

Activity Name	Construction of a birth and child rearing support network for international students			
Date	May 2009 - February 2010			
Location	Sendai City Gender Equality Promotion Center, L-Park Sendai			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporations	Other	Total
	170	24		194
	124	20		144
	50	67		117

### < Activity Details >

Our goal is to create a network involving local residents and to provide information regarding birth and child rearing in Japan to foreign residents of the Sendai area, especially international students and researchers enrolled at Tohoku University and their families. From July to December 2009 we held the "Birth, Child Rearing & Child Education Seminar" in which experts in the fields of birth, child rearing, and education provided information from the viewpoint of foreigners (total nine times); "Children's Club" children's exchange events such as puppet shows and magic shows for children who have been exposed to diverse languages and cultures (total eight times); and "Cooking Class: World Recipes for Children" featuring cultural exchange between international students and local residents through multicultural cooking lessons (total four times).



Seminar



Networking event

These events were highly evaluated by the diverse range of participants, including not just international students, researchers, and their families but also foreigners working as ALTs or in other positions at elementary and junior high schools or corporations in Sendai and the surrounding area. In addition, people who cooperated to help hold the seminars and children's classes (including birth, child rearing, and education experts as well as residents of the city who volunteered) said they didn't know it was so difficult for foreign residents of the same town to gather information and told us they were glad to have been of service.

To create a university that is appealing to excellent international students and researchers, in addition to pursuing academic excellence that places emphasis on research and education it is also necessary to create and maintain an environment, facilities, and support system in which education and research can be carried out smoothly. Support for the families of international students and researchers tends to be lacking at Japanese universities, but in the future we must work to provide ample support of the same level available at universities in the United States and Europe. When many foreigners decide to study abroad, it is only natural that they have concerns not just for themselves but also regarding the lifestyles of their accompanying families. Keeping this in mind, we are aiming to create an environment in which international students and researchers can live with peace of mind.



Cooking event

### <Comments from The Participants>

I have given birth in my own country, but this is my first time to give birth in Japan. I was happy to be able to reaffirm the information I already knew and receive instruction regarding the latest child rearing support information that I wasn't previously aware of. It makes me feel safe even having another child.  
(Lizheng / China)



Seminar



Networking event

I think it was very good for international students. Usually, we know little knowledge about birth and child rearing in Japan, I learned a lot useful for me and my family.  
(Matinde Christine / Zimbabwe)