

awa life

Yokai of Japan: The Kappa

Mar. 2025

#412

ONE WORLD
Children's Support
Event

A Day of Simple Wonders
Tosayama's Heartfelt Story
(Part 1 of 2)

Nihongo Know-it-all:
虫の知らせ



TOPIA

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

Welcome to March, everyone! In this month's Awa Life edition, we've squeezed in a whole lot of fun articles and information, so be sure not to miss it! Notably, the annual Hanami Map can be found in the events section, so if you're wanting to plan a trip or two to check out the beautiful sakura (cherry blossoms), it should come in handy. March is also the month of hinamatsuri, an annual festival that takes place across Japan on March 3rd. It's also known as "Girl's Day" or "Doll Festival" in English. Around this time you may see Hina dolls on display.

For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses, or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community. Additionally, please keep articles around ~300-500 words (if writing in English), or ~1000 characters (if writing in Japanese). If you have any questions or want to check if your topic will work, feel free to reach out to us before you start writing.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

awalife@gmail.com

Your editors,
Riley and Lisa

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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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Yokai of Japan: The Kappa

By: Qin Yao

In the Japanese language, there are many examples of idioms about kappa, a type of creature from Japanese folklore. For example, the phrase, “^{かつぱ}河童^{かわなが}の川流れ”, which translates to, “Even kappa get swept away in the river.” (The meaning of this phrase is that “even the best swimmers can drown,” which is to say that everyone makes mistakes, even the best of the best.) But what exactly is a kappa? In this Yokai of Japan feature, let's find out.

The kappa is one of Japan's most well-known yokai, right up there in the ranks along with the likes of Oni and Tengu. In most versions it has a green body similar to that of a frog, and on top of its head lies a round dish-shaped indentation or divot that holds water. If the water spills or dries up, the kappa is said to lose its supernatural powers. It also generally has a small duck-like beak, a turtle shell on its back, and webbed hands and feet. Due to all these features, the kappa are very advanced swimmers, which makes them well suited for their aquatic homes in rivers and marshes. They also are known to love cucumbers and are often



depicted carrying them. This is likely because cucumbers were a popular offering to water gods in the past.

The proposed origins of the kappa yokai differ throughout Japan, but mentions of this creature can be seen in writings dating as far back as the *Nihon Shoki*, one of the earliest existing written documents in Japanese history. Various regions have their own versions of not only how the creatures look, but how they act as well. In some places, kappa are seen as harmless and even sometimes friendly yokai that may be mischievous and play pranks, but in the end are the friend of humankind. In others, they are seen as dangerous creatures that will drown you if you get too close to the water. Curiously enough, certain traits can be commonly found no matter the region. For example, the kappa's love for the sport of sumo. (If you are ever challenged to a round of sumo by a kappa, the legend is that you are supposed to bow politely before the match. Being a good sport, the kappa will bow back, thus spilling the water on its head and losing its powers). In this way,

Yokai of Japan: The Kappa

kappa in folk legends are depicted as friendly or dangerous, perhaps reflecting people's reverence and fear of the power of water and nature itself.

At this point, some of you may be asking, "Do kappa really exist?" However, unlike the tanuki, kappa do not exist in real life. Nonetheless, they are still an important presence in Japanese folk lore. In many folk tales and legends, kappa are regarded as water gods, watching over the safety

of water in local communities. Therefore, various customs and festivals related to kappa were also born and still exist to this day. Similarly, kappa frequently appear in pop culture, such as anime and manga, and are considered one of the "big three" of Japanese yokai. Thus, kappa are more than mere myth; they continue to live on in our hearts and minds as important reflections of the Japanese view of nature, people's lives, and culture.

A Day of Simple Wonders: Tosayama's Heartfelt Story A Memory Worth More Than a Simple "Thank You" (Part 1)

By: Odbayar Dorj

(The following article was submitted by Odbayar Dorj, a master's student from Mongolia studying Global Education at Naruto University of Education. It shares a memorable trip to Tosayama, where international students joined a locally organized tour to support regional tourism and cultural preservation.)

When the opportunity arose to join a trip with the 9th-grade students of Tosayama Gakusha School in Tosayama, Kochi Prefecture, I eagerly said yes. Our group of eight—six lab friends, our professor, and myself—divided into two cars and headed from Naruto to Kochi. Though it was raining, I remembered the Mongolian saying, "A lucky person is blessed even in the rain," and felt optimistic about the journey ahead.



Tosayama Gakusha, nestled in the mountains, is a school I've visited several times before. However, this was my first time traveling with the students. Upon arrival, the 9th graders greeted us warmly and handed out the day's itinerary. A student guide holding a flag marked "Tosayama

Gakusha" led us through our adventure.

Our first stop was "Sangakusha," an ancient Japanese house located in the mountains of Tosayama. When we arrived at Sangakusha, a male student in a yukata greeted us and told us he would be explaining the house to us. From the outside, the house was small, built in the traditional Japanese wooden style, but when we entered, we saw a large tatami room. There was a special set up to show us the traditional way of life, and all the windows on the right side were opened, allowing us to look out at a small garden and pond in front. The sunlight filtered through the tall trees, casting beautiful rays of light, and the raindrops from the previous night hadn't yet dried completely, making the natural beauty even more stunning. Just watching the sunlight shining through the leaves of the trees and reflecting off the little pond was so satisfying and peaceful.



Soon, two girls wearing summer yukatas brought us green tea. They served the tea with great respect, bowing and offering each cup with a formal gesture. They would turn the cup several times before handing it to us, each time bowing again. It was an opportunity to truly appreciate

A Day of Simple Wonders: Tosayama's Heartfelt Story

Japanese culture and its beauty. After serving each of us tea, they brought out “okashi” (sweets), and we ate the sweets as we drank our tea. The natural beauty, combined with the tea ceremony, made the whole experience even more special.



As we finished our tea, the student guide from Sangakusha placed a fan in front of him, bowed again, and announced that he was ready to share the history of Sangakusha with us. At that moment, a student dressed in uniform stepped forward to tell us about the history of the place. He had interviewed local people and conducted various studies, all of which he used to present an amazing lecture. His English was flawless, as

well as his ability to express his ideas, his tone of voice, his body language, the structure and coherence of his presentation—everything was perfect.

The student concluded his presentation by saying, “Freedom starts from Sangakusha,” and I couldn’t help but think that the message of his lecture was that educated people, those who possess knowledge, are the ones who achieve true freedom.

Next, we visited Shobu Fureai no Sato for lunch, but first, we explored the surrounding area. At Shobudo Cave, we felt the refreshing breeze and cool water flowing from its depths. The nearby Square Bamboo Farm provided a glimpse into the region’s unique agriculture, and we learned that bamboo from this farm featured in our meal. On the restaurant terrace, we listened to the gentle river sounds as we awaited our food.

(Continued in April 2025 Awa Life edition)

ONE WORLD Children’s Support Event

By: Miyui Okamoto

The ONE WORLD Children Support Project aims to foster children’s awareness of international understanding and cooperation through international exchange. This year it was held together with the Job Experience Event hosted jointly by Tokushima City and the Myodo District PTA Association. More than 20 businesses and organizations from the prefecture took part and the children enjoyed experiencing the respective jobs at each booth.



South Korea and India asked for advice on simple matters, such as, “Can you teach me Japanese?” “What food do you recommend in Tokushima?” “Can you tell me how to separate the garbage correctly?” etc. The children answered the questions using plain Japanese and translation apps. Some of the children were too shy to speak very much, but I hope that the experience of talking with a foreigner gave them confidence and inspiration to pursue their future dreams.



At TOPIA’s booth we provided the experience of becoming consultation coordinators for foreign residents of the prefecture. Instructors from countries such as the USA, China, Germany,

Here’s what some of the instructors had to say about the experience.

- “I was a little nervous because it was my first

ONE WORLD Children's Support Event

time working with children. Most of them were very shy and seemed a little timid to speak with me, which I wasn't quite sure how to handle. Still, I hope the children enjoyed themselves and learned something. They didn't seem to know anything about Germany or even where in the world it was located at first, so I hope that this event was an opportunity for them to become interested in Germany and other foreign countries.

- "Even though they may not have a ton of social experience yet, the kids were kind enough to talk to us (instructors) and enthusiastically tried to help as much as they could, whether it was explaining how to separate garbage, how to count things, or school life in Japan. I was so glad so for their positive attitude. I also realized that the most important thing to realizing a society with many cultures coexisting

is to do our best in our own way to understand and support each other, regardless of whether we have any special ability to do so or not."

- "I think the event was a great opportunity for kids to gain experience speaking with non-Japanese people, and learn some of the things foreigners living in Japan may struggle with. The number one thing I wanted the kids to walk away from the event remembering was that at the end of the day we are all human, and that it's not scary, but instead exciting and fun to talk to people who are different from you. I am always amazed by the capability of kids to accept differences, and most of them seemed excited for the opportunity to speak with people from different countries. I hope we can do more events like this in the future to further encourage that curiosity and promote cultural understanding."



Japanese Language Studies Survey

日本語の勉強についてのアンケート
Questionnaire about studying Japanese
关于日语学习的调查问卷
Bảng câu hỏi về việc học tiếng Nhật
Kuesioner tentang belajar bahasa Jepang

にほんご べんきょう
English 中文 日本語 べんきょう
tiếng Việt Bahasa Indonesia

徳島県に住んでいる外国住民の皆さん、
日本語の勉強について、聞きたいことがあります。質問に答えて下さい。
ありがとうございます。

To Foreign Residents Living in Tokushima Prefecture,
We have questions regarding Japanese language study that we would like to ask you. We kindly ask for your cooperation in answering them.
Thank you in advance.

致居住在德岛县的外国居民们：
关于日语学习，我们想要了解一些情况。请回答问卷中的问题，非常感谢您的合作！

Gửi tới tất cả cư dân nước ngoài sống ở tỉnh Tokushima,
Chúng tôi muốn hỏi bạn một số câu hỏi về việc học tiếng Nhật. Hãy vui lòng trả lời các câu hỏi. Chúng tôi xin trân thành cảm ơn!

Kepada Warga Asing yang Tinggal di Prefektur Tokushima,
Kami memiliki beberapa pertanyaan tentang belajar bahasa Jepang.
Kami mohon kerja sama Anda untuk menjawab pertanyaan tersebut. Terima kasih.

アンケートに答えて、プレゼントを当てよう！
Fill out the survey for a chance to win a prize!
填写调查问卷，赢取精美礼品！
Hãy cùng trả lời khảo sát và nhận quà tặng trúng thưởng!
Isi survei dan menangkan hadiahnya!

2025年3月31日（月曜日）まで
Until Monday, March 31, 2025
2025年3月31日截止
Thời hạn đến ngày 31 tháng 3 năm 2025 (Thứ Hai)
Hingga Senin 31 Maret 2025

大谷焼のコーヒークップとソーサーセット
Otaani ware coffee cup and saucer set
大谷焼咖啡杯碟套装
Bộ cốc kèm đĩa làm bằng gốm sứ đựng cà phê
Set cangkir dan piring kopi Oya ware

KINOFフェイスタオル
KINOF face towel
KINOF 面巾
Khăn mặt thương hiệu KINOF
KINOF Handuk muka

阿波和紙と阿波おどりデザインのブックマーク
Awa Washi paper and Awa Odori dance bookmark
阿波和紙和阿波舞设计书签
Hình dán vở làm từ giấy Awa Washi có hình điệu múa Awa Odori
Awa Washi dan pembatas buku berdesain tarian Awa Odori

藍染めハンカチ
Awa Indigo-dyed handkerchief
藍染手帕
Khăn tay nhuộm chàm
Saputangan yang diwarnai dengan nila

応募方法はアンケートに書いています
Application instructions can be found in the questionnaire.
获取礼品的方式写在问卷中。
Cách thức ứng tuyển được ghi trong bảng khảo sát
Anda dapat mengetahui cara mendaftar di kuesioner.

徳島県 生活環境部 生活環境政策課 国際交流室

〒770-8570 徳島県徳島市万代町1丁目1番地

TEL: 088-621-2092 FAX: 088-621-2978

kokusaikouryu@pref.tokushima.lg.jp

お問い合わせ
Contact
咨询
Liên hệ với chúng tôi
Pertanyaan

Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner:

勝浦町のひな祭りイベント

By: Junko Kimura

徳島県勝浦町では、4月6日（日）まで「ビッグひなまつり」が開催されています。
1988年の春に始まり、今年で37回目に なります。

このお祭りでは、全国から 家庭で 飾られなくなった ひな人形を 集め、大切に
供養し、丁寧に 飾ります。会場には、なんと 約3万体の ひな人形が 並びます。

とくに、高さ8メートルの「百段のひな壇」は とても 見応えが あります。

また、勝浦町の 奥にある 坂本集落でも、3月15日まで ひな祭りの イベントが 開かれています。
昔の 街道にある 家々に ひな人形を 飾る「坂本おひな街道」では、のんびり 散歩しながら
楽しめます。週末には 着物レンタルや 着付け体験も できるそうです。
着物で おひな街道を 歩くのも、特別な 思い出に なりそうですね。

さらに、3月25日からは、「阿波勝浦さくら祭り」が 開催されます。約2km
に わたる 桜並木を 歩きながら、春の 訪れを 感じる ことができます。
ひな祭りと あわせて、ぜひ 勝浦町の 春を 満喫してください！



Vocabulary List

開催	to hold/host	飾られなくなった	no longer displayed	ひな人形	hina dolls	供養	memorial service
丁寧	carefully	ひな壇	tiered stand for hina dolls	見応え	worth seeing	集落	village
着付け	dressing	並木	row of trees	訪れ	arrival (e.g. of spring)	街道	main road
				満喫	enjoying to the fullest		

虫の知らせ

By: Riley Henke

Nihongo Know-it-all

Have you ever had a strong hunch, or a gut feeling that something bad was going to happen before it did? If so, then you've had a 虫の知らせ! When translated literally, this means that you received a message or notice from a bug, but it is used to mean a premonition or foreboding feeling that something bad is going to happen. In English there might be a little bird telling you gossip, but in Japanese, it's a little bug warning you about something!



The origins of this phrase aren't clear, but many believe that it traces back to Taoism and the belief in the existence of "sanshi", or three bugs that live inside the body and report on one's wrongdoings to the gods. 虫の知らせ is not the only phrase involving bugs found in Japanese. In fact there are many other examples, including 弱虫 (coward), 泣き虫 (crybaby), 虫が好かない (disagreeable, unpleasant), to name a few.

As for why there are so many phrases relating to 虫, some believe that it has to do with the fact that in Japan, where rice cultivation and other agriculture thrive, people have long lived in close contact with insects, for better or for worse. Insects can cause damage to crops, or they can signal the changing of the season with their voices. Catching cicadas and dragonflies, raising beetles, and catching, raising, and observing other insects are not rare sights in Japan. The amount of bug-related vocabulary likely has to do with this proximity they have to Japanese people's lives, especially long ago.

Let's learn how to use particles in 「使役文」!

The causative form in Japanese can be used for the following purposes.

1. To show that someone is *forced* to do an action



- Boy A doesn't want to go to bed yet. His mother tells him to go to bed early.
 - お母さんは、息子【を】寝させます。寝ます・・・Intransitive verb
- Boy B is sick. He received medicine from the doctor. He doesn't like the taste, but his mom says he must drink it.
 - お母さんは、息子【に】薬を飲ませます。飲みます・・・Transitive verb

2. To show someone is granted *permission* or *allowed* to do an action

- Girl A wants to go to France. She asks her mother for permission. Her mom says "OK."
 - お母さんは、娘【を／に】フランスに行かせます。行きます・・・Intransitive verb
- Girl B says that she would like to learn piano before she studies abroad. Her mom says "OK."
 - お母さんは、娘【に】ピアノを習わせます。習います・・・Transitive verb

In each case, there is an intransitive or transitive verb.

- In the case of an intransitive verb:
 - When an action was *forced*, we use 人 を V (さ) せます。
 - When an action was *permitted* or *allowed*, 【を】 and 【に】 are used together.
- In the case of a transitive verb:
 - We use 人 に V (さ) せます

However, in the case that there would be multiple 【を】 particles in the sentence, the 【に】 particle must be used, even if the verb is intransitive.

お母さんは、息子 を【に】横断歩道を歩かせます。

Let's Practice! Insert 「を」 or 「に」 into the parenthesis.

- ① お母さんは、娘 () 荷物を持たせます。
- ② 塾へ行きたいというので、私は、娘 () 塾へ行かせました。
- ③ 朝は忙しいので、子ども () 食事の準備を手伝わせます。
- ④ 部長は、佐藤さん () 出張させました。



Events & Memoranda

Osettai Experience at Ryozen-ji Temple and Sake Brewery Tour 四国八十八ヶ所第一番礼所 霊山寺でのお接待体験と酒蔵見学

Would you like to experience *Osettai* at *Ryozen-ji*, the first temple of the Shikoku 88 Pilgrimage? *Osettai* is a unique culture rooted in Shikoku, where food and drinks are offered to pilgrims out of support. Following the *Osettai* is a tour of the Honke Matsuura Sake Brewery. Participation is free (transportation fees not included).

Date & time: Thurs. March 20, 2025 (National Holiday). Meet at *Ryozen-ji* Temple 9:30am

Location: ① Temple No. 1 *Ryozen-ji*

② Honke Matsuura Sake Brewery

How to apply: Contact TIA to apply. Applications will be accepted up to 20 people on a first come, first serve basis.

Inquiries: TIA Tokushima International Association

E-mail: info@tia81.com

Phone: 088-622-6066

一番礼所 霊山寺でお接待をしてみませんか？

お接待とは、お遍路さんに食べ物や飲み物をふるまったりする、四国に根付く特有の文化のことでお遍路さんを純粋に応援し、労う気持ちで行われています。お接待体験の後は、本家松浦酒造にて酒蔵見学を予定しております。この機会に日本酒の伝統に触れてみませんか？無料で参加できます。(交通費は含まれておりません。)

旅程: 2025年3月20日(木・祝日)

午前9時30分 霊山寺 集合

場所: 第一番礼所 霊山寺

本家松浦酒造

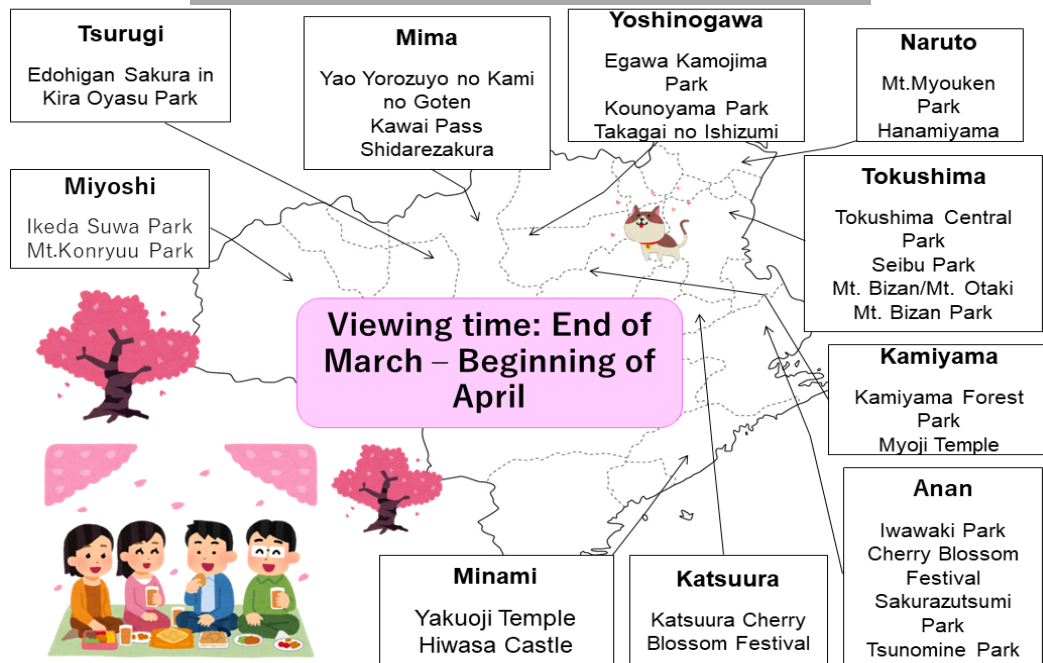
申込方法: 徳島市国際交流協会までメールまたは電話で申込下さい。先着20名まで受付ます。

お問い合わせ: 徳島市国際交流協会

メール info@tia81.com

TEL 088-622-6066

Tokushima Hanami Map 2025 徳島県花見案内図 2025



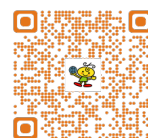
令和6年度 国際理解支援フォーラム

徳島ではたらく4名の外国人講師の話を聞きませんか？講演では、仕事内容や日常生活、子育て、日本に来て困ったことや驚いたことなど、様々な観点からお話しいたします。講演の後、おしゃべり交流会や在住外国人向けの個別相談会もあります。ぜひご参加ください！

日時: 3月16日(日) 14:00 ~ 16:00

開場: 四国大学交流プラザ4F 第2セミナー室

申込方法: QRコードをスキャンして、必要な情報をご記入ください。



当日とび込み
参加OK!

Events & Memoranda

2025 Term 1 TOPIA Japanese Classes Schedule

Time: 10:30-12:00 Location: Meeting rooms at TOPIA Fee: Free

Textbook: We will be using the "Minna no Nihongo I" or the "Minna no Nihongo II" (2nd edition) textbooks (2,750 yen for the book and audio CD). Please prepare the textbooks on your own. Additionally, there will be themed lessons on various topics such as seasons and life in Tokushima.

DAY	TEACHER	LEVEL	CLASS DESCRIPTION	START DATE
TUE	Ms. Tamaki	Elementary 2・3	We will study various forms and expressions such as potential, volitional, imperative, prohibitive, conditional, reasoning, passive, causative, and honorific expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II from Chapter 26~50	April 1 st (24 times)
WED	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up into 3 different groups. *For parents of young children, a childcare worker will be on hand to look after your child during the lesson. (Please make a reservation in advance. Childcare will be offered at TOPIA's meeting rooms or at the child-care facility in the Amico Building (5 min. walk from TOPIA).)	April 2 nd (20 times)
THU	Ms. Yamada	Beginners	We will take the first step towards learning basic expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo I from Chapter 1~13	April 3 rd (20 times)
FRI	Ms. Aoki	Elementary 1	We will study a variety of verb conjugations such as te form, nai form, and dictionary form. Text: Minna no Nihongo I from Chapter 14~25	April 4 th (20 times)
SUN	JTM	Elementary 2	We will study various forms and expressions such as potential, volitional, imperative, prohibitive, conditional expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II from Chapter 26~38	April 6 th (20 times)
	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up into 3 different groups.	

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

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

* The Volunteer Classes on Wednesday and Sunday will be cancelled if no students show up within the first 30 minutes.

TUE	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 any time.
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*Classes may be cancelled if there is a typhoon, heavy rain, heavy snow, etc.

TOPIA will also post on their Facebook page by 8:30 AM if classes are cancelled, so please take a look.

TOPIA TEL: 088-656-3303 Email: topia@topia.ne.jp

Japanese classes are also available at the Anan International Association, Aizumi Town International Exchange Association, Yoshinogawa International Exchange Association, Mima no Sato, Minami Multicultural Coexistence Network "Harmony", the Club for Thinking about Multicultural Coexistence "Tomoni" in Tsurugi Town, Awa International Exchange Association, and the NPO "Attakaiyou" in Kaiyo Town. Website: <https://www.topia.ne.jp/english/>



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

TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention; and information on sightseeing spots to overseas residents and visitors. When necessary, we will refer you to the appropriate organization that can assist with your needs. Counselling is available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

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

Vietnamese: Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10:00 - 14:00

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