

awa life



March 2015
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TOPIA's
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Introduction



The **Big** *Hina Matsuri*

A Sign of *Gratitude*
Along the
Shikoku Pilgrimage



Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

Every article you send us is appreciated so please consider becoming a writer! A few rules will apply though so please look below to see what content we encourage you to write about and what kind of stuff we cannot publish.

You can totally submit articles about concerts, lectures, and other event information, cultural, sporting, and other community group information, etcetera.

BUT, the following will not be posted: Religious, political, or commercial activities, businesses searching for clients or employees, things the Awa Life editors deem inappropriate.

If you have something you would like to share with the Tokushima community, email the editors at:

[awalife@gmail.com!](mailto:awalife@gmail.com)

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Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!



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Pilgrims Giving the Finger – A Sign of Gratitude Along the Shikoku Pilgrimage Route

By David C. Moreton

Imagine if people from the past left no clue as to how they lived. How would we be able to piece together such aspects of their life as their eating habits, their customs, and their belief systems? How would we be able to understand the joys and struggles they went through? How would we learn from them? When you visit a temple along the Shikoku pilgrimage route what do you look at? Do you try to find traces of people who have visited there in the past and when you find them are you curious to find out when, why, or how this was left there by those people? One of the earliest "marks" left by pilgrims is graffiti written on some temple walls during the 16th century. It sounds no different from people today carving their names in trees, benches or

other objects. However, this offers solid proof that people were making the pilgrimage more than three hundred years ago. Other people from the past hundred years or so have pasted paper or wooden *osamefuda* or *senjafuda* (name-slips) all over the pillars or walls of the temple buildings, and some have left paraphernalia such as crutches, leg braces,

or wagons at temples because they been cured of an illness or disability and no longer needed them. Personally I like to collect old materials about the Shikoku pilgrimage, especially photographs with pilgrims looking directly toward the camera. Who were they? What is their story? Why did they decide to embark on the lengthy and arduous Shikoku



Pilgrims Giving the Finger

pilgrimage?

In this article I would like to tell you about the custom of people giving their fingers as a sign of gratitude. Self-mutilation seems to be a part of Buddhism with many examples seen in China of people burning or biting their fingers off as an offering to Buddha as a sign of repentance, or to support a special vow. In Japan, there are examples in Japanese tales, plays, the *yakuza* (mafia) and the world of courtesans to show one's love or loyalty. Even today, children make promises by connecting their pinkies and saying, "*yubi kiri genman, uso wo tsuitara,*

hari senbon nomasu, yubi kitta."

If you lie, I will punch you ten thousand times, make you drink 1000 needles and cut off your finger. Unfortunately it is unknown when, why, or how this bizarre action was performed by pilgrims in Shikoku during the early 20th century.

There are three examples in two small books published in 1916 and 1925 about Temple 19, Tatsueji:

1. In May 1909, Dai FUJIWARA, age 22, from Ehime prefecture was sick and so with a sincere heart he prayed devotedly to the gods and completed the Shikoku pilgrimage. He received a blessing from the main deity and completely recovered. He was so happy that he cut off his finger and left it at Tatsueji.

2. On April 24th, 1915, Hyakutaro OKUNO from Okayama prefecture became sick. He believed in Jizō with all of his heart and received a blessing. He cut off the end of his little finger and as a sign of the fulfillment of his prayers left it at

Tatsueji.

3. Mine ISHIHARA, age 24, from Fukuoka prefecture had suffered from epilepsy from a young age and his only solace was to believe in Jizō and pray for a cure. One night, the figure of Jizō appeared above her pillow and showed her the cure. She was so happy that on June 3, 1922, she came to Tatsueji to worship. The next day, she cut off one finger from her left hand and placed it in front of the gods.

Another example is found in *Shikoku Hachijuhachi Fudasho Henroki* (四国八十八札所遍路記) by Sakae NISHIBATA (pub 1964). During the Taisho period (1912-1926) a couple and their disabled daughter, Ai, from Hyogo prefecture came to Shikoku to make the pilgrimage. When they arrived at one of the temples the parents put a vest on Ai with the words *Namu Amida Butsu* written on it and Ai went to the temple to pray. She put her hands together and said, "*Namu Amida Butsu*", but this was the first time ever for her to speak. Her parents were extremely surprised and asked her to repeat other words, which she was able to do so without any problem. The mother, frantic with joy, bit off one finger and gave it to the temple. The author states that the finger, soaked in alcohol, is still there.



阿波國鶴林寺大前堂面

Pilgrims Giving the Finger

There are also stories of fingers in jars at temples around Shikoku. For example, in the book, *Haikai Angya: Ohenrosan* (俳諧行脚：お遍路さん), (pub. 1927), the author states that when he visited Temple 70, Motoyamaji he saw a pickled ring finger in a jar hanging by the entrance of the Daishi hall. This apparently belonged to a forty-year pilgrim from Okayama who visited here around 1916 and purposefully cut off his finger



with a knife. In *Shikoku Reiseki Shashin Daikan* (四國靈蹟寫真大観) (pub. 1934) there is a photograph of nine clear bottles and five dark bottles at Temple No. 40 Kanjizaiji. The

caption states that the fingers have been given to the temple. The labels above the jars state the sickness from which the pilgrim was cured, for example, blindness, deaf and dumbness, being crippled, epilepsy, uterine cancer, intestinal problems, and

mental problems. Unfortunately there are no written records as to whose fingers they were or when or why they were given. Presently, such fingers are no longer on display, but in a way

this is unfortunate because viewing them demonstrates to us the strong degree of devotion that people had a hundred years ago. In recent years, several temples have also removed all the leg braces, crutches etc. used by pilgrims of old. Why?

Do temple owners not want modern-day visitors to know about people who came in the past? Are they anxious to sweep away history? While the custom of giving a portion of one's finger

would today be considered grotesque, it is an interesting part of the religious history of the Shikoku pilgrimage that should not be overlooked nor forgotten.

Letter from Suketo Hoikuen

By Kazue Inoue

It's becoming more and more like spring with the sun warming up. Perhaps many families will be embarking on a new lifestyle come April. With the arrival of spring, many children will be starting nursery school or kindergarten. Starting this new lifestyle can be both an exciting yet daunting experience for them. The best thing you can do for them is to be there for them and to try and understand

what they are going through. In this way, you can help them have a smoother and quicker transition to their new lifestyle.

<Understanding your Child>

1) Smile and provide physical contact ("skinship") – important for babies but also great for older children. You can show them that you really care about them by giving them lots of hugs and talking to them while

smiling.

2) Listen to them patiently – children will want to try their best if they feel that they are being listened to and understood.

3) Praise them for things they do well – when children fail at doing things or cannot do something, cheer them on by telling them "you can do it." When they do succeed praise them by saying "you did really well!" This will make children happy and

their willingness to tackle new challenges will increase.

*It is also important for parents to praise and thank each other in their day to day lives by telling each other “thanks for all your hard work” or “thank you”!

This Month's Craft Triangle Building Blocks

Materials

1000 ml milk carton
Scissors
Glue or tape
Construction paper or colored

tape

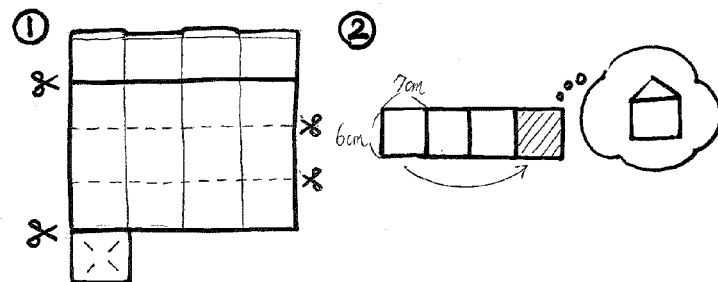
Directions

1) Cut off the top and bottom portion of a 1000 ml milk carton. Cut three strips widthwise from the carton.

2) Fold the strip of carton up to create a triangle. Glue down or tape down the parts that overlap

with each other to complete your triangle block.

3) You can have more fun with it by adding construction paper or colored tape to the outside of your building blocks. (You can make up to three building blocks from a single milk carton. With that in mind, make as many as you need.)



Big Hina in Little Shima By Broc Sewell

Are you a fan of evil spirits trapped within dolls? How about painstakingly decorated ones that often take weeks to arrange and decorate? Perhaps hundreds if not thousands of dolls filled with said evil spirits surrounding you with only one avenue of escape is more your bag? If you said yes to any of those questions, or if you just really enjoy authentic, traditional Japanese festivals full of food, live music, and steeped in culture, then Big Hina Matsuri of Katsuura is definitely something you shouldn't shake your “nay” stick at.

Katsuura is a quiet little village nestled in a quaint valley surrounded by forest and

mountains. It is a wildlife equal opportunity provider, so you are just as likely to see a wild boar or deer as you are another human being at any given moment. Katsuurans (trademark pending) are a humble bunch, dedicated to their local economy and culture through the proud production, by the “*kei-to-ra*” load, of the finest mikans in town. There is also ample fishing, hang gliding, and awa

odori among countless other events held throughout the year. However, in the early shiverings of spring, there is one main event to rule them all, Big Hina Matsuri.

Doll festivals have been present throughout Japan for over 1000 years, their origins found during the mid-Heian era. The localized Katsuuran version has been going on since the mid 80's to stimulate economic growth and has thrived ever since; popularity generated in equal parts by staunch locals and the surefire eradication of evil through the yearly burning of old dolls. An event you can witness for yourself at the beginning of February.



Big Hina

Despite its heavy origins and purpose, the festival itself has become something much more bright and spectacular. Dolls crafted through every era, and of every size, form into towers nearly four meters high in every direction, festooned by streamers, fountains, miniature bridges and more, all arranged with evident focus and care. It truly is a marvel to witness and be a part of. Tack on the plethora of events held daily, everything from magic shows to hula dances, the live music and food, and you have a festival that far exceeds the value of its paltry 300 yen

entry fee.

Once you have had your fill of dolls, dances, and demonic oppression, feel free to ask the local help desk if you can purchase a doll for yourself. Who knows? You might just get lucky. Just don't be surprised if you get funny looks for suggesting the purchase of what



could very well be a possessed doll.

So who's caught on your coattails? Why are you wasting your time reading when you could be walking among thousands of beautifully hand-crafted dolls that may or may not come alive when night falls? Get out to Katsuura, thirty minutes southwest of Tokushima City, starting Sunday, February 22nd and running through March 22nd, to find out what the hubbub is all about. Just be sure to make it out before the sun sets, I don't think you would want to get trapped inside after dark.

International Understanding Support Forum

By Jenifer Tanikawa

Currently, there are about 5000 people from 70 different countries and regions living in Tokushima Prefecture. For the most part, despite having different cultural backgrounds, they are all living in harmony with each other, and Tokushima is becoming more and more international. However, there are still individuals who face language or cultural barriers and require help from the people around them. In order to discuss the importance of promoting multiculturalism and creating a society where people of all different nationalities and

ethnicities can live together, the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA) held an International Understanding Support Forum on Sunday, February 8th.



The forum kicked off with a speech by the Director of

TOPIA, followed by a lecture by Takao Hasui on the theme of "creating a society where we can understand our differences and support each other." Mr. Hasui stressed the importance of the connection of local support and

international support. With the ever decreasing communication among our current generation, the connection within communities is decreasing as well. Before we can start talking about how we can support the international community, we need to focus on how we can support our local community. Even if it is a simple hello to your neighbors,

it is important to start with the little things, instead of fixating on making large differences or doing something special. This will in turn foster the ability to care for and to think about the people around you. Once a foundation is set in place, you can apply the same ideas to the support of foreign communities. Whether it is greeting your foreign neighbors or providing help to them when possible, it is important to take action instead

of taking the backseat, as just watching and pretending you don't notice anything will hinder internationalization.

After Mr. Hasui's lecture, two TOPIA International Understanding Support instructors, Ahmed Ibrahim Elhossamy (from Egypt) and Molomjams Enkhjargal (from Mongolia) spoke about their life and international understanding. During the

reception that followed, Ni Putu Ayu Komalawati from Indonesia, performed Balinese dance and a group led by Zhang Wei sang a song in Chinese.

In total, approximately 70 people from 12 different countries and regions filled the large meeting room space in TOPIA to hold a discussion on international understanding.



"Safety tips" application

By the Japan Tourism Agency

This Application notifies a user with Earthquake Early Warnings and Tsunami Warnings issued in Japan. It is a free application developed under the supervision of Japan Tourism Agency. The Application provides various functions useful for both foreign tourists and residents in Japan.

MAIN FUNCTIONS

-Receiving earthquake early warnings and tsunami warnings

-Earthquake List

→Information on past earthquakes of intensity 3 or higher can be viewed.

-Evacuation flow chart

→Actions to be taken during a disaster are shown in the form of a flow chart.

-Communication cards

→A set of questions that can be used when asking people around you during a disaster.

-Links

→Links to other sources of information that may be necessary during disaster situations (contact information of embassy, nearest tourist centers, etc.), and other information concerning disasters and tourism.

-Seismic intensity scale

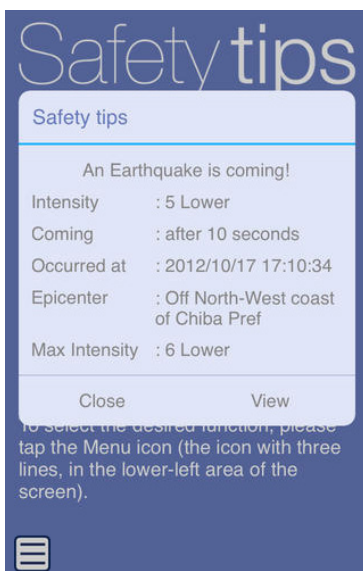
→Explanation concerning the

intensity of an earthquake (according to the seismic intensity scale).

The App provides various functions useful for both foreign Tourists and residents in Japan.

For more information please check:

http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/en/page03_000000.html/



Japanese Lesson

By Yoko Aoki

こんげつ
今月のことは

1 「この漢字は 何 と読みますか。」

How do you read this kanji ?

2 「これは どういう意味ですか。」

What does this mean ?

You can use these two phrases when you don't know what the kanji or the word means.

Now let's take a look at the following dialogue.

【会話】

マリア：すみません。この日本語がよくわかりません。教えてください。

木村：ええ、いいですよ。

マリア：子どもが学校からもらってきたんです。

木村：ああ、これは ①防災訓練(地震)のお知らせですね。

マリア：この漢字は 何と読みますか。

木村：「ぼうさいくんれん(じしん)」と読みます。

マリア：ぼうさいくんれん・・・？ どういう意味ですか。

木村：地震が ②起きたとき、③どうしたらいいか、みんなで勉強して練習するんです。

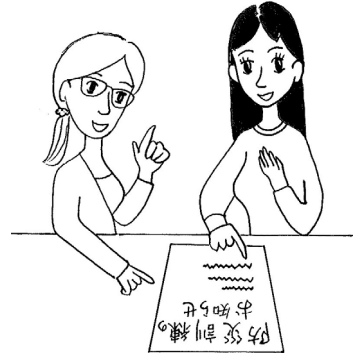
マリア：練習・・・するんですか。

木村：ええ。地震の ④揺れを ⑤体験したり、⑥安全なところへ ⑦逃げる道を歩いたりする
んです。それに ⑧準備しておいたら役に立つ物をいろいろ教えてください。

マリア：そうですか。とても大切なことですね。

木村：日曜日ですから、ご主人やお子さんと一緒にマリアさんもぜひ ⑨参加してくださいね。

マリア：はい、ぜひ参加します。ありがとうございました。



【ことば】

①防災訓練のお知らせ notice of an evacuation drill (earthquake)

②起きた happened ③どうしたらいいか what should we do? ④揺れ a quake, a tremor

⑤体験(したり) experience ⑥安全な safe ⑦逃げる run away, evacuate

⑧準備しておいたら役に立つ items that will be useful to prepare in advance

⑨参加(して) take part in, participate in,

【その他の便利な日本語】

1 「ここに 何と書いてあるんですか。(書いてありますか。)」 What is written here ?

「『立ち入り 禁止』と書いてあります。」 It says "Tachi iri -Kinshi (=Don't enter) ."

2 「この漢字の書き方を教えてください。」 Please show me how to write this kanji ?

3 「このマークは どういう意味ですか。」 What does this mark mean ?

「ここで たばこを すってははいけません、という意味です。」

It means "Don't smoke here."



Events & Memoranda

災害時ボランティア通訳・翻訳研修を開催いたします！

南海トラフ巨大地震が危惧される徳島県。災害時、避難所では様々な情報提供があります。しかし、外国人の方たちは、言葉の壁により、適切な情報を得られないことがあり、災害弱者になってしまいます。そんなとき、情報提供者と外国人を「言葉」でサポートをしたり、掲示物をわかりやすく翻訳したりするのがボランティアの方々です。

今回の研修では、時光氏の講話、そしてワークショップを通じて地域における災害の際に多言語で情報提供を円滑に提供するため、通訳ボランティアの育成・活動促進を図ることを目指します。ワークショップの対象言語は英語と中国語です。対象言語以外の方たちにはやさしい日本語でのワークショップを予定しております。（ただし、語学研修ではありません）

講師：時光氏

お申し込み：

特定非営利活動法人多文化共生マネージャー全国
協議会事務局長

郵送：〒770-0831 徳島市寺島本町西 1-61 クレ
メントプラザ6階
公益財団法人 徳島県国際交流協会
「災害時ボランティア通訳・翻訳研修」担
当宛

日時：3月22日（日）13：00-16：00

場所：徳島県国際交流協会 会議室

参加費：無料

TEL：088-656-3303

参加予定人数：30名

FAX：088-652-0616

内容：講話・ワークショップ

Email：coordinator1@topia.ne.jp

★3月16日（月）までに氏名、住所、電話番号、
Email、言語を記載の上お申し込み下さい。

AJET Musical: Anna and the Snow Queen AJET ミュージカル：アナと雪の女王


Anna and the Snow Queen

3月 1日（日）	石井町中央公民館	16:00 - 18:00
3月 7日（土）	コスモホール（阿南市情報文化センター）	14:00 - 16:00
3月 8日（日）	ヨンデンプラザ徳島	14:00 - 16:00
3月14日（土）	北島町立図書館・創世ホール	14:00 - 16:00
3月15日（日）	吉野川市アメニティセンター	16:00 - 18:00
3月21日（土）	脇町劇場・オデオン座	18:00 - 20:00

中学生レベルの英語で行われます。（日本語の解説あり）詳細：www.ajetmusical.com

お問い合わせ：TOPIA（徳島県国際交流協会）まで (088)656-3303

フェースブックで「いいね」したら、ミュージカルについての最新情報と写真がアクセスできます！

 Facebook.com/AJETMusical

Events & Memoranda

Medieval Music Group RANUNCULUS – 中世音楽隊ラーヌンクルース

Don't pass on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: The medieval music group "Ranunculus" from Germany will tour Japan for the first time and will also visit Tokushima for only one concert, so come and join us for an afternoon of medieval music at the German House.

When: April 5 (Sun)

15:00 – 16:30 (Doors open at 14:45)

Where: Event Hall at the Naruto German House

Cost: Free!

Info: Naruto German House

TEL: 088-689-0099

初来日するドイツ中世音楽隊「ラーヌンクルース」の鳴門市での公演が決定！ドイツ人にとっても珍しい中世音楽を鳴門市ドイツ館で一緒に楽しみましょう！

日時： 4月5日（日）、15時～

16時半（開場：14時45分）

場所： 鳴門市ドイツ館、1階ホール

入場料：無料！

問合： 鳴門市ドイツ館

TEL： 088-689-0099

Let's Explore Joruri! じょうるりの世界へ！

Come and enjoy the charm of the traditional Japanese "musical story telling", characteristic for going along with puppet plays.

When: March 14 (Sat) & 15 (Sun)

11:00 - 15:15

Where: Tokushima Awa Jurobe Yashiki (Tokushima City, Kawauchi-cho, Miyajima Honura 184)

TEL: 088-665-2202

Fee: Adults 410 yen, High School & University students 300 yen, Elementary & Middle School students 200 yen

日本独自の「語り音楽」の魅力をじっくりと味わっていただくため義太夫鑑賞教室を企画いたしました。

日時： 3月14日（土）、3月15日（日）

11時～15時15分

会場： 徳島県立阿波十郎兵衛屋敷（徳島市川内町宮島本浦184）

問合せ： 088-665-2202

入場料： 一般410円、高・大学生300円、小・中学生200円

2015 Tokushima Japanese Speech Contest - Call for Participants - 2015年度外国人による徳島県日本語弁論大会 - 出場者募集 -

The 2015 Tokushima Japanese Speech Contest will be held on July 20 (Mon). Foreign residents whose native language is not Japanese (and who have not attended more than 3 years of Japanese mandatory education) may enter. You may choose any topic as long as it is related to cultural understanding and living together in a multi-cultural community. More information will be on the TOPIA website starting mid-March. For further information contact TOPIA.

2015年度外国人による徳島県日本語弁論大会は7月20日（月、祝）に開催されます。募集対象は徳島県内在住の日本語を母語としない外国人の方（ただし、日本での義務教育を3年以上受けていない方）です。テーマは異文化理解・多文化共生に関するものであれば自由です。詳細は3月中旬にTOPIAのホームページに掲載を致します。問い合わせはTOPIAまで。お知り合いの外国人の方には是非お勧め下さい！



Events & Memoranda

Japanese Lessons 2015 - Term 1 Schedule

■To students and instructors:

*Each class has 20 sessions, and will be using the "Minna no Nihongo I" or the "Minna no Nihongo II" textbooks (2625 yen for the book, comes with a CD). As well, there will be themed lessons on various topics such as seasons and life in Tokushima. Classes are from 10:30-12:00.

DAY	TEACHER	LEVEL	CLASS DESCRIPTION	
TUE	Ms. Motoki	Elementary 1	We will study various verb forms and sentence patterns using those verb forms. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 14	From 4/7
WED	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels. *For parents of young children, a childcare worker will be on hand to look after your child during the lesson (please inquire in advance). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the rooms may change.	From 4/8
THU	Ms. Yamada	Elementary 3	We will study reasoning, causative, passive voice, and honorific expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II – from Chapter 38	From 4/9
FRI	Ms. Aoki	Beginner	We will take the first step towards learning basic expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 1	From 4/10
SUN	JTM	Elementary 2	We will study various verb forms and complex expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II – from Chapter 26	From 4/5
	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels.	

* Please register for Group Lessons at least a day before class (if you do not sign up in advance and show up on the day of class, we may not be able to find you a group to study with). As the number of groups are limited we may not always be able to form a group that fits your level.

* If you are unable to attend class, please call and let us know.

THU	Ms. Kimura, others	Special Beginners Class	A class for those who cannot read or write hiragana or katakana. We will study the basics such as, the Japanese alphabet, greetings, numbers, and items. We will also be learning about Tokushima.	You may join at anytime
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April 11, 18 (Sat): 13:00-16:10 April 25 (Sat): 10:30-12:00 & 13:00-16:10 April 29 (Wed / Holiday): 13:00-16:10	JTM	Intensive (4 days)	A class for those who have completed the Elementary level classes or for those who have lived in Japan for a while and can already engage in daily life conversations. We will review and study grammar and expressions taught in the elementary level classes. (For parents of young children, a childcare worker will be on hand to look after your child during the lesson. Please inquire in advance.) (Please apply until the 28 th of March. All lessons are free of charge.)
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1. Location Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA)
6F Clement Plaza, 1-61 Terashima Honcho Nishi, Tokushima City 770-0831
TEL: 088-656-3303 FAX: 088-652-0616
2. Fee All classes are **free** this year (we would like to provide Japanese lessons to as many people as we can).
Classes may be cancelled due to inclement weather such as typhoons, heavy rain, or snow. Please confirm by calling TOPIA at 088-656-3303.

Counselling Service at TOPIA ・ トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA offers a counselling and advisory service to all foreign residents to help with issues involving accidents, working conditions, housing, visas, international marriage, and more. Counselling is available in English and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

Tel: 088-656-3303 or 088-656-3320 (allows three-way conversations with an interpreter)