



JEEF NEWS LETTER 2024



To Provide Environmental Education That Leaves No One Behind

<Basic Stance>

In our time, with the declining birthrate, aging population, increasing urbanization, and the increasing number of dual-earners and single-parent households, children, under such social changes in recent years, have less opportunities to grow up through various natural and social experiences in local communities on a daily basis and such experience inequality is deemed a social challenge.

Your donations were aimed to provide opportunities for those who find it difficult to attend the programs for environmental education and nature experiences due to physical, economic or geographical reasons and utilized to implement the activities of providing environmental education and nature experiences that leave no one behind, which consist of the following three pillars:

- Nature and social experience activities that are available for the children from single-parent households, households facing financial hardships, and children with disabilities.
- Healing opportunities for adults who are working hard every day in a stressful society.
- Enjoyable opportunities to learn for children who often miss out on those for inquiry-based learning.

We are truly grateful for your donations.



Creating sustainable society through environmental education.



教育の力で、環境問題を解決する。

公益社団法人

日本環境教育フォーラム

Japan Environmental Education Forum

Nature and social experience activities that are available for the children from single-parent households, households facing financial hardships, and children with disabilities.



Initiative: Parent-Child Camping in Okutama Forest (Elementary and Junior High School Students & Parents)

Date: July 20(Sat) -21(Sun), 2024

Location: Okutama (Tokyo)

In Partnership With : Earthmanship (Certified NPO)

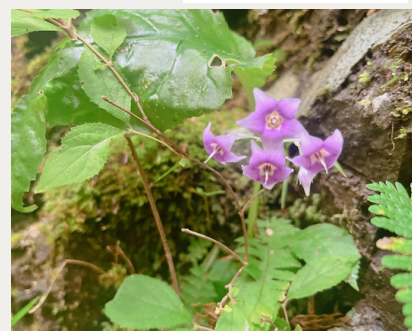
We held a parent-child camp for single parents. Nine pairs of parents and children (18 people) were invited to join the camp, where adults could forget about their busy days raising children or working and spend time with themselves while being healed by nature, and children could discover new things, take up challenges, and grow in nature. In the camp, preparing food, drawing water for cooking and drinking, and building fires are all carried out by working together. Among them, what was really popular and exciting was playing in a mountain stream, and the stream above the water source forest was crystal-clear, and both adults and children fully enjoyed splashing water on each other, floating buoyantly, or diving from the top of a high rock.

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(From guardians)

I'm usually pretty busy and rarely have time to talk leisurely with my child, but for these two days, we could have a lot of time to talk with each other.

I was also able to talk with the parents who have similar concerns as I do.





Initiative: Parent-Child Camping in Kiyosato Forest (Elementary and Junior High School Students & Parents)

Date: Sept. 7(Sat)-8(Sun), 2024

Location: Seisen-Ryo Nature School (Yamanashi Prefecture)

In Partnership With:

Kiyosato Educational Experiment Project, Inc.

The overnight program was held fully enjoying the greenery of Kiyosato Forest, Yamanashi Prefecture with 10 single-parent families (22 people). Making snacks using a fire built in parent-child cooperation, watching the sky full of stars on a night hike, building a secret base only by children and spending time leisurely just among adults. Those were the two days filled with excitement and challenges. When we asked the children, “What was fun to you?,” they responded one after another saying, “Snacks!,” “Night hike!,” “Bath!,” “Meals!,” “Building a secret base!” That fact that they did not respond in one and the same answer is the proof that the children were able to challenge themselves feeling nature in every aspect of the program.

Taking this opportunity, we would be happy if they could try having time spent in nature from now on as well.

(From guardians)

- Watching the starry sky lying down on the sheet on the grass on a night hike was an unforgettable amazing experience.
- My child who used to hate insects started touching them and taking a large public bath with friends for the first time. Though my son used to be allergic to new places and shy of people in the past, he immediately fit in this time with other children, which showed me a lot of his learning and growth.
- He said, “Since I’ve never experienced camping with you, I want to go with you.” I wonder how many times I will be able to have such an experience with my son from now on. I really appreciate having had such an opportunity this time.

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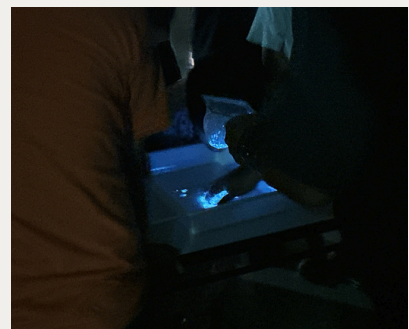
Initiative: Cape Taibusa, Minamiboso Parent-Child Ocean Program (Elementary School Students & Parents)
Date: Sept. 22 (Mon)-23 (Tue), 2024
Location: Cape Taibusa Nature House, Minamiboso City
In Partnership With: Chiba Nature School (Specified Nonprofit Corporation)

The overnight program to fully enjoy the Ocean was held at Cape Taibusa, surrounded by greenery and the sea, with 10 single-parent families (21 people in total). The program started with a walk in the nature, later enjoying SUP and kayaking in the sea. At night they caught and observed sea fireflies. The next day, they made wind chimes with shells they picked up, spending eventful two days. Although it is a parent-child program, It does not mean that parents and children are always together, and children and adults, sometimes together and sometimes alone, spent the two days with variation of styles, such as just kids, just adults, solo, etc. so that they could have great time in their own ways. “I saw a real rainbow for the first time.” “It was my first time that I had slept separately from my parent.” Children, thus, had a lot of first experiences. In the bus going back after fully enjoying the sea of Minamiboso, children, having run out of batteries, were sleeping like logs. Through the program, both adults and children became closer to nature and human connections were deepened through the experience together.

(From guardians)

- I was glad to have made connections with other parents.
- I wanted to give my children a lot of opportunities to experience nature, but it’s not easy to do so; therefore, it was a good opportunity for me to connect with my children.
- I learned that I didn’t have to be with my kids all the time. It was OK to be on my own and enjoy myself.

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Osaka Children's Camp in 2025 (Elementary School Students)
Date: Jan. 25(Sat)-26(Sun), 2024
Location: Osaka Prefectural Youth Retreat (Osaka Prefecture)
Supervision: Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences

In cooperation with Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences, the winter camp was held for two days and one night for 28 elementary and junior high school students from single-parent households (22 families). The camp included a fire-building experience, outdoor cooking, hiking, etc.

This year's winter camp celebrates the third anniversary. There are some children who look forward to the program every year and have attended the camp three years in a row, and our staff feel happy to see them growing up every year. The greatest feature of this camp is the fact that the students belonging to the Outdoor Activities Department of Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences and other students are fully engaged in planning and the operation of the program as camp counselors. The students, being close to the children in age, are in a better position to try to figure out how to make programs sticking to containing humors and how to interact with children.

The program was also intended to provide respite for the parents during the two-day and one-night stay. Parents also commented that "it was the first time in a long time that they were able to spend time on their own."

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(From guardians)

- My child had a lot of fun and told me many stories. I guess children can release their stress in nature.
- I think my kid was anxious before going, but once he got there, he had a great time and seemed satisfied. It was a very good opportunity for me because I was too anxious to take him to the camp by myself.





**Hokkaido Winter Children's Camp
(Elementary School Students)
Date: Oct. 19(Sat)-20(Sun), 2024
Location: Kitoushi Forest Park & National Taisetsu Youth
Friendship Center
Co-hosted by: NPO Daisetsuzan Nature School**

The event of “Let’s Fully Enjoy Great Autumnal Nature! KITOUSHI & BIEI CHILDREN’S CAMP” was held for two days and one night. A total of 18 children living in Asahikawa City and its suburbs from single-parent households and households facing financial hardships participated in the camp. Waking up to find the world outside with everything covered with snow! The participants took on activities including mini games to learn the life of wild animals, such as Yezo deer and brown bears inhabiting in the forests in Asahikawa, taking up a challenge in producing gradations by gathering colorful leaves, and creating unique wooden spoons and forks on their own by skillfully using a knife. In addition, the trekking in the forest covered with snow was creating an unusual air of fantasy. Becoming friends in a natural way through activities with the participants they met for the first time, and while enjoying themselves on their own, they seem to be enjoying themselves by respecting the personalities of others, which was pretty impressive. In addition, as it was an overnight stay, children in the upper grades behaved as older brothers and sisters in such a manner as to take the initiative in bed making for the children in the lower grades. There seems to have been many parents who had worries that they did not know what to do without outdoor knowledge although “they wanted their children to enjoy playing in nature to their heart’s content!” However, through this camping, the children were able to feel the beautiful autumnal nature of Hokkaido with all their senses and have many new experiences.

(From guardians)

- Without any experience of staying overnight away from the parents because of the fact that the events to be held by the nursery were cut down during the COVID-19 pandemic, the camp experience this time seems to have helped provide confidence to my child in such a manner as to have him shout with joy, “I was able to enjoy the overnight stay!”, “I had a good sleep!” and “I could go to another camp!”
- My son told me that away from the parents, he was able to learn this time how to think about various things by himself.

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Rainbow Adventure Nature Class for Developmental Bumps and Lumps (Elementary School Students & Parents)

Date: Jun. 15(Sat) / Aug.11(Sun) / Sept.28(Sat), 2024
 May 15(Sat), 2025(Scheduled)

Location: Whole Earth Nature School

In Partnership With: NPO Whole Earth Nature School

Nanairo no Daiboken takes development disabilities as an individuality and offers the opportunity for children and their parents/guardians to discover a new side of themselves through a nature experiences at the foot of the majestic Mt. Fuji. We continue our activities in the hope that children will feel, think, and act in nature to affirm themselves and feel more comfortable at home and at school. In fiscal 2024, the one-day session for parents and children was held four times (including the session to be held).

1st session: “Let’s enjoy cave exploration & hikes through the forests of Mt. Fuji!”

2nd session: “Let’s have a lot of fun swimming in the limpid stream of Inako River!,
 The source of which is at the foot of Mt. Tenshigatake”

3rd session: “Let’s experience canoeing in the lake & enjoy a guided nature trip by a lake!”

4th session: “Let’s enjoy a walk rally around Satoyama (wooded hills surrounding village communities) in pursuit of spring!”

(From guardians)

- By being in contact with nature, we can learn a lot of things that cannot be experienced in daily life. Every time we participate, we feel our own growth. In addition, a lot of staff kindly act with us, which I found was very helpful and encouraging. It was also reassuring that we could talk with the staff members about children’s growth.
- Although my child was not active in interacting with other people or attending the events and he, worrying about others around him, could not participate positively, in the “developmental bumps and lumps” session, such families having a similar feeling about their children as the staff member to whom I had confessed about my child kindly talked to me in a gentle manner. Therefore, I as a parent was able to understand how my child was feeling on that day and at that time of the day, and it was a valuable time for me to be able to notice a new aspect or interest of my child.

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In
 preparation



Adults Need Nat Adul Need Nature Experiences Too!

We work hard every day in a stressful society. Do you have time to talk to yourself?

We, who have been accumulating "Environmental Education through Nature Experience (= Human Resource Development)," hope that adults living in a stressful society will spend more time in contact with nature. Forests have the potential to be used effectively to realize a sustainable society from a variety of perspectives, including SDGs, human resource development, health, and work opportunities.



Session to be in contact with autumnal nature in the forest in Musashino and enjoy coffee in a chillaxing ambiance

Date: Nov. 24(Sun), 2024

Location: Metropolitan Nogawa Park (Tokyo)

Lecturer: Nature trip guide, Ms. Noriko Kawakami (NACS-J Nature Observation Instructor, the Tokyo Liaison Conference)
Bonfire Arranger, Mr. Soichi Ashizawa (Skillnote Corporation)

We held a nature experience retreat event planned for adults wishing to be in contact with autumnal nature over the weekend and spend time leisurely, although they are usually pretty busy working. Having had 15 participants, we were able to spend a day being healed by a wonderful nature of Nogawa Park and the warmth of the bonfire. It turned out to be a pretty healing program relieving the daily fatigue that after having enjoyed a hike and nature observation in the forest in Musashino tinged in autumnal colors, we had a bonfire in the forest, made and tasted the coffee using water from a spring, and spent a relaxing time in the forest.

(From participants)

- Since I like bonfires, I was happy to have seen and known how to make a fire. It was a nice and informative experience for me that I was able to know how to build a fire and what kind of wood to use.
- It was a lot of fun to know the nearby abundance and wonder of nature from the explanations about plant leaves, seeds, fruits and insects, including the things we tend to miss out on during our daily walk. Bonfires were really nice and comfortable in terms of all visual, hearing and tactile senses, and I was able to spend a moment of bliss. Thank you also for having selected and prepared the fair trade coffee. It was a brief time for rest that recharged my mental and physical batteries.

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Creating Fun Learning Opportunities for Children Who Rarely Engage in Inquiry-Based Learning

Children fighting serious illnesses such as pediatric cancer, unable to attend school, or unable to reach urban venues due to geographical or economic reasons often miss out on opportunities for inquiry-based learning.

That is why we visit places where such children are living in and host a variety of workshops as well as teach the adults around these children simple experiments they can do at home and how to interact with the child in an ongoing effort to create opportunities to have fun while learning and connect while at home.



Inquiry Workshop Caravan

Date: ① Feb. 17(Sat)-19(Mon), 2024

② Jun. 28(Fri)-30(Sun), 2024

Location: ① Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture

② Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture

In Partnership With: ① BLOSSOM Junior in Ohnoyama, Naha

② Pocket Support(Specified Nonprofit Corporation)

The project visits locations throughout Japan to offer free exploratory workshops, and to encourage an interest in the joy of learning and the outside world.

In Okinawa Prefecture, workshops were held under the theme, “Let’s enjoy arithmetic games!” as part of the the day service after school-a welfare services that provide the necessary support for each child with disabilities. There were some children who were not good at learning or who had difficulty managing their emotions or movements, but it was impressive that the children were pretty vivid with their eyes shining and exclaiming, “I still want to continue!” or “It was really fun!” even after having spent freely explorable time.

In Okayama Prefecture, workshops were held for children and their siblings battling illnesses and the adults around them under the theme, “Let’s be a scientist!” The workshops were held both online and face-to-face to allow them to participate in either way depending on their physical condition. Children of a wide age range from elementary school to high school participated and enjoyed working on experiments and crafts freely. It was an occasion where we could feel the children’s proactive enthusiasm for learning and the importance of the places for getting together.

(From participants)

- I was surprised to have realized that I enjoyed learning arithmetic for 45 minutes just like in an elementary school, being absorbed in it.
- Both volunteers and parents participated all together and enjoyed exchanging ideas.



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Your donations support these activities. We would be grateful for your continued support and cooperation.



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