Student Health Care on Campuses in Japan: The Approach to Care for the Japanese Student

Health Education as a Liberal Art

Kanazawa University Health Service Center

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Colleges: 3
Faculties: 16
Students: 10,800
Teaching staff: 2,600
Contemporary Health Problems in Japan
Children’s Mental and Physical Health

• Changes in social circumstances and lifestyles of people affect mental health issues and proper eating habits.

• Mental health issues such as teasing, absenteeism and child abuse as well as allergic diseases, inappropriate sexual behaviors and drug abuse are becoming clearer.

• In recent years, the social environment has given children the habit of skipping breakfast, obesity, or excessive dieting.
Contemporary Health Problems in Japan College Students’ Mental and Physical Health

• Clear tendencies to obesity in males and thinness in females.

• Increased intakes of sugar, alcohol, and carbonated beverages vs. decreased intakes of fruits and vegetables.

• More than 50% of students complain about reduced hours for sleep.

• 72% of students complain about frequent mental fatigue.

• Depression, social anxiety, absenteeism, withdrawal, apathy, self-injury etc. are seen in college students.

“Student and Health” Japanese National University Council of Health Administration Facilities 2001
Contemporary Health Problems in Japan
Occupational Health

- 60% of workers felt anxiety and stress in their working lives.

- Suicides in Japan have exceeded 30,000 each year over the last 10 years. About 30% of them were workers.

- The declining economy affects the workplace environment: e.g. amount and quality of jobs, human relationships. Increases the number of workers suffering from mental health problems.
Contemporary Problems in Japanese Education

- Fragmentation of knowledge
  - Piecemeal information picked up from surfing the internet.
  - Accelerated spread of social networking services and mobile phones
- Accelerating globalization causes changes in traditional Japanese systems.
- Internationalization of Japanese universities also creates difficulties.

Re-organization of Education System Needed
Support for University Education Reform
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

• Support for the education reform of national, public and private universities
  • MEXT supports a variety of efforts to reform universities in a competitive environment through national, public and private universities, with the objective of invigorating higher education and encouraging excellent education and research activities which utilize each university’s individuality and particular characteristics.

• Improvement of graduate education
  • Graduate education fosters the creative human resources that will bring about a knowledge-based society. It is vital to raise the quality of graduate education in Japan and increase its international recognition and reliability.
Purpose of Our Project

Student support that exceeds the level in “Student Personnel Services” (1953 March) by Wesley P. Lloyd et al. (members of the Advisory Board of the American Council on Education)

Support for students’ growth from mental and physical aspects

Students who can create their own futures
A Trinity of Abilities

Communication

Self-control

Coorporation
Complete Health Promotion by Health Service Center

• A comprehensive health promotion program aimed at the growth of the students from both mental and physical aspects.

• Funded by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) from 2007 to 2011 academic years.
Project outline

• Environment
  • Shuttle bus services connecting campuses
  • Communication venues for students

• Regular Curriculum
  • Compulsory subjects: health education as concept learning
  • Elective: promote action through practice

• Extra-curricular activities
  • Various programs to spur healthy actions
Students with ability to bring happiness to self and others

A trinity of abilities

Variety of education programs from physical and mental aspects

Introductory courses of physical and mental health to all new students

Students' living environment
Soup-tasting at Communication venue
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Practical Approach for Health 1
Emergency Resuscitation and Safe Campuses
Practical Approach for Health 2
Prevention of lifestyle-related diseases
Practical Approach for Health 3
Self-discovery through group work
Project Outline

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Dietary education
Physical exercise
Self-awareness
Seminars
Emergency training
After Expiration of MEXT Support (FY2012-)

- Environment
  - Shuttle bus operation finished.

- Regular Curriculum
  - Expanded, including extra-curricular activities

- Extra-curricular activities
  - Continue with the support of the University
Special Programs in Liberal Arts

- Packages (starting 2011)
  - Environment & Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
  - English Step-up
  - English International Communication
- Packages (starting 2012)
  - Health & Self-management
  - History as a Humanity
Health Service Center Student Volunteers (Student Crew)

• Activities

  • Support the mental and physical education provided by the Health Service Center

  • Exchanges with local communities near the University

• Regular Meetings

  • Casual lunch meeting on Tuesday and Thursday
Kanazawa City and Administration Support for Student Crew

• City administration willing to help our Student Crew to communicate with local people

Student Crew with mayor and administrative staff
Distinctive Effects of Regular Curriculum and Extra-curricular Activities

- To obtain knowledge about health conditions
  - Efficacy: Regular Curriculum $>>$ Extra-curricular Activities

- To be aware of things about their interest
  - Efficacy: Extra-curricular Activities $>>$ Regular Curriculum

Participants (Regular Curriculum): 255 (4 years)
Participants (Extra-curricular Activities): 3,043 (4 years)
Total students in Kanazawa University: 10,690
Programs and Systems Students Prefer to Attend

Questionnaire from 1st and 2nd year students

[Bar chart showing preferences for different programs and systems]
Health is a Universal Issue.