.
- Regular daycare services are eight hours a day, and some daycares also offer after-hours services such as evening and holiday daycare services.
- Some day care centers offer hourly care services in which children can be left there on an hourly basis in the event of urgent business or a short-term part-time job, for example.

### Key Point:

#### Non-registered daycare facilities

This is the general term for facilities that care for children and that have not been approved according to the Child Welfare Act. The following are examples of non-registered daycare facilities:

- Non-registered daycares (Muninka hoikujo)
- Daycares for customers at department stores
- Day nurseries (Takujisho)
- Baby hotels
- Baby sitters



## (2) Kindergarten (Yochien)

- Kindergartens are school for children from age three until they start elementary school.
- The standard time for education is four hours a day, but childcare services is available at some kindergartens until evening or night, or from early morning, depending on the circumstances of parents and guardians such as working.
- Kindergartens focus on a children's voluntary activity and play, unlike education after elementary school.
- Some kindergartens also offer consultation services related to child-rearing for parents and guardians in the local community or open their schoolyard to the public.

## (3) Center for Early Childhood Education and Care (Nintei Kodomoen)

- Centers for early childhood education and care combine the functions of both kindergartens and daycares.
- Centers for early childhood education and care can be used regardless of whether parents/guardians work or not.
- They also have other functions for all households with children such as consultation activities to help with the anxiety of parenting and providing a place where parents and children to get together.

**4-5****After-school Children's club (Hokagojido-club)**

- For elementary school children whose parents or guardians are not at home during the daytime for work or other reasons, after-school children's clubs are available.
- In these clubs, after-school care workers are staffed to offer an appropriate place for playing and spending time after classes.
- In addition to after-school children's clubs, some municipalities also offer after-school children's classes that include different types of learning and interactive activities for all elementary school children.

**4-6****Family Support Center**

- The Family Support Center is an organization that consists of the members described below. The Center acts as a go-between to help members support each other.
  - i. Parents who need assistance in watching infants or elementary school children
  - ii. People who want to provide assistance
- Examples of support are as follows.
  - i. Taking children to and from daycare facilities
  - ii. Watching children after daycare facility hours or after school
  - iii. Watching children while parents or guardians go grocery shopping or run other errands
- The procedure for using such support is as follows.
  - i. Contact the nearest local Family Support Center, and register to become a member.
  - ii. Apply for use of the support.
  - iii. A Family Support Center advisor introduces you to a member who will provide you with assistance and acts as a go-between for you and that person.
  - iv. Pay a fee to the person who provided assistance after the assistance.