

# Bookstart in Japan

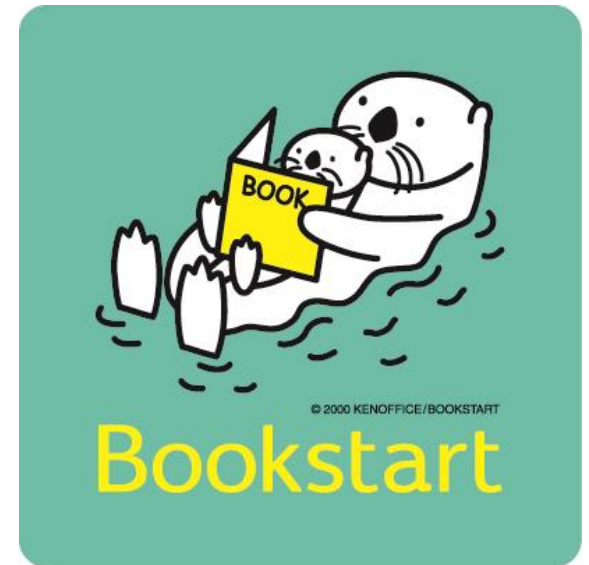
Working with volunteers and  
community invigoration

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**Bookstart Japan**

Global Network for Early Years Bookgifting

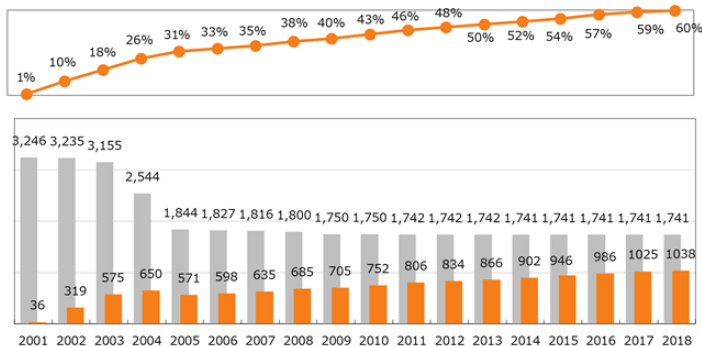
12 September 2019



# About Bookstart in Japan

## Key Figures

- Population: 126.8 million (126,800,000)
- Babies born: 920,000/year
- Local authorities (LA): 1,741 cities, towns and villages in 47 Prefectures
- Bookstart Launched in 2000
- National Coverage of Bookstart: 60% (=1,051 LA)
- More than 6 million babies have been targeted since 2000



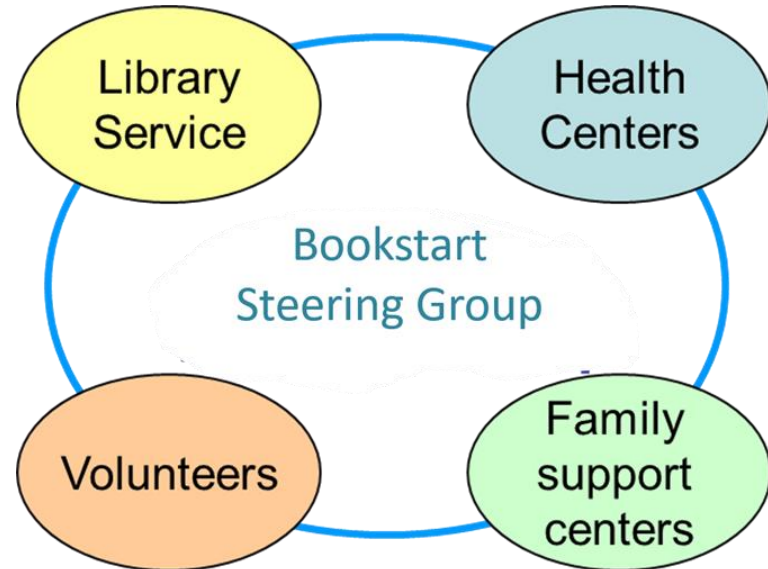
# About Bookstart in Japan

- Local authority wishing to launch Bookstart budget their programme
- Most Bookstart programme in Japan is held at baby's group health checkup at local health centres
- Age target is 3, 6, 9 or 18 months old, depending on the local authorities
- The pack contents

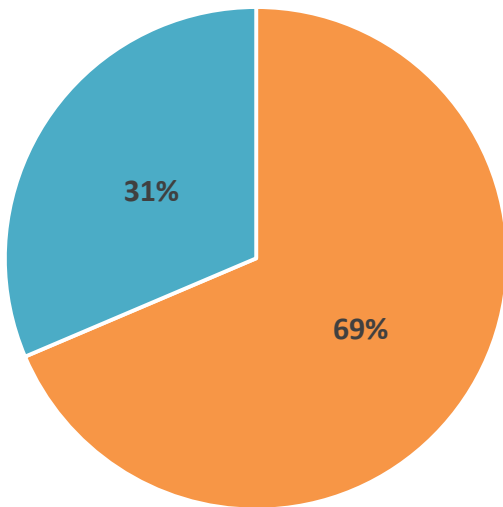


- “Bookstart Japan” provides various support in running Bookstart locally.
  - workshops to share experience, consultation, training, research, publishing, National PR, as well as producing quality Bookstart packs and sell them to LAs for a reasonable price

# Volunteer involvement



LAs that works with volunteers



- with volunteers
- no volunteers



# Who are the volunteers?

- Local reading volunteers
  - Bunko – Private children's library





# Who are the volunteers?

## ■ Local reading volunteers

“Bunko” owners - private children’s library

<https://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/papers/081-Takahashi-en.pdf>

*Presentation made by Kichiro Takahashi at IFLA general conference 2006*

- **Established in various places**; private house, community centre, temple and any places where books (1,000-3,000 books) can be stored and children may freely gather, play, read and borrow books on opening days.
- **Run by a volunteer or a group of volunteers**, 97% are women who love sharing books with children.
- Even though many of them do not have the professional qualification of a librarian, **they are enthusiastic** and often learn themselves to gain skills and knowledge to manage a children’s library.
- It started to become popular in 1950s and there were over 5,000 bunkos throughout the country. In 2008, 1,143 bunkos are known.



# Who are the volunteers?

- Local reading volunteers
- Local childcare support volunteers
- Local welfare volunteers
- Retired nursery nurses
- Those new to volunteer etc.

## Recruitment

- Ask volunteer groups / individuals
- Recruit through the local authority's website, facebook, posters etc.



# Role of Volunteers

- Preparation of the Bookstart packs and the venue





# Role of Volunteers

- Preparation of the Bookstart packs and the venue
- Delivering the packs



# Role of Volunteers

- Preparation of the Bookstart packs and the venue
- Delivering the packs – Making of the bag





# Role of Volunteers

- Preparation of the Bookstart packs and the venue
- Delivering the packs – Making of the bag
- The presence at the venue



# Outcomes of the involvement of volunteers

## ■ For Bookstart

- Quality Delivery
- Creating a warm feel in the venue / Conveying the message of Bookstart to parents in a natural way
- Smooth taking over of the programme and the spirit over the years
- Taking roots in the community
- Programmes launched in new local authorities
- Positive affirmation of Bookstart by taxpayers





# Outcomes of the involvement of volunteers

## ■ For the health checkup

- Effective use of the waiting time
- Smooth detection of families in need of support. Volunteers connect them to the professionals

## ■ For the local authority

- Evoking a feeling of closeness to the community among residents
- Create a network of people and organisations from both private and public sectors who support families with babies

“Volunteers are not hand and foot but the brain themselves.

They breathe life into Bookstart” - Akira Shinoda, Mayor of Niigata city



# Training sessions for the volunteers and professionals

## ■ Training session topics and speakers



# Training sessions for the volunteers and professionals

## ■ Possible training session topics and speakers

| Topics   | Speakers/facilitator                                      |
|--|---|
| Understand and reconfirm the purpose and philosophy of Bookstart.  | Bookstart Coordinator<br>Bookstart Japan Regional Manager |
| Understand how Bookstart operates in the local authority.  | Bookstart Coordinator                                     |
| Learn things to know about volunteering, mindset and behaviour required for delivering packs.  | Staff from community volunteer centre<br>etc              |
| Learn how to deliver packs often by roleplaying.<br>Know the topics often asked by parents and learn how to deal with them. Learn what to answer and what should not answer. | Bookstart coordinator, librarian, health professional     |
| Study on baby development, modern parenting and local environment for raising children often including visits to some of those facilities.                                   | Health professional and staff from the children's centre  |
| Study on baby/children's books, reading aloud, nursery rhymes, finger play songs and library.  | Librarian   |
| Visit the Bookstart venue  | Bookstart Coordinator                                     |

# Handbook for those who deliver packs

## Q&A こんなとき、どうする？

Q 保護者が早く帰りたがっている場合は？

A まずは、「5分くらいで終わりますので、少しだけいいですか？」などと聞いてみましょう。上の子のお迎えなどで時間がない場合は、無理に引き止めず、ブックスタート・パックの中身を簡単に紹介して手渡します。



時には、数ページの読みきかせさえできないこともあるかもしれません。そんな時には、「おうちで開いてみてくださいね」と伝えたり、「気軽に図書館へ来てみてくださいね」など、親子を次の機会につなぐことを意識した声かけをするのも一つの方法です。特に急いではないけれど、「絵本に興味がない」「なんとなく面倒」という様子の保護者には、短めに説明をしつつ、赤ちゃんに絵本を見せて話しかけたり、少しでも読んでみてはどうでしょうか。赤ちゃんの様子を見て、関心を持ってくれる保護者や、絵本を楽しんでいるうちに、そのままゆったり過ごす保護者もいるようです。

## 自己紹介をする

ブックスタートで出会う親子とは、初対面の場合がほとんどです。まずはあいさつとともに、ひとこと自己紹介をしましょう。会場には、保健師、保育士、図書館員などの自治体職員やボランティアなど、様々な立場の人がいる場合が多いため、自分の立場を明らかにすることが大切です。保護者に安心感を与えるだけでなく、会話の糸口にすることもできます。



長崎県雲仙市



