

2. Activity Report

Community Support Division, Kesennuma Regional Center

Community Support Division, Ishinomaki Regional Center

Community Support Division, Stem Center

Planning and Research Division, Stem Center

Report of the Kesennuma Regional Center

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Introduction

The main initiatives of 2017 are listed for each operation. Since the number of activities for each operation is listed under 1) Activity State by Operation Item in Chapter 1 of the 2017 Report, such details will be kept to a minimum here, with details provided here centered on the operation content.

1. Resident support

Resident support services conducted in 2017 included home visits for residents classified as high-risk under the health survey conducted by the Miyagi Prefecture and each municipality, as in previous years, as well as providing ongoing support in response to requests made by each relevant institution and people asking for consultations directly.

Furthermore, one employee has been temporarily transferred to Kesennuma and Minamisanriku, respectively, cooperating with psychological health welfare services and conducting resident support services as part of their work.

(1) Kesennuma City

Based on the health survey conducted on residents in private rental housing in Kesennuma City, outreach via home visits was conducted for those who are believed to be in a high-risk state from the perspective of K6 and alcohol-related behavior (Table 1).

Following 2016, there has been an increase in direct consultation requests from the person concerned or their families in addition to aid requests from governmental, educational, and other relevant institutions. The content of consultations includes poor adjustment within school for elementary, middle, and high school students and issues related to families, similar to what was seen in 2016. Other consultations that stood out are for those of working age regarding their workplace and tasks, and consultations related to trauma. There were many issues, with some serious in nature. There were many cases in which aid was continuously provided. For this reason, there has been an increase in consultations in which support was given in collaboration with other relevant institutions.

Table 1: Support provided including health surveys conducted through home visits

Summary	The main support period and main support targets	The number of support cases (e.g., home visits) conducted by the Kesennuma Regional Center
Home visits based on 2016 health survey of residents of private rental housing	May 2017–February 2018, Focusing on cases with high K6 scores and those who matched with items such as “drinking from the morning.”	27 cases

(2) Minamisanriku

Home visits were conducted with residents who were believed to be in a high-risk state based on the health survey conducted at Minamisanriku (Table 2).

Furthermore, aid was provided through home visits and phone calls in response to requests made by governmental institutions and other relevant institutions, as well as those made directly by the person in question.

Table 2: Support provided including health survey conducted through home visits

Summary	The main support period and main support targets	The number of support cases (e.g., home visits) conducted by the Kesennuma Regional Center
Home visits based on the 2016 health survey of residents	July–December 2017, Focusing on cases with high K6 scores and those who matched with the items such as “drinking from morning” and “drinking excessively.”	48 cases

(3) Discussion

Concerning home visits conducted after the health survey in Kesennuma, although there were not many residents in a state that required continuous support, there were several residents who discussed sleep disturbances, feeling down, and concern about their future prospects since the earthquake. Although these were not of such a degree as would impair their lives, this indicated that experiences during the earthquake still affect them.

As the number of residents in private rental housing in Kesennuma decreases, the number of cases that require support based on the result of the health survey is also decreasing annually. However, the number of consultations from related institutions and the number of direct consultations are increasing, with the number of consultation cases in 2017 being the highest in history. During the recovery process following the earthquake, various daily life challenges that threaten the mental health of residents will appear, which leads us to believe that consultations will continue to increase in the future.

At Minamisanriku, relocations to the upland have been in progress, in addition to public housing being built. However, when the situation of residents believed to be in a high-risk state during the health survey was checked during visits, it was found that there were many residents who had received negative impact to their mental health due to financial problems after rebuilding their own home or deterioration in their physical health after moving. When continuous support was needed, it was provided by collaborating with public health nurses from the municipality, supporters, and the LSA. With residents who had difficulties talking openly during visits due to the presence of other family members, ongoing support was provided by arranging an environment that would make it easier for them talk openly through such measures as providing a private consultation space.

We will continue to provide support to Kesennuma and Minamisanriku in a flexible manner. This includes handling a wide range of issues related to the mental health of the community, regardless of whether there are future disasters, as well as arrangements such as implementing night-time consultation times, depending on the living circumstances of those requiring help.

2. Support for supporters

(1) Kesennuma

① The allocation of specialists to the municipal body

As in 2016, a specialist was also allocated to the municipality in 2017. By providing support for public health nurses' tasks, we conducted an initiative toward reducing the operational burdens of the municipality public health nurses.

② Support related to municipality employees' mental health

Health consultation contact points for municipality employees (including dispatched employees) were opened with a designated staff member assigned between 10AM and 4PM on every third Wednesday of the month at the One-Ten Building in the Kesennuma Municipal Office. In the event that the service was difficult to reach during opening hours due to work obligations and such, alternative flexible operation hours and consultation points were arranged. The number of contact point usages increased over 2016.

We participated in a conference on employee mental health in August 2017, where we shared the consultation state of the municipality employees and discussed future support systems (e.g., support for returning to work after leave, and training).

③ Mental health support for Kesennuma Social Welfare Council employees

Individual interviews with Kesennuma Social Welfare Council employees were conducted based on the results of the Tohoku University Graduate School of Medicine's Department of Preventive Psychiatry (hereinafter, “the Department of Preventive Psychiatry”)'s 2018 mental health survey of Kesennuma Social Welfare Council employees.

(2) Minamisanriku

① The allocation of specialists to the municipal body

As in 2016, a specialist was allocated to the municipality body in 2017. By providing assistance by supporting Earthquake survivors and performing public health nurse duties, the specialists helped reduce the workload of the municipality's public health nurses.

② Support related to municipality employees' mental health

Health consultation contact points for municipality employees were open, as in 2016, twice a month, on the fourth Tuesday (14:00–19:00) and either Saturday or Sunday (11:00–15:00). In addition, consultations were organized by making arrangements around employees' circumstances.

Information about the health consultation contact point was distributed so as to be easily seen by employees. Such measures included posting the information in the *Hitoiki Column* ("Take a Breather Column"), a column related to mental health published in the newsletter distributed every month by the General Affairs Office.

③ Mental health support for Disaster Survivors' Life Support Center, Minamisanriku Social Welfare Council employees

Individual interviews with 24 employees of the Disaster Survivors' Life Support Center, Minamisanriku Social Welfare Council (hereinafter, "Disaster Survivors' Life Support Center"), was conducted in November in order to ascertain their mental health state.

Furthermore, there were opportunities to share information about the status of residents that we provide support to, the temporary container-type housing, and the public housing, with the senior citizens' advisory center located in each satellite office and public housing by visiting them irregularly.

(3) Discussion

Through the dispatch of employees transferred to Kesennuma and Minamisanriku, municipal employees' operations were supported, including especially public health nurses, as well as providing further support to the two municipalities by our Center.

Initiatives assisting recovery from the disaster continue in Kensunuma. The municipality employees have a heavy operation workload, just as before, and are believed to be experiencing accumulated exhaustion in both body and mind.

Even in Minamisanriku, municipality employees are still dealing with excessive workloads. Although the need for mental health support is understood, it was difficult to lead them to avail themselves of the employee health consultation contact point.

By regularly hosting the health advice contact point for Kesennuma and Minamisanriku employees even into the future, we will continue to provide individual psychological support as well as support toward creating a structure for improving the mental health of said employees.

Furthermore, Disaster Survivors' Life Support Center employees are experiencing an increased sense of burden by having to face new issues, such as dealing with residents who cannot be contacted or those who died inside public housing. For this reason, we provided support to reduce their psychological burden when we exchanged info. We will continue to provide support by responding to requests.

3. Raising public awareness

(1) Kesennuma

① Publishing *Sanriku Kokoro Tsuushin*

In *Sanriku Shinpō* (translation: New Sanriku Report), a newspaper with subscriptions mainly in Kensunuma, a column named *Sanriku Kokoro Tsuushin* (translation: Sanriku Soul Communication) has been published monthly since April in collaboration with the Kesennuma Public Health Center (Table 3). Through the newspaper, accurate information on mental health and the announcement of the health consultation contact point was communicated with the general public.

The topics for the articles were decided via discussion with the Kesennuma Public Health Center and by considering factors such as the current state of the region. Topics related to the earthquake were included for the first time in 2017.

After publishing the column, reactions included questions regarding the article and phone calls asking for consultation.

Table 3: Content published on "*Sanriku Kokoro Tsuushin*" in the *Sanriku Shinpō*

Issue	Date published	Content	Writer
Vol. 42	April 2017	Start of the new fiscal year: Let's deal properly with nervousness	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 43	May	Spring-time malaise!?: The physical and mental disorders most likely to be	Kesennuma Regional Center

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		experienced this season	
Vol. 44	June	Looking after both your body and mind: Let's go for a checkup!	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 45	July	Dealing with changes in residential environment	Kesennuma Regional Center
Vol. 46	August	Did you know? Appropriate drinking habits: How to deal with alcohol well	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 47	September	Are you able to sleep well these days?: Promoting health with quality sleep	Kesennuma Regional Center
Vol. 48	October	Is your mind exhausted?	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 49	November	Taking breaks efficiently—How to rest and take breaks for those with a busy work schedule	Kesennuma Regional Center
Vol. 50	December	On drinking and mental health	Kesennuma Regional Center
Vol. 51	January 2018	Becoming socially withdrawn—it could happen to anyone: Let's think about it together	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 52	February	Do you know what a gatekeeper is?	Kesennuma Public Health Center
Vol. 53	March	On natural disasters and their impact on the body and mind	Kesennuma Regional Center

* The “issue published in” refers to the cumulative issue number since 2013.

② Hosting the *Koko Café* (Warm-Hearted Café), a mental health interaction project for residents

The *Kokoro Café* is a project that the City of Kesennuma has been running since 2012, with disaster survivors who reside in private rental housing as the main target subjects. The objective of the project is to provide opportunities for residents to interact with one another and to go outside in order to prevent them from becoming isolated, as well as to help them learn stress relief methods as part of self-care methods.

In 2016, the project was held jointly with the City of Kesennuma, with our Center hosting it in 2017. The Kesennuma Citizens’ Health Management Center Sukoyaka (hereinafter, “Sukoyaka”) was used as the main venue in collaboration with the Medical Corporation, Testushisa Igawa Association Mitsumine Hospital (hereinafter, Mitsumine Hospital), and it was held by the City of Kesennuma and the Social Welfare Volunteer Center of the Kesennuma City Council (hereinafter, “Volunteer Center”) (Table 4).

Table 4: *Kokoro Café* Implementation Content

	Date conducted	Location	Content
1 st Session	June 13, 2017 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Talks on stress & aromatic hand massage experience session
2 nd session	June 27 (Tues)	Jonan Branch	Picture-letter workshop
3 rd Session	July 18 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Decorative magnet workshop & exercises
4 th Session	August 29 (Tues)	Matsuiwa Civic Hall	Rhythm exercises
5 th Session	September 19 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Workshop on how to make coffee
6 th Session	October 17 (Tues)	Ojima Community Center	Workshop on how to make coffee
7 th Session	November 7 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Story time & Music
8 th Session	December 12 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Story on life habits that increase immune system strength
9 th Session	January 23 2018 (Tues)	Matsuiwa Civic Hall	Workshop on how to make green tea
10 th Session	February 13 (Tues)	Sukoyaka	Story from a chaplain

③ Cooperation with the city Health Festival project

Based on Kesennuma Health Plan 21 and the Healthy Eating Promotion Plan, the Health Festival is a project conducted by the City of Kesennuma for the purpose of preventing the deterioration of health and physical functions caused by lifestyle habits and stress to maintain and promote the health of citizens.

During the festival day, a *Kokoro Café* (*Koko Café*) Corner was run under the topic of “finding stress relief methods suitable for you,” with drinks provided, self-experience programs conducted, and awareness-raising panels displayed. The experience program involved a *Sanshin* (Okinawan traditional instrument) performance, breathing methods, and a story time on health, all held as part of a relaxing experience that stimulates the five senses.

Note 1*: “Story-time” in this paper refers to *Kamishibai*, a form of Japanese street theater and storytelling that involves the usage of large illustrated cards as a visual aid.

④ Distribution of awareness-raising materials for city employees

Awareness-raising materials related to mental health were distributed to city employees in December 2017 to provide them the opportunity to be mindful of their own health.

⑤ Others

The following mental-health support activities were conducted as part of awareness raising for residents (Table 5).

Table 5: Other public awareness-raising initiatives

Support targets	Support content	Number of implementations
Residents	We participated in and cooperated with regular alcohol abstinence meetings managed by the Miyagi Prefecture-based nonprofit organization Danshukai held in the Honyoshi District.	Participated 11 times/Hosted 12 times
Shishiori District temporary container-type housing/public housing residents	We co-sponsored the 2017 Shishiori District Genkikyoushitsu (translation: Energetic Class) hosted by Miyagi University. We were in charge of opening a mental health advisory contact point and delivering part of the lectures, as well as providing a place in which residents of temporary container-type housing and public housing can interact at a Yasugrai, Kesennuma Citizens' Welfare Center Center.	6 times
Residents	We co-sponsored the Kesennuma District Health-Promotion On-Street Campaign in 2017 hosted by the Kesennuma Public Health Center. We distributed awareness-promoting goods that have a mental health checklist and advisory institutions information printed on them at three supermarkets within Kesennuma City during Suicide Prevention Month.	Once
Persons with dementia and their caregivers, local residents, and staff members of relevant institutions	We co-sponsored Koko-cha, a dementia café hosted by the Miyagi Prefecture Dementia Patient Medical Center. We provided a place in which persons with dementia, caregivers, and local residents can interact once a month at either one of the locations of restaurants within Mitsumine hospital, the One-Ten Building in Kesennuma Civic Hall, and Ysauragi, Kesennuma Citizens' Welfare Center.	12 times
Residents	We cooperated with a Public Awareness-Raising Course on Preventative Care organized by Fukuju-Sou, a Kesennuma Elderly Welfare Center. Talks about mental health through skits and experience-based programs, such as relaxation techniques and exercises, were provided.	3 times
Residents	Activities for men were held and sponsored by our Center and co-sponsored by the City of Kesennuma. A place for giving lectures about health, self-experience, and interaction for men who are prone to isolation were provided for the purpose of improving and promoting psychological health.	3 times
Caregivers & families	We participated in the Families of Dementia Patient Exchange Meeting in response to a request made by the Kesennuma Northern regional general support center. Relaxation and exercise sessions were provided at the San-san Building of the Kesennuma Karakuwa Health and Welfare Center.	Once
Caregivers & families	We participated in a Dementia Round-Table Conference in response to a request made by the Kesennuma Southern regional general support center. Talks and relaxation exercises were conducted at Itoi, a Motoyoshi Health and Welfare Center.	Once
Residents	Talks on mental health through a skit and experiment-based program, such as relaxation techniques and exercises, were provided in response to a request made by the Kazuno Residents' Association.	Once
Residents	Story-time on mental health was conducted at <i>Iki-Iki</i> (translation: lively) Health Classroom in Nagaisohama, Nagaisohara District, in response to a request by the Kesennuma Health Promotion Division.	Once
Residents	Story-time on mental health and experience-based programs, such as relaxation techniques and exercises, were provided at a resident's association in the Kamizawa District in response to a request made by the Volunteer Center.	Once
Residents	Talks on mental health and experience-based programs, such as relaxation techniques and exercises, were provided at the <i>Iki-Iki</i> (translation: lively) Health Salon, at temporary container-type housing at Kisennuma Park in response to a request by the Volunteer Center.	Once
Residents	A regular program on mental health was produced and broadcast in collaboration with Radio Kesennuma, as per their request. The program aired information on mental health and advisory institutions.	13 times

(2) Minamisanriku

① Holding health-themed story-time jointly with the Survivors' Life Support Center

A health-themed story-time on mental health was conducted by the Survivors' Life Support Center during tea-time, and held at temporary container-type housing and public housing. The public awareness-raising campaign was conducted eight times during the year, reaching a total of 83 local residents.

② The implementation of health story-time in conjunction with Minamisanriku regional general support center

In response to a request made by the Minamisanriku regional general support center, story-time relating to mental health and exercise was conducted during tea parties held by local organizations. Public awareness-raising campaigns were conducted twice a year to a total of 28 local residents.

③ Alcohol and Health Class for Residents

From 2017, health classes for residents concerning alcohol consumption using health story-time were conducted via "Free-talk health advice meetings," which were held by the Minamisanriku and Miyagi Nursing Association as part of Minamisanriku's alcohol-related issue countermeasure project. Public awareness-raising campaigns were conducted seven times a year for a total of 45 local residents (Table 6).

Table 6: Implementation Status of Alcohol and Health Class for Residents

Session number	Date	Location	Number of participants
1	October 20, 2017 (Friday)	Yodorigi/Niranohama Housing Estate Assembly Hall	14 (14 women)
2	November 14 (Tuesday)	Viva Minamisenriku	0
3	November 21 (Tuesday)	Kanaham Housing Estate Assembly Hall	6 (6 women)
4	December 8 (Friday)	Shizugawa-West (West) Restored Housing Assembly Hall	6 (2 men, 4 women)
5	January 16, 2018 (Tuesday)	Togura Restored Housing Assembly Hall	11 (1 man, 10 women)
6	February 9 (Friday)	Shizugawa-East (East) Restored Housing Assembly Hall	4 (4 women)
7	March 13 (Tuesday)	Natari Restored Housing Assembly Hall	4 (1 man, 3 women)

④ Distribution of awareness-promoting material to municipality employees

Before the long-term holidays at the end of the year, leaflets about promoting mental health were created and distributed to all employees (approximately 450).

⑤ Participating in Minamisanriku Welfare/Health Festival

As in 2016, we opened a booth at the Minamisanriku Welfare and Health Festival, where we presented a panel describing our Center's activities and mental health, as well as presenting stress-relief goods designed to involve all five senses. Furthermore, an eco-bag with the Center's logo printed on it was distributed to 500 festival attendees and stress releasers to 384 booth visitors in an attempt to raise public awareness about mental health.

⑥ Cooperation with Café Azumare (Translation: Come Together) Opening Ceremony

Due to the closing immediately after the earthquake of the salon where the recreation activities that the Survivors' Life Support Center had been conducted, relaxation experiences using music were provided to participating residents in the closing ceremony.

(3) Discussion

Kesennuma saw an increase in public awareness-raising campaign requests in 2017 from relevant institutions and resident associations. This increase can be attributed to further collaborations between the Center and relevant institutions, along with the usage of methods that were easier to understand, including story-time and exercise. In particular, resident reactions toward such mediums for awareness and promotion were very favorable. Furthermore, given that these activities were frequently conducted in small groups involving face-to-face interaction, participants were provided with the opportunity to perceive mental health as something close to and directly impacting them.

There have been instances where holding public awareness and promotion activity has led to consultation. Such activities not only serve to disseminate information about mental health, but also about the places at which consultations could be carried out.

Activities to help raise public mental health awareness in Minamisanriku centered on health story-time about alcohol. These were conducted in public housing and in districts relocated to upland and other pre-existing regions, rather than simply at container-type temporary housing.

Furthermore, public awareness-raising activities were conducted for a wide range of ages by operating a booth at the Welfare and Health Festival in which many residents participated in. By participating in the festival two years in a row, we were able to further learn about the changes in awareness on mental health, as well as the daily lives of the residents who were in attendance.

In the future, we will continue to engage in providing support for residents using the methods that have been accumulated to date.

4. Human resource development and training

(1) Kesennuma City

① Listening seminar for those working in the district (e.g., welfare commissioners)

We cooperated in holding a listening seminar conducted by Takeshi Yamazaki, Vice President of our organization. Titled “Learn to listen well and provide mental support to those around you,” the seminar was hosted by the Omose District Social Welfare Council and Kesennuma City, with the welfare commissioners and volunteer association members of the district as seminar attendees.

② Training for managers of facilities for the elderly

We conducted training for workplace mental health for managers in response to requests made by the Keicho-en, a special nursing home for the aged.

③ Social Skills Training (SST) at the Employment Support Liaison Committee

We conducted a talk on SST at the Employment Support Liaison Committee in response to requests made by Kanae, an employment/living support center for persons with disabilities.

④ Mental health training for nursing students

We conducted a talk on mental health self-care of nursing professions in response to requests made by the Kesennuma Shiritsu Byoinfuzoku School of Nursing.

⑤ Training for municipality employees

We conducted a talk on mental health self-care as part of the mental health training for municipality employees in response to requests made by Kesennuma City’s Human Resource Division.

(2) Minamisanriku

① Training for aid workers and LSA at Survivors’ Life Support Center

Workshops on the topic of relaxation and looking back at past activities were conducted twice a year in response to requests made by the Survivors’ Life Support Center.

② Training for municipality employees

A training session on the topic of Workplace Mental Health was conducted for 14 employees of the departments that requested it via the General Affairs Division.

③ Training at the Minamisanriku Family Caregiving/Regional Living Support Workshop

Talks and relaxation experience sessions were provided under the title of “Talking is Important, Don’t Hold It In” to 19 people during workshops for volunteers in response to requests made by the regional general support center.

(3) Discussion

Similar to 2016, we conducted training sessions based on demands from relevant institutions. In Kesennuma in particular, there were many requests made by institutions on topics surrounding the mental health of workplace and aid workers.

In Minamisanriku, we met the needs of Survivors’ Living Support Center employees by providing training in accordance with the current state of this Center, which was closed in 2017.

In 2017, we took part in the Family Caregiving/Regional Living Support Workshop held for the first time in Minamisanriku. We provided training to residents, who will be the future bearers of aid work in the region, on the importance of self-care. This training led to conducting awareness-raising activities via story-time in existing regions, expanding our endeavors.

Securing and fostering specialists and other human resources has become a major issue in Kesennuma and Minamisanriku. We therefore aim to contribute to resolving regional issues by taking charge of all possible roles at the Center.

5. Support for various activities

(1) Kesennuma

In 2017, we continued to provide support for numerous activities as we strengthened our bonds with various groups and organizations operating in the region via such venues as the NPO/NGO

We also continued to cooperate with *Wakachiai no Kai* (Association of Sharing) in 2017. This was sponsored by the nonprofit organization Sendai Grief Care Research Association as part of their support to families of the deceased. In the middle of the year, we reflected on our activities, examined how the association should handle itself in light of the regional situation, and channeled these ideas back into the activities held in the latter half the year, in which we saw an increase in participants.

Furthermore, we cooperated with a presentation of the experience of the loss felt by the parties concerned and their supporters and related group work at the East Asian Grief Meeting held by the East Asian Grief Meeting Implementation Committee, as well as providing café space to conduct these activities.

(2) Discussion

There has been an increase in new participants this year concerning *Wakachiai no Kai*, as well as increases in continuing participants. Although there was a prolonged state until the previous year in which the number of participants was small, we came to recognize once again the significance of continuously holding these meetings and the importance of sharing this with relevant organizations.

Through our participation, the East Asian Grief Meeting became an opportunity to deepen our coordination with these institutions with regard to providing support to the families of the deceased.

6. Children's Mental Health Care Regional Base Project

(1) Main activities

① Conducting mental health-promotion activities for high school students

As an institution that makes up Working, a Mental Health Medical and Welfare Liaison Conference within the Kesennuma jurisdiction, as implemented mainly by the Kesennuma Public Health Center, we conducted mental health promotion activities targeting 11th grade students and teachers at Miyagi Prefecture Shizukawa High School. We provided health education via skits and shared information on the advisory organs within the Kesennuma jurisdiction. We also managed the Working Office in collaboration with the Kesennuma Public Health Center.

② Holding training at daycare centers

We provided information to daycare center employees about how to interact with children using games. In order to help integrate this information with their daily operations, we created T-shirts using stamps made from erasers for Kesennuma Municipal Sekko Daycare Center.

③ Holding training at Resident Association children's group meetings

We conducted public awareness-raising activities relating to mental health in response to a request by the Resident Association children's group meeting. This involved providing abdominal breathing exercises using a blowing pipe, a Christmas-card-making workshop, and speaking panels designed to raise awareness surrounding mental health.

④ Holding training at middle schools

A training session under the topic of communication was conducted for 8th grade students at Kesennuma City Omose Middle School.

(2) Discussion

The number of consultations by teachers concerning school children increased in 2017. It is believed that there are a number of children who require support concerning their mental health due to the impact of the disaster and about issues related to their household and school life.

We will continue to provide individual support and raise public awareness by attempting to continue cooperating with schools and educational institutions.