New comprehensive support system for children and child-rearing

In order to further improve early childhood education and care, and to provide better local parenting support, a new comprehensive support system for children and child-rearing will be introduced to municipalities throughout Japan starting in April 2015.

Main points of the new comprehensive support system for children and child-rearing

1 Providing high quality education and care

The new system provides high quality education through measures such as increasing the spread of Centers for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*, which combine the positive points of both kindergartens and day care centers, and can be used by children regardless of whether their parents work or not.

2 Eliminating children on waiting lists

We aim to eliminate children on waiting lists by making full use of small-scale local childcare facilities *(Chiikigata hoiku)* which care for small numbers of children, in addition to kindergartens, day care centers and Centers for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*.

3 Supporting childcare within the local community

Childcare support close to home in the local community such as temporary and after school childcare will be improved.

Education and care facilities where the new system will be in place

Under the new system, Centers for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)* and small-scale local childcare facilities *(Chiikigata hoiku)* can be used instead of kindergartens and day care centers.
However, the age of children accepted and opening times vary by facility.

Kindergarten

Age of children accepted : 3-5 years
Opening times : Morning- early afternoon
*Some kindergartens accept children before and after usual opening hours and during extended holidays

Description of facility
A facility offering early stage education to provide a base for elementary school

Day care center

Age of children accepted : 0-5 years
Opening times : Morning- evening

Description of facility
A facility which provides care for children whose parents both work or otherwise cannot give care at home

Center for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*

Age of children accepted : 0-5 years
Opening times : Morning - early afternoon (3-5 years old)
* Some facilities accept children before and after usual opening hours and during extended holidays
Opening times : Morning – evening (0-5 years old)

Description of facility
A facility that provides integrated education and care regardless of whether parents work or not

Small-scale local childcare facility *(Chiikigata hoiku)*

Age of children accepted : 0-2 years
Opening times : Morning – evening

Description of facility
A small-scale facility which provides care in a homely atmosphere, for 5 children or less, or for 6-19 children

To use facilities, “approval” is required.

Under the new system, parents must receive approval to use kindergartens, day care centers, Centers for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*, and small-scale local childcare facilities *(Chiikigata hoiku)*. There are three types of approval depending on the age of the child and the necessity of care.

The facilities available and length of time they can be used varies by type of approval received. Please confirm with the relevant ward office.

Type of approval \ Desired facility		Kindergarten	Day care center	Center for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*		Small-scale local childcare facility *(Chiikigata hoiku)*
				Opening hours Morning - early afternoon	Opening hours Morning - evening	
3 years old and over	Standard education length Type 1 approval	✿		✿		
	CHECK! Care approval Type 2 approval		✿		✿	
Under 3 years old	CHECK! Care approval Type 3 approval		✿		✿	✿

CHECK!

How do you get type 2 or 3 approval?

→ You must have a reason to need childcare.

In order to get type 2 or 3 approval, you must have one of the following reasons to require childcare.

- ☐ **Employment** (over 64 hours per month (TBC))
- ☐ **Pregnancy or childbirth**
- ☐ **Illness or disability** (of parent, not child)
- ☐ **Care of a relative**
- ☐ **Recovery after a disaster**
- ☐ **Job hunting**
- ☐ **Attending school** etc.

Also, there are 2 types of approval with different lengths of time, which vary depending on the reason why care is needed, and the parents’ situation.

Standard care length

Extended care ← **Maximum 11 hours** Time when care can be provided → Extended care

Short care length

Extended care ← **Maximum 8 hours** Time when care can be provided → Extended care

For example, if the parents work over 120 hours (TBC) per month, “standard care length” approval can be provided. If the parents work between 64 and 120 hours per month, “short care length” approval will be given.

For more details, please enquire at the facilities you are interested in or at the relevant ward office.

What kind of approval is required?

What about me?
Quick reference chart

(If at least one parent works)

How old is the child?

- 0-2 years old
  - **Who works?**
    - One parent → **Not necessary to apply for approval**
    - Both parents (or single parent family) → **Working time per month**
      - Under 64 hours → **Not necessary to apply for approval**
      - Over 64 hours → **Type 3 approval**
- 3-5 years old
  - **Who works?**
    - One parent → **Type 1 approval**
    - Both parents (or single parent family) → **Working time per month**
      - Under 64 hours → **Type 1 approval**
      - Over 64 hours → You can choose → **Type 1 approval** / **Type 2 approval**

Not necessary to apply for approval

You can use temporary childcare at day care centers, preschool for children under kindergarten age at kindergartens, and Centers for early childhood education *(Nintei kodomo-en)*

Type 3 approval

You can enroll your child at

- Day care center
- Center for early childhood education and care *(Nintei kodomo-en)* (Morning - evening)
- Small-scale local childcare facility *(Chiikigata hoiku)*

Type 1 approval

You can enroll your child at

- Kindergarten
- Center for early childhood education and care *(Nintei kodomo-en)* (Morning – early afternoon)

Type 2 approval

You can enroll your child at

- Day care center
- Center for early childhood education and care *(Nintei kodomo-en)* (Morning - evening)

How to use the new system
~Applying for approval and enrolment~

Procedures required for enrolling in a facility
Type 1 approval

If you wish to enroll your child in

- **Kindergarten**
- **Center for Early Childhood Education and Care** *(Nintei kodomo-en)* (morning – early afternoon)

1 Attend explanatory meetings and open house events to decide the facilities where you are interested in enrolling your child

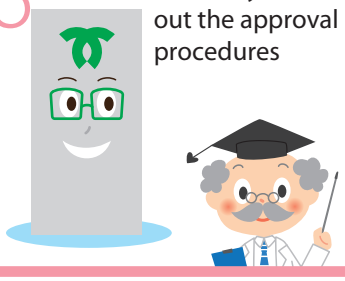
2 Go to the facilities you wish to apply for and pick up an application form

3 Fill in the application form and hand it in to your desired facilities

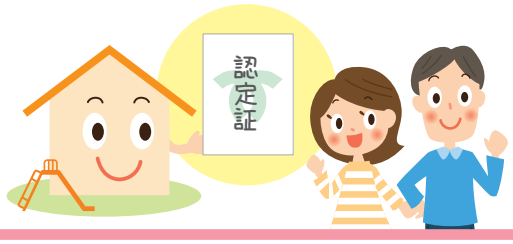
4 Once your child has been unofficially accepted at one or more of the facilities, choose which one you wish for your child to enroll in. You will receive a "grant approval application form" from the facility

5 Fill in the "grant approval application form" and hand it in to the facility

6 Kobe City will carry out the approval procedures



7 You will receive a certificate of approval from Kobe City via the facility



8 Carry out the relevant procedures, and your child is enrolled!

Procedures required for enrolling in a facility

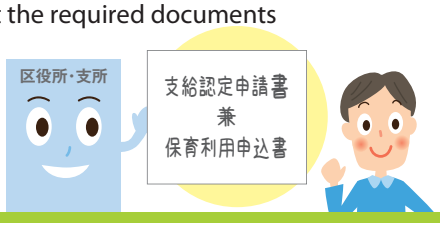
For type 2 and 3 approval

If you wish to enroll your child in

- **Day care center**
- **Center for Early Childhood Education and Care** *(Nintei kodomo-en)* (Morning - evening)
- **Small-scale local childcare facility** *(Chiikigata hoiku)*

1 Attend explanatory meetings and open house events to decide in which facility you wish to enroll your child

2 At the ward office or branch office of the facility where you most wish to enroll your child, get a "grant approval and care application form" *(shikyuu nintei suishinsho ken hoiku riyou suishinsho)*, and find out about the required documents



3 Prepare the "grant approval and care application form" *(shikyuu nintei suishinsho ken hoiku riyou suishinsho)* and all necessary documents

4 Hand in those documents to the ward office/branch office of the facility where you most wish to enroll your child

5 The ward office/branch office will carry out

- Approval procedures
- Facility selection

6 The ward office/branch office will send you the "approval certificate" and will tell you at which facility your child has been placed

7 Carry out the relevant procedures, and your child is enrolled!

From April 2015		When?	Where?
Kindergarten	Private	Distribution of application forms: from 10th September Acceptance of completed application forms: from 1st October	Please apply at your desired facility *For details please contact the facility directly
	Municipal	Distribution of application forms: from 15th to 21st October Acceptance of completed application forms: from 22nd to 31st October *Excluding 28th and 29th October	
Center for Early Childhood Education and Care *(Nintei kodomo-en)*	Morning - early afternoon	Distribution of application forms: from 10th September Acceptance of completed application forms: from 1st October	
	Morning - evening	Distribution of application forms: from 22nd September Acceptance of completed application forms: from 4th November to 12th December	Please apply at the ward office or branch office of the facility
Day care center			
Small-scale local childcare facility *(Chiikigata hoiku)*			

What is an "approval certificate"?

The "approval certificate" gives information such as:

- **The type of approval (type 1,2 or 3)**
- **The validity period**
- **(In the case of type 2 or 3 approval)**
  The time limit of care provided (Standard care length or Short care length type)

Costs (care fees) to be covered by parent

Costs (care fees) which arise from using the new system will be covered by Kobe City up to the limit determined by the national government.
Any other costs (apart from care fees) which arise vary by facility. For more details, please contact the care facility directly.

Local child and child-rearing support projects

The new system provides support for all families with children, not only those in which both parents work. Kobe City provides various care services to meet the various needs and take into account the various situations of each household.