

Child Abuse in Japan (part2): Research on Demographic Characteristics of the Experiences

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this research is to identify problems in child abuse by clarifying how public health nurses recognize and respond to it.

METHODS:

We conducted a self-administered questionnaire survey of 2,705 health nurses working for public health centers and other municipal agencies in 7 prefectures. 1,197 nurses participated in it (44.3%) and yielded 955 valid responses. Questions are composed of basic attributes, the experience in handling child abuse cases, coordination with relevant organizations, and knowledge on child abuse.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of experience

population	<10,000 (n=48)	10,000~ <50,000 (n=241)	50,000~ <100,000 (n=169)	100,000~ <200,000 (n=150)	200,00~ (n=332)
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100
0	27.1	22.4	20.7	17.3	12.1
1 to 2	35.4	28.2	24.9	29.3	9.6
3 to 5	20.8	22	21.3	22	19.6
6 to 9	6.3	10.8	10.1	9.3	11.8
10 ~	10.4	16.2	20.7	21.3	46.4
Average of cases ±SD	2.3±2.3	3.0±2.6	3.3±2.7	3.4±2.6	4.9±2.6

Table 2. The public health nurse's support when it encounters child abuse (two or more answers)

population	<10,000 (n=48)	10,000~ <50,000 (n=241)	50,000~ <100,000 (n=169)	100,000~ <200,000 (n=150)	200,00~ (n=332)
Listen to enough at parents' appeal and each embarrassments (%)	40.9	63.4	62.2	62.4	77.3
Support it by the member of the team (%)	65.9	72.8	74.4	73.8	82.6
Not held as a public health nurse alone (%)	59.1	72.8	69.9	69.1	77.6
Prioritize child's safety (%)	61.4	58.5	51.9	57.1	71.1
Parenting skill in the assessment (%)	40.9	51.8	50	56.4	75.8
Make mutual trust with parents (%)	47.7	62.5	51.3	58.4	78.6
Share serious of the child care with parents (%)	34.1	47.8	51.3	58.4	78.6
Others (%)	2.3	3.6	5.8	6	6.5

Table 3. Public health nurse's role concerning child abuse (two or more answers)

population	<10,000 (n=48)	10,000~ <50,000 (n=241)	50,000~ <100,000 (n=169)	100,000~ <200,000 (n=150)	200,00~ (n=332)
Find the child abuse (%)	82.6	83.5	83.5	77.3	83.6
Improve the child care environment (%)	82.6	82.2	81.2	86.4	89.0
Prioritize child's safety (%)	80.4	81.4	79.4	82.5	86.9
Ongoing support to abused child (%)	58.7	59.1	51.2	50.7	57.7
Continuous support parents to abused child (%)	60.9	64.5	66.5	70.8	79.2

RESULTS:

The average number of child abuse cases they handled was 3.6 ± 2.7 . The size of city's population in which they stayed is negatively associated with the number of child abuse cases in which they are involved ($p < 0.001$). Those who stayed in cities whose population was more than 200,000 or less than 10,000 were more likely to report child abuse cases to child guidance centers than those who stayed in cities whose population is over 50,000 but less than 100,000

DISCUSSION:

As the population increases, public health nurses were more likely to experience child abuse cases, took the training course of child abuse prevention, and read a manual on child abuse prevention in a workplaces. These findings suggest that it is necessary for cities whose population is over 50,000 but less than 200,000 to take child abuse prevention measures more actively.