National Reading Campaigns from local networks in Japan.

Japan Library Association.

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"Children's Reading Year"

Details.

 1-1. The Year 2000 was designated as "Children's Reading Year" by the National Diet Resolution. International Library of Children's Literature was founded on January 1st. 2000, as a branch of the National Diet Library. Since then it has engaged in various kinds of projects to support local libraries.

1-1-1. Book Sets Lending Service to School Libraries.

- Book Sets are composed of about 50 books, and there are 6 kinds including (1) East Asia (2) Southeast Asia & South Asia (3) Europe (4) Scandinavia (5) Canada & United States of America (6) Around the World.
- Each school borrows Book Sets for a month.

"Law on the Promotion of Reading Activities for Children"

 1-2. In 2001, the "Law on the Promotion of Reading" Activities for Children" was approved. The Ministries of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), drafted and announced the "Basic Plan for the Promotion of Reading Activities for Children". They designated April the 23rd. as "Children's Reading Day". In line with the national plan, prefectural and local governments drew up their own plans, facilitating good conditions for children to read books of their own free will, at any opportunity, and in any place. The Basic Plan was revised in 2008.

1-2-1. Good examples.

- * Open the Center to support children's reading.
- * Buying all newly published children's books and holding exhibitions.
- * Training of librarians and volunteers.
- * Open homepage to support children's reading.
- * Lending of Book Sets.
- * Lending large picture books.

1-2-3. Best practice in a small local Japanese town.

 Omaezaki City holds "Nabura Reading Activities". The Japanese word "Nabura" refers to a local Japanese dialect in Shizuoka prefecture in central Japan. The original meaning in Japanese refers to the shoaling of local sea fish. The expression is used as a regional idiom to convey the gathering of children's literature resources. Omaezaki City council proposed that small children borrow books from their kindergartens and enjoy reading aloud at home, and disallowing TV on Thursdays. Librarians have opened blogs on the City Library's home page, and have been providing information to caretakers of small children.

"The Children's Dream Fund"

- 1-3. In 2001 a grant for reading campaigns to be distributed by "The Children's Dream Fund" was started. The project's aim is promoting the wholesome growth of children for the future. The Fund is supported by governmental investment and private (nonofficial) donations.
- Through the grant, many local NPO/NGO groups embarked on various kinds of projects, such as reading picture books aloud, reading festivals, workshops, and so on. In 2009, 450 groups will receive a grant.

"Multicultural Library Services for Children".

 1-4. MEXT started a new fund for cooperative projects between public libraries and NGO groups in 2006. Yokohama City Central Library, in partnership with NPO groups(Yokohama Library Friends & Kanagawa Children's Plaza) received funds in 2008 and began the project.

YOKOHAMA Library Friends (YLF)

 YLF was established in 1995 to support Yokohama City Libraries.
 Main activities are library visit & exploration, seminar, and publication of bulletin 3 times a year.











Kanagawa Children's Plaza

- Kanagawa Childrens Plaza was established 1998. The aim is to make the free space for children and the persons concerned to facilitate the children's culture.
- Their activities are reading aloud picture books, storytelling, and exhibition & booktalk "Around the world through picture books.





1-4-1. Exhibitions and booktalks about Asian children's books at Yokohama City Libraries.

 About 250 books were displayed in the lobby. During the exhibition, reading picture books aloud, booktalks, and seminars were held.









1-4-2. Visitor tours and workshops

 The groups targeted were children and their parents, or caretakers from abroad. Translators and guidebooks were provided in the appropriate languages, including Thai, Chinese, and Tagalog. At Minami Library, a branch of Yokohama City Libraries, a workshop was held. Children conducted scientific experiments using science books.











1-4-3. Lending Book-sets to schools and booktalks in schools.

 Book Sets were made up of 45 books. The target grade was 3rd or 4th grade children. Book Sets were sent to elementary schools for 3 weeks. In the intervening time 3 or 4 staff visited schools to give booktalks.





1-4-4. Lecture about multicultural library services and reports on 3 projects.

 Mr. Takao Murayama, former director of the International Library of Children's Literature, a branch of The Diet Library, was invited to lecture and introduce a number of libraries in Oslo, Norway, Katmandu, Nepal and, Munich, Germany.



