

DVDs and Books on Human Rights

The Human Rights Promotion Division of the Sakai City Government lends out DVDs on human rights for free.

* Books are not lent out.

Inquiries: Human Rights Promotion Division, Sakai City Government TEL: 072-228-7420 FAX: 072-228-8070

DVD Dowa Issue

(36 minutes)

Anata-ni Tsutaetai Koto (What I want to communicate to you)

The main character of this story learns that the Dowa issue is not someone else's problem, through her own experience in relating to her boyfriend, with whom she is dating with a view to marriage, and her friends and family. This DVD conveys the important message, with a bright hope for the future, that to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including Buraku discrimination, it is important to interact with and understand others without being influenced by information posted on the Internet.

DVD Peace

(70 minutes)

Kataritsugu Hiroshima, Nagasaki 1945 (Handing down stories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 1945)

This video is a collection of testimonies from hibakusha (victims of an atomic air raid) living in Sakai City, produced by using images and audio. "I hope all nuclear weapons will be eliminated from the world. We must never repeat the same mistake." This DVD was planned and produced by the Sakai City Hibakusha Association to let people know how terrible nuclear weapons are, while praying for peace and happiness throughout the world.



DVD Human rights of sexual minorities

Misugoshite-imasenka, Seiteki Shosha (LGBT) eno Sekusharu Harasumento

(Do you overlook sexual harassment of sexual minorities?)

(29 minutes)

There are various sexual orientations, such as lesbian (women who are attracted to other women), gay (men who are attracted to other men), bisexual (people who are attracted to both men and women) and transgender (people whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex at birth).

Human rights issues of sexual minorities are not something just on TV. Instead, they are issues relevant to everyone.

This DVD concerns sexual harassment of sexual minorities at the workplace.



* Please note that books are not lent out.

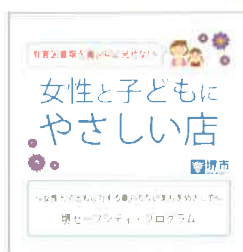
- *Daremo Okizarini Shinai Shakai-e: Hinkon Kakusa no Genba kara* (Toward a society where no one is left behind: From the scene of poverty and disparity) Published by Shinnihon Publishing Company/ Authored by Tomoko Hiramatsu and others
- *Watashirashiku LGBTQ1-4* (Living proud! Growing up LGBTQ1-4) Published by Otsuki Shoten/ Authored by Robert Rodi, Laura Ross
- *Reisharu Harasumento Q&A: Shokuba Gakko deno Jinshu Minzokuteki Iyagarase wo Boshi suru* (Racial harassment Q&A: Prevent racial harassment at the workplace and school) Published by Buraku Liberation Publishing House/ Authored by Myungsoo Kim
- *Goriteki Hairyo, Sabetsuteki Toriatukei towa Nanika: Shogaisha Sabetsu Kaisho Ho, Koyo Sokushin Ho no Tsukaikata* (What is reasonable consideration and discriminatory treatment? How to use the Act for Eliminating Discrimination against People with Disabilities and the Act for Promotion of Employment of People with Disabilities) Published by Buraku Liberation Publishing House/ Authored by Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI-Japan)
- *Yokuwakaru Supootsu to Jenda* (Easy to understand, sports and gender) Published by Minerva Shobo/ Authored by Takako Iida and others

Sakai City has been promoting the Sakai Safe City Program to create a safe living environment for all residents, including women and children.

As part of this program, we have undertaken a project in cooperation with some companies to mask part of the front covers of adult magazines sold at convenience stores in the city to ensure adult magazines are out of sight of children.

This project evoked a positive response, resulting in more than 90 percent of convenience stores in Japan discontinuing the sale of adult magazines.

Regarding the Sakai Safe City Program as one of the most important efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Sakai City will further vigorously promote the development of a safe and secure city for all residents, including women and children.



Ko ko ro -no- Hibiki

vol.40

Let a culture of human rights bloom from Sakai City!

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Table of Contents

- P 1 What is the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC)?
- P 2 History of HREPC's Activities and Evolution of International Human Rights
- P 3 Introduction of Member Organizations
- P 4 Contributed article
- P 5 Introduction of the Committees
- P 6 Introduction to Activities of the Special Committees
- P 7-8 Programs and Activities Undertaken by the HREPC
- P 9-10 Essay Contest "My Human Rights Message" Award-winning entries
- P 11 DVDs and Books on Human Rights

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) are global goals for 2016-2030, adopted at the United Nations Summit in September 2015. SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 targets to realize a sustainable society, and declare that no one in the world should be left behind.

The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC) is promoting its grass-roots human rights campaign through various events. The HREPC will implement various programs in FY 2019, so we look forward to your active participation.



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What is the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC)?

The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council is a civic organization established in July 1979, with the aim of creating a bright, comfortable society, free from all forms of discrimination, including Buraku discrimination.

Through its education activities, the HREPC drives a grass-roots human rights campaign aimed at building a peaceful and prosperous society where the human rights of all people are respected.

Chair: Naohiro Kanemaru



The HREPC's symbol represents people holding hands, praying for promotion of human rights and world peace.

Organization Chart / Directors of the Council

The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council comprises committee members recommended by organizations, companies, religious corporations, etc., and individuals that support the aims of the Council and cooperate in its activities.

Chair: Naohiro Kanemaru (Business Members Committee of the Council)

Vice Chair: Teruo Kubo (Federation of Sakai City Residents' Associations)

Vice Chair: Noriko Yamaguchi (Sakai City Women's Association)

Vice Chair: Katsumi Nishio (Sakai City PTA Federation)

Vice Chair: Tadashi Shiramoto (Sakai City Association of Childcare Organizations)

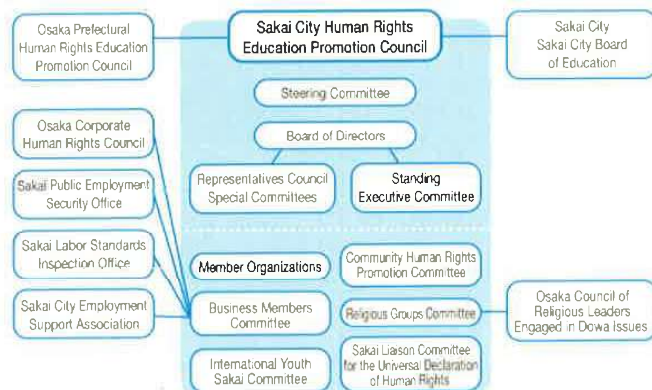
Vice Chair: Yutaka Kasai (Sakai City Association of Principals of Municipal Schools)

Vice Chair: Rieko Nakata (Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the Buraku Liberation League)

Vice Chair: Seiji Yoshimura (Religious Groups Committee of the Council)

Treasurer: Setsuko Hattori (Sakai City Women's Group for Social Rehabilitation)

Treasurer: Mitsuko Ogura (District Committee of the Sakai City Human Rights Commissioners' Association)



Member Organizations

The HREPC has a membership of 29 organizations.

- Sakai City Board of Education
- Sakai City Support Group for Foreign Residents' Education
- Sakai City Women's Association
- Sakai City Liaison Council of Instructors for Youth
- Sakai City PTA Federation
- NPO Sakai Federation of Private Educational and Childcare Institutions
- Sakai City Association of Principals of Municipal Schools
- Sakai District Committee of Administrative Counselors
- Osaka Prefectural Association of Vocational Schools
- Samboku Sumai Center, West Japan Branch UR Community Inc
- Sakai City Women's Group for Social Rehabilitation
- Federation of Sakai City Residents' Associations
- Sakai City Federation of Private Kindergartens
- Sakai City Human Rights Education and Research Society
- Sakai City Association of Childcare Organizations
- Sakai City Federation of Child Welfare Commissioners
- Sakai City Federation of Senior Residents' Clubs
- Sakai City Liaison Council of Probation Officers
- Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Headquarters of Liberal Dowa Association
- Sakai City Association for Sound Growth of Children
- Sakai City Social Education Committee
- NPO Sakai Federation of Disabled People's Organizations
- Sakai City Agricultural Cooperative
- Sakai City Welfare Association for Single-Mother Families and Widows
- Sakai Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- District Committee of the Sakai City Human Rights Commissioners' Association
- Sakai City Council of Social Welfare
- Principals' Association of Osaka Prefectural Schools in 8 Zones of the 4th District
- Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the Buraku Liberation League

History of HREPC's Activities and Evolution of International Human Rights

History of Activities of the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC)

- 1945** **End of the Second World War**
Following the end of the Second World War, a citizens' movement for post-war reconstruction and democratization sprouted. In Sakai City, the Sakai City Women's Association was established in 1948.
Following a nationwide movement, the PTA Federation and Human Rights Commissioners' Association were established in Sakai City. There are organizations that have continued their activities since before the war, including the Sakai City Liaison Council of Probation Officers, Sakai City Federation of Child Welfare Commissioners, Sakai City Education Association and Sakai City Association of Childcare Organizations.
- 1948:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- 1950s** **From post-war reconstruction to a period of rapid economic growth** **Society dramatically changed**
The Sakai City Welfare Association for Single-Mother Families and Widows was established by women who lost their husbands in the war. Also, the Sakai City Association for Sound Growth of Children started its activities. The Sakai City Council of Social Welfare was established in 1952 to not only create a community where everyone can live with peace of mind but also play a secretariat function for many civic groups. In 1953, the Sakai City Youth Advisor Program was founded to promote activities to prevent delinquency in neighborhoods.
- 1960s-1970s** **From rapid economic growth to stable growth** **Activation of citizens' movement**
After 1922 when the All Japan Leavers' Association was founded, the Buraku Liberation movement gained momentum. In the 1960s, as part of the movement, the Sakai Branch of the Buraku Liberation League was reestablished and the National Liberal Dowa Association was founded in 1986. Various activities to eliminate Buraku outcast discrimination were initiated by the Sakai City Human Rights Education and Research Society and other organizations. The Sakai City Women's Society for Social Rehabilitation (the present Sakai City Women's Group for Social Rehabilitation) and the Sakai City Federation of Senior Citizens Clubs were established around this time.
Entering the 1970s, the Federation of Sakai City Residents' Associations was organized, which comprised residents' associations in the City. Also, the Sakai City Liaison Council of Disabled People's Organizations (the present NPO Sakai Federation of Disabled People's Organizations) was established, which comprised organizations involved in the disability movement.
- 1966:** The International Covenants on Human Rights adopted.
- 1979** **1979: The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC) established on July 9.**
The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC) was established under the following slogan: "Protect human rights. Do not allow discrimination." Since then, the HREPC has promoted grassroots human rights campaign. They have been holding the Comprehensive Workshop for Human Rights Promotion Committee Members and the Citizens' Forum for Human Rights Protection, and publishing newsletters to this day. In addition to these activities, the HREPC also published booklets to raise public awareness of human rights, including *Orna no Ayumi to Sabetsu no Rekishu* (History of Discrimination against Women) and *Kokusateki Jinken Shiso to Kenpo* (International Human Rights Philosophy and Constitution).
- 1980s-1990s** **Many activities launched by the HREPC, and the Business Members Committee and the Religious Groups Committee established.**
 - Publication of human rights educational booklets (in addition to the two booklets listed above): *Dowa Mondai no Konnichiwa Kadei* (Contemporary Issues of the Dowa Issue), *Kigyono Dowa Kensyu no Jissen to Kadei* (Practice and Problems of Corporate Training on Dowa Issues), etc.
 - Training programs: Mount Koya Overstay Training, Elementary School District Training, Commitment Exchange Meeting with Other Cities, Human Rights Education Leader Development Seminars, etc.
 - Social campaigns: No Personal Background Check Campaign, Committee for Considering Issues Related to Practical Books on Funerals, Weddings and Other Ceremonial Occasions (prohibition of viewing of documents that can be used for background checks), etc.
 - Events: Citizen's Presentation Forum for Human Rights Protection, participation of *Jinken-maru* float in the Sakai Festival Parade, etc.
 - February 17, 1982: The HREPC Business Members Committee launched.
The Business Members Committee was established under the following slogan: "We do not practice or allow employment discrimination." At its first conference, the Committee resolved to strive to promote fair employment practices with correct understanding and awareness of Dowa issues.
 - September 14, 1983: The HREPC Religious Groups Committee launched.
The Religious Groups Committee was established in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that says, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights," and in line with the principles pursued by religious leaders of "freedom and equality" and "respect for life and human rights."

The Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and IYY (the present International Youth Sakai) established.
 - April 17, 1984: The Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established.
The Committee was established with the aim of realizing the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Since its establishment, the Committee has held the Citizens' Forum for Peace and Human Rights Protection each year, around July 10, when the Great Sakai Air Raids occurred.
 - April 11, 1985: The International Youth Year Sakai Regional Steering Committee (IYY), predecessor of International Youth Sakai (IYS), organized.
Upholding the four themes—"Participation," "Development" and "Peace," (three themes of International Youth Year, stipulated by the United Nations) plus "Human Rights"—, with the aim of communicating the spirit of these themes to future generations, IYS has worked to develop young people who can think and act independently through various programs, including an overseas dispatch program.

1994: Start of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

2000 – till the present **Entering the 2000s, various human rights problems have come to light, such as human rights infringement on the internet, hate speech, various types of harassment, abuse against children, the elderly and people with disabilities, and domestic violence (DV). In response to such a situation, many laws have been established to handle these issues. The HREPC has worked on these issues from the perspective of raising public awareness of human rights.**
 - 1996 - : Promoting the No Personal Background Check Campaign, under the slogan "Never discriminate against others, and never allow anyone else to discriminate against others."
 - 2007: Promoting public awareness campaign to increase awareness of human rights infringements on the Internet (electronic version of the Comprehensive List of Buraku Area Names, etc.)
 - 2008: Cooperating for the holding of Japan Women's Conference 2009 in Sakai; criticizing the growing inequality in society, following the collapse of Lehman Brothers
 - 2011: Making comments about the life and livelihood crises due to the Great East Japan Earthquake and reputational damage that can lead to human rights violations
 - 2016: Making comments on the "Act for Eliminating Discrimination Against People with Disabilities," the "Anti-Hate Speech Law," and the "Act on the Promotion of the Elimination of Buraku Discrimination"

2006: Start of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

2016: Start of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The HREPC establishes basic policies and priority objectives each year at the general meeting. Since entering the 2000s, the HREPC has promoted its activities with increased awareness toward international human rights trends.
 - 1995 - : Dissemination and awareness raising of the Sakai City Second-Half Action Plan for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, and Implementation of the Promotion Plan.
 - 2012: Making mention of the second phase of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
 - 2013: Criticizing Japan for placing 101st among 135 countries in the World Economic Forum's global gender equality rankings
 - 2014: Sakai City participated in the UN Women Safe City Global Program.
 - 2018: Promoting activities to achieve the SDGs and realize a society where no one is left behind

The History of the Sakai City Women's Association

The Sakai City Women's Association is the citizens' organization with the longest history in Sakai City, having been originally formed as Sakai Women's Society on July 1, 1948, after the end of the Second World War.

The Sakai City Women's Association later joined the National Federation of Regional Women's Organizations, and has continued its activities to the present day. The Association celebrated the 70th anniversary of its founding in 2018.

In 1945 the Constitution of Japan was established, with Article 24 stipulating equal rights for men and women. The movement promoting basic human rights, and women's status and social participation began to spread in post-war Japan. Women in Sakai at that time were actively engaged in community welfare activities; they collected debris scattered around the city, which had been reduced to ashes during the war, and held soup kitchens in their communities to orphaned children and elderly people who had lost their families. As part of the postwar GHQ policy, seminars were held to develop female leaders nationwide, and regional women's associations were established throughout Japan. Although three large women's organizations, including the National Defense Women Association, had already been formed and conducted their activities during the war, after entering the era of democracy, regional women's organizations were newly formed throughout the country. Concurrently, women in Sakai initiated various activities from the perspective of consumers and ordinary citizens.

Around the time when the Sakai City Women's Association was established, women were driven by a strong determination to never allow a war to happen again and never to send beloved members of their families to battlefields again. They conducted activities aimed at establishing women's human rights and building a society that embraces gender equality for peace. Their activities encompassed a wide range of fields, including education, welfare, healthcare, consumption, environment and culture.

Seeing women's strong desire to learn, the Association recognized the need to establish a base for activities to promote women's learning and empowerment. They launched a campaign to construct a women's hall in Sakai City, and started selling toothbrushes (100 yen for three) and holding recycling bazaars. They also conducted a

fund-raising drive with the single unit of donation being 1,000 yen, and eventually collected 77 million yen. The women's hall construction campaign lasted for 27 years. The collected money was donated to Sakai City, and the City enacted an ordinance to construct a women's hall. At long last, Sakai City Women's Hall was completed in August 1980.

After completion of the Women's Hall, we had opportunities to inspect women's halls in various regions in Japan, in the course of working in cooperation with the city government to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. These inspections made us realize anew that it is important to ensure that the Hall is loved and used by many local residents, instead of being satisfied with just having a hall. Since its establishment, Sakai City Women's Hall has been used for many programs and activities that stimulate local residents to learn and promote lifelong learning, thereby contributing to the local community and society at large.

The Sakai City Women's Association participated in the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council (HREPC) from the beginning. As a member of the HREPC, we have undertaken various activities, including a campaign for introducing mixed roll-books (listing student names in alphabetical order regardless of gender) at schools; a campaign against beauty contests; research on the children's story *Little Black Sambo*, gender issues in textbooks, and Chinese characters with female radicals; research on gender-based customs, conventions and traditions (practices at funerals, weddings and other ceremonial occasions, religions, discriminatory posthumous names, etc.); and research on the bans on women in tunnels, sumo rings and on Mount Omine and the issue of impunity. We have addressed a wide variety of issues and made improvements.

In keeping with the SDGs' philosophy of leaving no one behind, we are currently working to create a society where everyone, regardless of gender and sexual orientation, can live and thrive. Aiming to eliminate sexual violence and harassment against women and children, we are implementing various initiatives under the Sakai Safe City Program. As one of the leading women's organizations in Japan, we are working vigorously to promote women's empowerment. As a member of the HREPC, we will continue striving to build a society where human rights are properly respected.

Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the Buraku Liberation League

The Buraku Liberation League (BL) is a mass organization formed by *Buraku* outcast people, who suffer from discrimination, with the purpose of eliminating that discrimination. The BL is engaged in various activities to solve Buraku problems and build a society where human rights are respected.

The BL is a nationwide organization that replaced the *Zenkoku Suiheisha* (All Japan Levelers' Association), which issued Japan's first human rights declaration, "Let there be heat and light!", amid severe discrimination against Buraku communities before the war. The League has 2,200 branches nationwide.

In Sakai, the Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the BL was established after the war, taking over the activities of the former Henomatsu Suiheisha, which had been active before the war.

In addition to addressing Buraku discrimination cases, the BL has campaigned consistently to raise public human rights awareness and improve the living conditions (i.e. living environment, economic conditions, employment and education) of Buraku communities that were living in poor conditions.

Since its establishment, the Sakai Branch has worked in cooperation with a wide range of people. It took an active part in the foundation and operation of the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council, International Youth Sakai (IYS), and Human Rights Forum Sakai.

In recent years, various human rights problems have arisen, such as hate speech, widening social disparities, and circulation and dissemination of discriminatory and derogatory information against

Buraku on the Internet. It is an urgent task to tackle these new problems.

In Japan, the Law on the Promotion of the Elimination of Discrimination against Buraku was established in December 2016. In Sakai City, the Ordinance for Fostering Communities Respecting Peace and Human Rights was enacted in 2007. It is urgently necessary to actualize the provisions of this law and ordinance and to establish a comprehensive law that aids victims of human rights infringement.

Currently, with the aim of creating communities that respect human rights, the Sakai Branch is promoting community-based initiatives to address various issues.

Specifically, we conduct questionnaires among local residents to identify their problems and needs, and plan and implement activities to solve the identified problems. For example, we work to solve problems and concerns of elderly people and watch over them. We also operate children's restaurants and hold *Osusowake* Food Market events in cooperation with the Food Bank Osaka. *Osusowake* Food Market is an event which provides food for free to people in need.

We conduct these activities in cooperation with not only Daisen Nishi Elementary School District, but also the junior high school district as well as neighboring school districts, thereby promoting interaction among people within and outside the school district.

The Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the BL will continue to promote various activities with the aim of realizing a safe and secure society where no one is left behind.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Promoting Region-led Initiatives based on Human Rights

Kaoru Nemoto

Director, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC)



Last year, Sakai City was selected as a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Future City by the Japanese government, as one of the front-runner municipalities to lead the way in implementing the SDGs. Given Sakai's history of developing through trade with overseas countries and flourishing as a self-governing city, I expect that the city will promote its own unique, creative initiatives while combining local issues such as regional revitalization with global concerns like climate change.

The SDGs, adopted in September 2015 by a consensus of all United Nations member states, are ambitious global goals that seek to end all forms of poverty by 2030 while tackling 17 areas related to economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. The SDGs concern all countries—even domestic issues of developed countries including Japan, and not only national governments, but companies, organizations, local governments, and citizens are also key players in SDGs implementation.

The background to adoption of the SDGs, which serve as a lighthouse guiding the path toward 2030, was the growing sense of crisis that if no action was taken, it would not be possible to hand down this beautiful Earth and tolerant society to the future. Last year, abnormal weather events and natural disasters occurred frequently not only in Japan but also worldwide. Since the beginning of this century, global warming and climate change have rapidly become serious, affecting many peoples' lives, especially those living in poverty or vulnerable situations. Economic globalization on the whole has enriched the world and made people's lives more convenient. However, these benefits have not been equally distributed, leading to widening disparities in every respect. A sense of inequality or disparity has made such societies unstable, causing many conflicts. Intensified and prolonged conflicts have spawned huge numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have fled their homes for safety. The number of refugees and IDPs in the world has reached the highest level since the end of the Second World War. At the same time, prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia toward immigrants and refugees have spread

throughout the world. It is said that if current lifestyle patterns continue, by 2050, when the world's population is expected to reach 10 billion, three Earths will be needed to meet human demands. We must review our lifestyles and industrial practices, taking into account the limits of the Earth.

The SDGs were born from a sense of crisis toward such a situation. The SDGs' fundamental principle of "leaving no one behind," which is firmly rooted in the principles of human rights, is particularly important as the goals try to save vulnerable people who are most likely to be left behind, including foreign nationals, people with disabilities, women, young people, and the elderly.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948, soon after the end of the Second World War, and marked its 70th anniversary last year. Behind this Declaration lies humankind's desire for peace and freedom after the devastation of two world wars. At first, the Declaration did not have any legal binding force, but later, with the development of international human rights laws, the Declaration became legally binding. This is a triumph of the foresight of the people who compiled the Declaration and the perseverance and power of action of those involved in negotiations for international treaties built on the spirit of the Declaration. At the root of the SDGs' commitment to leave no one behind are human rights principles, which respect each individual person's dignity. The SDGs are innovative in that they make an explicit commitment to human rights despite being global goals for development.

To breathe life into the SDGs, each one of us living in the present world, needs to start getting involved in local issues, such as child-rearing support, community participation of the elderly, and development of attractive communities, while recognizing the SDGs as our own issues. I hope that residents of Sakai City, filled with the spirit of freedom and autonomy, become front runners in SDG efforts.

Introduction of the Committees

The Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council has four committees: Business Members Committee, Religious Groups Committee, International Youth Sakai Committee, and Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This issue introduces the activities of the Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Religious Groups Committee.

Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Chairperson: Naohiro Kanamaru

The Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights joined the Sakai City Human Rights Education Promotion Council in fiscal 2018. The Sakai Liaison Committee, established in 1984 in commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, aims to undertake various activities to realize the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Such activities include the following: holding lectures and seminars on human rights, distributing awareness-raising materials, and participating in meetings of the Osaka Liaison Conference for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Citizens' Forum for Peace and Human Rights held

The Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds the Citizens' Forum for Peace and Human Rights in July each year, with the aim of sharing and implementing the basic spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Sakai residents.

In fiscal 2018, the event was held at the Sakai City Higashi Cultural Hall on Sunday, July 8. This year's event featured a live performance ("Kizuna Concert") by the brass band of Sakai Municipal Noda Junior High School and a screening of the animation film *Kono Sekai no Katasumi ni* (In This Corner of the World).

The Sakai Liaison Committee for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds the Citizens' Forum for Peace and Human Rights on Sunday around the 10th of July each year, to pray for peace and resolve not to engage in war again, as well as not to allow our memories of war and the great air raids on Sakai to fade away.



Religious Groups Committee

Number of members: 394 corporations (as of February 2019)

Chairperson: Seiji Yoshimura (Izumo Taisha Shrine Osaka Branch)

The Religious Groups Committee was established in September 1983, by religious leaders living in Sakai who support the aim of the HREPC, beyond boundaries of religions and sects. Upholding the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the spirit of "freedom and equality" and "respect for life and human rights," which religious leaders have continued to pursue, the Committee aims to eradicate all forms of discrimination, including Buraku discrimination.

In addition to promoting the No Personal Background Check Campaign, the committee has worked to prohibit the perusal of necrologies (*kakochō*) and other biographical records maintained by Buddhist temples, and to abolish the provision of purifying salt (*kiyomejio*) to funeral attendees, which leads to the "notion of *kegare* (defilement)," lying at the root of Buraku discrimination. To eliminate any form of discrimination, the committee has undertaken various activities while reviewing social norms, awareness and customary practices which entrench discrimination, from the perspective of human rights.

Past activities

Extracted from the "Agreement on Prohibition of Perusal of Necrologies, 1985"

The Religious Groups Committee has been promoting the No Personal Background Check Campaign. However, some religious organizations cooperate directly or indirectly in background checks, either by making necrologies available for perusal, or by disclosing one's family line or other information. We, religious leaders, must refrain from engaging in these acts.

We hereby agree to refrain from perusal of necrologies and disclosure of family background information, such as family line through religious organizations.



Extracted from "Regarding a Stone Monument in the Precincts of a Shrine and Discrimination against Women and Buraku, 1991"

Based on a stone monument standing at the entrance of a shrine, on which is inscribed "No Entry by Defiled People," the Religious Groups Committee examined how the concepts of *kegare* (defilement) and *kiyome* (purification) relate to discrimination against Buraku people and women. The Committee members have recognized anew the importance of religious leaders working to disseminate the correct way of thinking while being fully aware of discriminatory or prejudicial elements lurking in daily customs, practices and behavioral patterns.



Introduction to Activities of the Special Committees

Special Committee on Dowa Issues

Representative: Rieko Nakata (Sakai Branch, Osaka Prefectural Federation of the Buraku Liberation League)

The Special Committee on Dowa Issues aims to address Dowa issues and other social problems in contemporary society. All committee members are expected to first correctly understand the history of Dowa issues and other current social problems and then communicate what they have learned to the public.

The sectional meeting in the second part of the 2018 HREPC Comprehensive Workshop featured a discussion in the World Café format, where participants exchanged their thoughts and feelings freely about Dowa issues, based on the actual answers to questions regarding Buraku discrimination posted on electronic bulletin boards on the Internet.

Feedback from participants included the following: "Electronic bulletin boards are convenient as you can ask questions and get answers from other users. But I felt that there was a possibility that they might spread incorrect knowledge." "Since many young people use the Internet, I think it is increasingly necessary to educate young people."



What is the World Café?

The World Café method requires participants to form small groups consisting of about four people to exchange their thoughts and ideas in a café-like relaxed atmosphere.

Groups of participants discuss a topic at several tables. Participants switch tables periodically and discuss the topic with new group members. The World Café is an effective method to facilitate open and intimate discussions and ensure active participation of all participants.

Special Committee on Human Rights of Women and Children

Representative: Noriko Yamaguchi

(Sakai City Women's Association)

The Special Committee on Human Rights of Women and Children is engaged in various activities, while considering what to do to protect the human rights of women and children.

In the sectional meeting in the second part of the HREPC Comprehensive Workshop held in August 2018, in response to the government's decision to lower the legal age of adulthood to 18 from 2022, a World Café format discussion took place on the theme of "Are 18-year-olds adults or children?". Participants exchanged their opinions in a relaxed atmosphere.

Opinions expressed by participants included "18-year-olds will have a greater sense of responsibility if they are granted legal adulthood" and "It is necessary to create a society that helps young people develop a sense of responsibility instead of criticizing them for lacking responsibility." Young people expressed opinions, such as "We want our opinions to be heard more."

We look forward to your active participation. Let's consider human rights together!



Special Committee on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons

Representative: Mitsuko Ogura

(District Committee of the Sakai City Human Rights Commissioners' Association)

We in the Special Committee on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons implement various initiatives while listening to the elderly and people with disabilities and considering what we should do to help them.

In the sectional meeting in the second part of the HREPC Comprehensive Workshop held in August 2018, we hosted lectures on the theme "Let's learn about dementia," inviting Ms. Kaoru Hanaie (Comprehensive Regional Care Promotion Division, Sakai City Government) and Ms. Toyoko Miyoshi (certified nurse in dementia nursing, Asakayama Hospital).

From Ms. Hanaie, we learned that all those involved in dementia care in the community should work in collaboration, from the four perspectives of self-help (Ji-jo), mutual aid (Go-jo), social solidarity care (Kyo-jo) and governmental aid (Ko-jo). From Ms. Miyoshi, we learned that people with dementia can live a happy and fulfilled life if they receive the correct support and their human rights are respected.

We look forward to your participation in the next sectional meeting.



Programs and Activities Undertaken by the HREPC

Comprehensive Workshop

August 20, 2018 Place: Sun Square Sakai

In the first section of the 2018 HREPC Comprehensive Workshop, a lecture was given on the theme of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by guest speaker Dr. Kiyoko Ikegami (Professor at the Nagasaki University School of Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Chair of the Board at NGO Plan International Japan, and Supervising Editor for the Sakai Safe City Program). The title of the talk was "What Is a Society Where No One Is Left Behind—17 Goals and What We Can Do—"



In the second section, the three special committees (Special Committee on Dowa Issues, Special Committee on Human Rights of Women and Children, and Special Committee on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons) held sectional meetings on their respective themes. More detailed information is available on page 6 in "Introduction to Activities of the Special Committees."

Citizens' Forum for Human Rights Protection

December 9, 2018 Place: Sakai City General Welfare Hall

The first section of the 40th Citizens' Forum for Human Rights Protection featured a commendation ceremony for award winners of the Essay Contest "My Human Rights Message," presentations by four award-winners selected from among all award-winning entries (the four award-winning entries are provided on subsequent pages), and a report on a Taiwan study tour by International Youth Sakai (IYS) members.

Presentations of award-winning essays inspired the audience to think again about human rights problems that exist in our daily lives. Every one of us should regard human rights problems as our own problems and consider what we can do about them. We believe this is the first step toward resolving human rights problems.

Also, through a report by IYS members, we have learned anew the importance of respecting each other's human rights and accepting diversity. We have realized that instead of believing only what is conveyed by the mass media, it is important to meet people directly and place importance on what we learn in the course of working together with them.

In the second section, a lecture titled "What Is a Society That Is Easy to Live in for Everyone?—How Japan Is Seen from Other Countries—" was delivered by Ms. Asako Osaki (Vice President of Sakai Jiyu-no-Izumi University, Visiting Professor at Kansai Gakuin University, expert on international cooperation and gender). She talked about human rights issues, focusing on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, themes on which she has worked since she was a United Nations staff member. She explained why it is important to protect women's human rights, in an easy-to-understand manner with concrete examples.

Regarding the SDGs, she explained the problems facing the world today. In her talk, she said that Japan is now facing problems that used to be considered problems in developing countries, and that if things go on like this, our society cannot keep going. In order to maintain a stable society, it is essential that each individual person's human rights be respected. In connection with this, she explained the SDGs' commitment to reducing inequality, the SDGs' philosophy of leaving no one behind, and the key concepts of universality, social innovation, and multi-stakeholders.

She also said that it was important to involve various stakeholders, including women, to understand the needs of many different people, and that the power of young people was essential to realizing a society that is easy to live in for everyone. The SDGs and the HREPC's grassroots human rights campaign have something in common and we will work hard on what we can do, even small things, toward realizing our goals and the SDGs.



Community Human Rights Promotion Committee Workshops

Every year between October and November, the HREPC holds a workshop on human rights in each of the seven wards of Sakai City. The workshops are open not only to members of the Community Human Rights Promotion Committee but also to all those interested.

The following table shows workshops held in fiscal 2018. The workshops were attended by many participants. Thank you very much.

	Date	Theme	Lecturer
Naka Ward	Oct. 16 (Tue.)	Women's rights "Support for DV Victims to Assist Their Recovery"	Ms. Juri Yukita (Lawyer, Josei Kyodo Law Office)
Kita Ward	Oct. 22 (Mon.)	Children's rights "What We Can Do to Prevent Child Abuse"	Ms. Kayoko Ito (Professor, School of Social Welfare and Education, College of Health and Human Sciences, Osaka Prefecture University)
Mihara Ward	Oct. 29 (Mon.)		
Sakai Ward	Oct. 23 (Tue.)	Dowa issue "Create a Town Where Each Person Is Valued"	Mr. Sanshiro Nakajima (NPO Kurashizukuri Network Kitashiba)
Minami Ward	Nov. 29 (Thu.)		Mr. Katsuke Ikegaya (Executive Director, NPO Kurashizukuri Network Kitashiba)
Higashi Ward	Oct. 30 (Tue.)	Internet and human rights "Human Rights Issues on Social Media and the Internet"	Ms. Chiaki Ishikawa (Chief Researcher, Social Media Association)
Nishi Ward	Nov. 19 (Mon.)		

We look forward to the participation of many people in next year's workshops too. * All sessions held from 19:00 to 20:30.

"Internet and Human Rights"

Pickup In Higashi and Nishi Wards, a seminar was held by Ms. Chiaki Ishikawa (Chief Researcher, Social Media Association), under the title "Human Rights Issues on the Internet and Social Media."

About 10 years have passed since the advent of smartphones, which are now part of our everyday life. With the spread of smartphones, various problems have emerged. One of those problems is the trend of smartphone users becoming younger and younger. This trend has been rapidly progressing since around 2013. More and more children get involved in trouble when using social media. Social media refer to websites and applications that enable people to communicate and share information. Also, an increasing number of troublesome incidents are taking place involving chat (text-message communication over the Internet) sites.

Today's children attach importance to reading the situation. Something trivial your child mentioned on the Internet may lead to trouble, and your child may be excluded from a group. When using text-based social media like LINE, it is necessary to be careful of your language. By warning children to be careful of the language they use in their posts, it is possible to reduce the number of Internet-related problems in school.

Also, cheating using a smart watch has become a problem.

There is also the term "internet dependence." Some children use smartphones more than 13 hours a day, and negative impacts on health have been reported.

What we adults can do is to teach children how they should conduct themselves as a person and how to use smartphones responsibly, and help them develop a solid foundation as a human being.

We should take measures to protect children, for example, (1) use content filtering to prevent access to harmful websites, (2) set rules for smartphone use, and (3) talk with children on a daily basis so that they feel they have someone to turn to when they have problems.

There is the term "digital native". Digital natives refer to people who grew up with the Internet and social networks from a very young age. Children are exposed to digital technologies from birth and are deeply familiar with them.

What we should do is to help children decide what they should value as people, regardless of being digital natives or not, and how to use digital devices responsibly.



Who are the members of the Community Human Rights Promotion Committee?

Members of the Community Human Rights Promotion Committee engage in grassroots human rights activities in their respective school districts. Members are recommended by community representatives of the Federation of Sakai City Residents' Associations from among officials of community residents' joint associations, presidents of unit residents' associations, members of various organizations in school districts, and people who are enthusiastic about human rights education activities in individual school districts.

About banning women from the sumo ring

Third-year elementary school student

I go to sumo school. There, everyone, both boys and girls, enjoys practicing sumo together. I like sumo very much.

In May, Sakai City hosted a sumo *jungyo* (regional tour) for the first time in over 20 years. It was my first time seeing such an event, so I was really looking forward to it. The day before the event, I went to the venue together with adults and junior high school members from our sumo club to help set up the venue. They joined other people in building a *dohyo* (sumo ring) from scratch, but I could not join. I did not think about it deeply then, and I helped arrange chairs. Everything was new to me, and I really enjoyed helping with preparations for the event.

The next day, the day of the event, I was scheduled to participate in children's sumo, so I went to the venue early in the morning.

The thought of being able to practice sumo with a sumo wrestler set my heart pounding. But I was told by someone on the event staff that I could not participate in children's sumo. I was disappointed, but then I was told that I could participate. The situation changed again and again, but in the end, I was told that I could participate, and then I moved to the waiting area below the sumo ring, together with other children.

I was waiting for my turn, with my heart pounding. Suddenly, someone said, "Girls, please wait over there". All the girls waiting below the sumo ring were taken to the waiting area for children who finished their turns. I watched boys engage in sumo with sumo wrestlers from below the sumo ring. Girls were not allowed to step onto the sumo ring until the end. I felt sad, upset, envious and disappointed...various emotions surged up within me, and tears welled up in my eyes. But I tried to smile because I don't like crying in front of people. I got sad because I realized that I was not allowed to enter the sumo ring because I was a girl.

Even now, if I recall things that happened on that day, I get upset. But I think the reason why decisions about girls' participation changed again and again was because someone worked hard to allow girls to participate in children's sumo. I am grateful about that.

I know the history of sumo and the importance of tradition. Banning women from the sumo ring is a sumo tradition, so I think it cannot be helped. But I hope that someday there will be a day when women can enter the sumo ring.

About the Dowry issue

Third-year junior high school student

"Discrimination is a bad thing". I don't know how many times I have heard this in human rights classes. Although like myself, many people have learned and thought about human rights issues, there are people who suffer various types of social disadvantages even today.

I recognized the Dowry issue as a problem close to me for the first time when I heard my grandparents say, "because that area is a Dowry district," while seeking advice on which senior high school to apply to. At first, I did not understand what Dowry meant, but their remark never left my mind. So I researched it on the Internet. I have learned that the Dowry issue originated before the Edo period, when outcasts called *eta* (literally abundant filth) or *hinin* (literally non-person) were severely discriminated against, and that discrimination has not been totally eliminated even today. There still remain cases where people are turned down for marriage only because they live in Dowry districts. So many people from Dowry districts lead their lives, while hiding their hometown. I do not think my grandparents made that remark in an effort to discriminate against people in Dowry

districts. I understand they mentioned it because they thought seriously about me. However, I got scared, thinking about the fact that discrimination that existed before the Edo period still remains today.

While researching on the Internet, I felt that unlike human rights issues drawing much attention today, such as LGBT rights, the Dowry issue has been fading away. Precisely for this reason, I think we should always keep in mind that our reckless words or deeds can hurt someone without us knowing.

Until recently, I thought "The world will not change soon even if I alone pray for peace." But I now think that the primary reason there still are cases where people suffer human rights abuses is that many people are indifferent to discrimination.

I want more people to know the current situation of the Dowry issue. I also want to communicate this issue to future generations. To do so, I should take an interest in and turn my eyes to human rights issues, to which I was indifferent before. I will walk along the path I believe to be right.

Earthquakes and hearing impairment

First-year student in an advanced course at a special needs education school

A deaf woman made a film titled "Kakehashi: Kikoenakatta 3.11 (The Connecting Bridge: 3.11 That Wasn't Heard)." This film depicts the situation of deaf people in the disaster area during the Great East Japan Earthquake.

I have a hearing impairment. Deaf people are unable to get earthquake information through hearing. I have learned from this film that when the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, many deaf people received earthquake warnings on their mobile phones, but they did not know a tsunami was coming. They also did not know where evacuation shelters were located in their area.

In many cases, temporary evacuation shelters are school gymnasiums, but deaf people do not understand where an evacuation shelter is if explained verbally. I have seen a green sign on a utility pole which says "Open Area Evacuation Site." But I have never seen gymnasium signs on the streets. So I don't know where gymnasiums are located. If a map is printed on signs, deaf people can evacuate to shelters.

Even if you speak to me, I cannot hear, so I don't understand what you say. If you communicate by writing, I can read and understand what you want to say. Deaf people cannot hear sounds, but if you pat them on the shoulder, they will notice. And if you write notes, they will understand them.

If I know where evacuation shelters are located, I can take elderly persons, persons with disabilities, or persons who cannot run to shelters. When an earthquake occurs, gas and water supplies are often disrupted, and we will not be able to take a bath or cook. In such a case, if I get information that a water-supply truck is coming near my house, I can fetch water for elderly people who cannot carry heavy water.

In the event of an earthquake, I want to help elderly people and other people needing assistance. I cannot understand what's being said because I am unable to hear. So I want people to communicate in a way that I can understand. If so, I can also help people in need.

About being approved by society

Adult

On June 27, 2018, the same-sex partnership system was introduced in Osaka City, where I was born and brought up.

I had heard that the system would be introduced around September, so when I first heard this news, I couldn't believe it. It was so sudden. I did not expect this to happen so quickly. I remember reading a newspaper with mixed feelings of surprise and joy.

I am a lesbian. I first became aware of this when I was a child. When I say I am attracted to women, people say, "so you don't like men, do you?" but it is not like that. I have male friends whom I respect from the bottom of my heart, and those whom I want to help as much as I can when they are in need.

It is just that I am romantically attracted to the same sex. But most people would not understand this—what it is like loving the same gender...

When I first had a same-sex lover, I was very happy, but at the same time I felt I had to hide it. We both agonized. Outwardly, we were good friends, but when we were alone, we were lovers. We were in puberty, and some of our friends had boyfriends and talked about their dates, but we kept secret about us. However, the more time we spent together, the stronger our love grew. We used to talk about dying together if nobody approved of our relationship. Eventually we broke up, but I carried a burden about being a lesbian and thought many times that I wanted to

disappear from this world.

After I grew up, I became acquainted with people who have similar problems as me and a movement to remove prejudice against sexual minorities gradually became active around the world. Although sexual minorities still received harsh treatment, the situation dramatically changed compared to when I was a student.

I often hear people say: "Same-sex couples can live together. Why does it matter whether they can legally get married or not?" But they do not understand the problem. The problem is that opposite-sex couples have the right to choose to marry or not, but same-sex couples do not. The existence of a system that allows same-sex couples to have hope for their future is very important.

On the night of the day when the same-sex partnership system was introduced in Osaka, I cried happy tears. I had lived my life denying myself, but on that night I felt as if Osaka, my hometown where I was born and raised, approved of me and could not stop crying. I thought, from the bottom of my heart, it was good I didn't die. I was glad I was alive.

I think such a movement will be more and more active in Japan and around the world in the future. In the future, people with a same-sex orientation will be able to feel more positive about themselves and live their lives strongly.