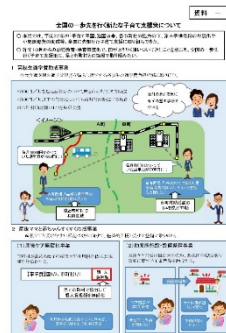


Leading Japan in Childcare Support Policies: Expanded and Improved Fertility Treatment Costs Assistance; Free Postpartum Care; and High School Travel Expenses Assistance

Tottori Prefecture



Fertility treatment



Assistance with school travel expenses, free
postpartum care

Situation (Background/Aims)

Since the founding of “Child Care Kingdom Tottori” in 2010, Tottori Prefecture has been leading Japan in undertaking childcare support initiatives in cooperation with local municipalities.

As a result, the prefecture’s total fertility rate, which had fallen to as low as 1.43 in 2008, has recovered in recent years to the 1.6 range, but the desired birth rate (1.95) has not been achieved, with the number of births continuing to decline year-on-year.

Accordingly, in response to the voices of prefecture residents saying that the burden of childcare is enormous, in FY2020 Tottori Prefecture newly launched a project that pushes prefectural child care support a step ahead of the rest of the country.

Content (Project Outline)

(1) Programme Supporting Desired Pregnancy and Childbirth

Assistance for testing costs is provided as an incentive for beginning fertility treatment early, as well as a means of lessening the economic burden of infertility testing costs.

(2) Postpartum Mothers and Babies Health Subsidy programme

In order to support a smooth start to childcare in addition to preventing postpartum depression and child abuse, Tottori Prefecture has made users’ out-of-pocket payments for postpartum care programmes free of charge.

(3) High School Travel Expenses Subsidy Programme

So that high school students need not abandon studies they wish to pursue because of the cost of travelling to school, Tottori Prefecture is subsidising the travel expenses of students at high schools in Tottori Prefecture who use public transportation to travel to and from school.

Results (Features and Innovation, Future Developments, etc.)

(1) Infertility testing expenses assistance approximately doubled. Tottori Prefecture is the first government body in Japan to subsidise the entire cost of testing.

(2) There was a large increase in mothers utilising postpartum care programmes. Tottori Prefecture is the only governmental body in Japan to make out-of-pocket payments free of charge.

Changing to a joint municipality-prefecture-managed programme has increased the number of assistance recipients. It is the only system in Japan with “no limitations on income” for eligibility.