

FY2008 Ministry of Environment Proposed Budget: Overview of Major New Budgetary Items

Study to Examine Risk Assessments of Vulnerabilities in Children

¥146 million (FY2007: ¥83 million)

Office of Environment Impact Assessment Review,
Environmental Health and Safety Division,
Environmental Health Department

1. Overview of Study

There is growing concern today that environmental risks for children are increasing, as international attention focuses on children's environmental health. In August 2006, the Advisory Commission for Children's Environmental Health recommended that Japan should implement initiatives for risk assessment of children's environmental health, through measures such as preparing a research base and promoting research concerning children's environmental health.

The pressing tasks in the future are to implement a birth cohort (tracking) study for epidemiological study to identify environmental factors that affect children's development, and establish a framework for risk management. Toward this end, examination of the study methodology should begin in FY2008 and the study should be initiated in FY2010. Accordingly, Japan will implement proposals and promote initiatives for appropriate assessment and management of environmental risks in order to achieve a healthy environment for the development of the next generation of children.

2. Project Plan (Starting from FY2003)

- Prepare a research base (by assembling research groups, developing human resources, collecting scientific knowledge, and becoming aware of trends in international research)
- Promote critical research projects
 - (1) Develop methodologies for assessment of children's exposures to environmental pollutants
 - (2) Develop methodologies for assessment of health effects, focusing on sensitivity factors among children
 - (3) Conduct epidemiological study of relationships between children's environment and health
Conduct a feasibility study to examine methodologies for epidemiological study, beginning in FY2008
Launch a birth cohort (tracking) study for epidemiological study, beginning in FY2010
 - (4) Undertake children's exposure assessments, biomarker development, and sample banking

- (5) Conduct social science research into welfare policies for children's environmental health
- (6) Conduct practical research concerning risk communication for children's environmental health

3. Benefits of Policy Measures

- Promote environmental risk assessments of chemical substances, focusing on exposures and vulnerabilities specific to children
- Implement environmental risk management based on appropriate assessment of environmental risks
- Achieve a healthy environment for the development of the next generation of children

4. Notes

Honorariums, committee travel expenses: ¥1.365 million

(Description: Expenses for convening panel to study risk assessments)

Study expenses ¥144.856 million

Convening of symposium ¥5.009 million

Epidemiological study of relationship between children's environment and health ¥135.747 million

Research into welfare policies and risk communication ¥4.100 million