



KUMAMOTO

YMCA NEWS

THE KUMAMOTO
YOUNG MEN'S
CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATION2016
5·6
No.528

We'd like to offer our sincere sympathy
to the people who have been affected by the Kumamoto Earthquake in April.

Living Together



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All YMCA staff concerned sincerely pray for encouragement and comfort from God for the people affected by the recent disaster who still live with anxiety from continuous aftershocks both in Kumamoto and the Kyushu Region.

Kumamoto YMCA is designated by municipalities as the management body to operate both Mashiki Town Athletic Park and Mifune Town Sports Center, which both became evacuation Centers. As of 10 May 2016, Mashiki Center accommodated 1,500 evacuees while Mifune had 150 respectively. Additionally, Aso YMCA has a role as a hub for disaster volunteers in Aso City.

Kumamoto YMCA accepts highly skilled staff and volunteers from YMCA nationwide to assist in operating evacuation centers, for tasks such as removing debris from the collapsed houses. We do our activities as a team with all our staff members and volunteers towards recovery without delay by taking advantage of our YMCA worldwide solidarity and network.

1 A school boy straightened up his back in the exercise session at one of the evacuation centers

2 A playroom set up for children evacuating in Mashiki Evacuation Center.

3-4 Many young people participated in volunteer work in Aso Region from inside/outside Kumamoto

5 A YMCA college student volunteering in the evacuation center

6-12 Chiang Mai YMCA in Thailand and Hiroshima YMCA doing fund-raising campaigns on the street for Kumamoto

7 Community people and children are volunteering in evacuation centers. In Mashiki Evacuation Center, child evacuees started a volunteer group.

8-9 Donations arrived from many corporations and churches.

10 A child and his family visiting his nursery to check the damage after the earthquake; the child said "I was worried about the building and my teachers."

11 Architecture-major students volunteering in cleaning the rubbish disposal site.

Alleviating Children's Anxiety

I worked mainly in the playroom set up in Mashiki Evacuation Center as a volunteer. Children were asking me for hugs and piggybacks, which could be coming from their anxieties. I hope I can help them feel better through playing blocks and tag-games, and doing origami with them.

In the evacuation center, I spent long time with these children. I learned how best to speak with them and dealing with their struggle from these experiences. How they play differ depending on their age groups. I think having some sort of ground rule will help them play safely and enjoy together.

I want to be involved with more children in the future, and I aim to be a kindergarten teacher who can convey important messages to them through creative and easy-to-understand methods.



Reira Moriichi

2nd year, Child Welfare Education Course,
Kumamoto YMCA College

Students Volunteering Spontaneously

I drove to Kumamoto from Yokohama after the main shock. I saw the scenery changing as I approached the area seriously damaged from the earthquake, and I witnessed the reality of disaster.

In Mashiki Evacuation Center I worked, many volunteers arrived to offer assistance from early days. It is challenging to provide relief for over 1000 evacuees, but those high school and university students spontaneously worked to sort out relief supplies. They were as if they are already YMCA leaders, and I was really encouraged to see their spontaneous leadership.

I trust that YMCA became well known by those volunteers through operating the evacuation center this time. It is great to see more and more people are initiating actions at such time of needs.



Hidehiko Otsuka

Yokobama YMCA
Former Miyako Volunteer Center Staff

Doing my Best for the Next Competition

When I was about to leave the gymnasium after gymnastics practice, the first earthquake occurred. I witnessed many walls of the gymnasium falling off. After I got back home, I couldn't sleep until the next morning. I didn't expect that another big one would come.

A few days later, I was asked to join sorting relief supplies by a YMCA leader. I thought I should do something rather than nothing, so I joined. I found out the situation of other members of my gymnastic team by sharing photos.

I feel happy to see shops reopening and bullet train service resuming. However, our practice has been suspended due to the earthquake. I'm not sure if our next competition would be held in June, and I'm worried if I can move my body like before. The least I can do is continue doing stretching exercises at home. I am committed to do my best to practice again and with studies at school.



Ririko Yamashita

2nd year of Junior High School,
Captain of gymnastics team

Even Half a Step a Day

I am volunteering to visit evacuation centers giving evacuees haircuts as I used to do it for the elderly before.

When I give people haircuts, I can see people smiling while having ordinary conversation, talking about their hometown and experience from their youth days. I am happy if I can provide the evacuees some pleasant time to be relieved from their anxiety.

The first item I took from my office after the earthquake were my scissors. Until now, I cannot even make a phone call at my office. It took three weeks to restart my activities from Mifune Evacuation Center being the activity base.

The earthquake gave me an opportunity to meet many YMCA staff and volunteers. Through such human relationship established, I would like to take even half a step forward a day.



Kazunori Morinaga

Genkiba Todoketai (NPO)

Envisaging Camping with Children Affected by the Earthquake

The situation at Mashiki Town Athletic Park was completely different especially after the main shock of the earthquake.

During the chaotic environment where many relief items and personnel were moving here and there, the great support was provided by YMCA staff and volunteers from all over Japan. YMCA's values on social interaction and group work oriented methodology really helped in such extraordinary environment. Linking many organizations and companies was also a value YMCA, as private and voluntary organization, added.

There are many challenges given the rapidly changing environment on the ground, but we believe that turning such changes into joy is our mission. I am really looking forward to do a camp with children from Mashiki town and students who came to assist as volunteers.



Yoko Marume

Deputy Manager at
Mashiki Town Athletic Park

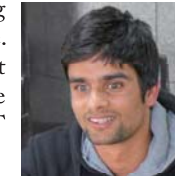
I am Fine, Because People Are with Me

Phokara, where I come from, is the second largest city in Nepal, and is located 200 km west from Kathmandu. On 25 April 2015, there was a very large earthquake in Nepal, 2 days after I came to Kumamoto. For me though, this Kumamoto earthquake was the first disaster I experienced. The earthquake occurred when I was working as a part-timer, and people guided me to a near-by university to take refuge.

I talked with my parents a few days after the earthquake, and they were really worried about me. I told them 'I am fine' as I was surrounded by other Nepalese students as well as teachers and Japanese community people here.

I am scheduled to visit Nepal after 6 months. I am really looking forward to seeing my family once again. I am also concerned about how communities in Nepal are doing after the earthquake last year.

Now, I am focusing my time and energy to learning Japanese language. In the future, I want to be a software engineer in IT industry.



Bhandari Krishna Prasad,

Student at YMCA College
majoring Japanese language

YMCA Values in Practice

When I moved to Tokyo Medical University Hospital in 2011, there were still aftershocks from the Great East Japan Earthquake. This time in Kumamoto, I used an opportunity during Golden Week, and I participated in volunteer work shifting out household goods from affected houses. I had some information about the damage, and I was really concerned about people in Kumamoto including YMCA staff and Y's Men colleagues.

At evacuations centers in Mashiki and Mifune, I saw YMCA colleagues from all over Japan providing services based on their respective expertise. Their presence surely relieved anxiety from the evacuees, and I was really proud to see such YMCA value put in practice.

I would like to continue to convey the situation in Kumamoto and YMCA's activities to people I meet.



Tadashi Tanoue

Musashi Y's Mens Club,
Former Chair of Kumamoto YMCA

Kumamoto Earthquake 2016

Find us on Facebook "@ymca.kumamoto"
(mainly in Japanese)
<https://www.facebook.com/ymca.kumamoto>



Opened Mashiki Town Athletic Park as an evacuation center.

Mifune Town Sports Center opened the martial art gym up to the evacuees. It was closed once on 15 April. After the main shock occurred, it was reopened as an evacuation center.



Photo on the left) Evacuees queuing up for hot meals (Mashiki Town)
Photo on the right) Evacuees doing exercises in the morning from 19 April



Opened Nagamine Family YMCA as a temporary evacuation center until 21 April. Supplied the swimming pool water for domestic use.

Aso YMCA started their "Bathing Project", opening their bathroom to the local community. Many children regained their smile by taking baths with their mothers.



Many smiles were generated, and one said "it was so fun to take a bath with my mother again."

The staff members of Kumamoto Chuo YMCA and YMCA College started recreational activities and exercises with their students for the elderly and children at local evacuation centers.

21
Mashiki Town Disaster Volunteer Center was established.

22
Kumamoto City Disaster Volunteer Center was established.

Started emergency call for donation.
Suizenji Kindergarten started free school.
Re-started YMCA college Japanese language class.



'We are fine because we are not alone' said foreign student with a smile.

Among 4 nursery schools in Aso area, Ogaishi and Kurokawa nursery schools reopened.

Aso YMCA started to function as Disaster Volunteer Center.



YMCA volunteer assisting shifting of roofing tiles.

26
Aso City Disaster Volunteer Center was established.

27
Kyushu Bullet Train services resumed in all sectors.

28
Kumamoto earthquake designated as specified disaster and aftershocks exceed 1000.

29
Temporary shelter construction being in Nishihara and Kosa towns. Kyushu Express Way reopens on all sectors

30

10 May

Established an emergency headquarters.

The supporting staffs arrived from National Council of YMCA of Japan. There were 71 staff members in total who came to support from YMCAs across the country until 14 May.



YMCA College and Suizenji Kindergarten started recreational activities and exercises for the elderly and children evacuating in Mashiki Evacuation Center. From the 19th, student volunteers from YMCA College joined.

Musashi YMCA started to open their shower room to the evacuees.

2487 houses were entirely destroyed (as of 6 May at 7:30 AM, reported by Fire Department) A historical building, the house of L. L. Jones, the founder of Kumamoto School of Western Studies was also entirely destroyed by the earthquake.

Budo-no-ki Kindergarten run by Minami YMCA was reopened.

The training gym and swimming pool for adults of Minami YMCA and Musashi YMCA were reopened.

The staff members with skills such as lecturers in Nursing Care Course of YMCA College started to assist the elderly to take baths in Mashiki Evacuation Center.



Bath service where many YMCA graduates and volunteers assisted.

YMCA College, programs for children and adults resume.



One parent shared with us the excitement their children showed before coming to YMCA 'yes we are going to YMCA!'

Children's Psychological Care during Disaster

How shall we deal with SOS signs from children such as 'not wanting to be away from parents even for a second', 'not able to sleep alone at night'? Daiji Akehashi, a psychologist and child care counselor, advises as follows.

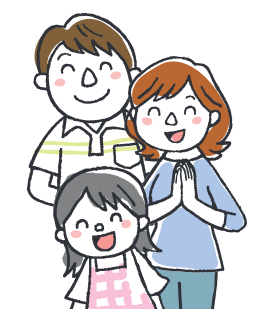
Question: after the earthquake, my 4-year old daughter show baby-like attitudes. What should I do?

Answer: There are various signs children show. For example, being scared of even a slight sound, not being able to talk, not wanting to be away from the parents even for an instance, always asking for hugs, not able to sleep or go to toilet alone at night, etc. These are often referred to as regression. When these syndromes appear, adults should do what they ask. You should hug, sleep together, and so on. Accepting such behavior is the most important thing for psychological recovery of these children.

Question: I myself is full of anxiety at the moment, and I am not able to accept regression of my child.

Answer: After large disasters, both children and adults suffer from anxiety. Seeing regression during such times could be shocking for some people, and in such circumstance, it is important to have someone to talk to. Just like children need care, adults also need care by having someone listening to your anxiety, and to accept your sad feelings.

Taken from Special Edition of Ichimannendo Shimbum (20 April, 2011) focusing on children's psychological care during the Great East Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011.



TARANTON

by Nariya Oka

Vol.26

General Secretary
of Kumamoto YMCA

Importance of Mutual Help

I would like to convey my sincere sympathy for people in Kumamoto and the whole of Kyushu area who have been affected by the earthquakes on April 14th and 16th.

When the first shock happened on April 14th 9:26 PM, I was at home which is in Minami-ku, Jonan-town. I still remember the tense feeling I got as it was my first experience of earthquake with such intensity. There were YMCA facilities which were operating at that time, and I started to contact YMCA staff, families, and to prepare for establishing a disaster response office. As there were still risks of secondary disasters, I waited until the early morning and I headed to the central YMCA building.

We assessed the damage level of the central YMCA building, and we started the operation of the disaster response office. We contacted all students, staff, members of YMCA, and coordinated with YMCAs outside of Kumamoto for emergency relief and recovery of the heavily affected areas such as Mashiki-town.

The main shock on April 16th 1:25 AM took place when I was about to sleep, and massive shaking really scared me. We contacted all colleagues again to make sure they are safe, but it was unbelievable that these massive quakes took place two nights in a row.

Central YMCA building suffered a crack, walls of gymnasium fell off, Nagamine Family facility damaged... Seeing such reality was heartbreaking, but when experts came to assess the actual damages of the buildings, we were relieved that the building structure did not suffer from critical damage.

However, people are living with constant fear from aftershocks, and many are still in evacua

tion centers, or in their cars not able to return to their homes even when lifelines are restored. This earthquake poses us with a great challenge in recovery as well as to continue assisting those in need.

YMCA staff across Japan possess various expertise including experience from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Colleagues from many of these YMCAs, such as Wakayama and Yokohama, drove all the way to come and help us even when trains and airline services were suspended. We commit to coordinate and work with world-wide YMCA network, partnership with local authorities, Y's Mens Club, medical service providers, etc. to overcome this significant challenge of recovery.

We will continue to update information about relief and recovery of Kumamoto on our Facebook and Website. We would like to extend our sincere prayers for safety and well-being of those affected by this earthquake, and we sincerely call for your kind support to the work of YMCA on the ground.

Request for Donations for YMCA Support Activities — for Children and Seniors Suffered from Kumamoto Earthquake

Powerful earthquakes hit Kumamoto prefecture -a magnitude 6.5 quake on 14 April and a magnitude 7.3 quake on 16 April. Due to these quakes and the following aftershocks, more than 62,000 houses have been destroyed /damaged, and more than 15,000 people have been forced to stay at shelters.



Kumamoto YMCA, also affected by the quake, has been making every effort to help people in the quake-hit area. It has 14 YMCA centers, including 2 sport centers commissioned by the government, and so Kumamoto YMCA has managed big shelters with the government where about 1,400 evacuees have stayed. Besides that, Kumamoto YMCA has provided the facilities of YMCA centers for free, and opened the YMCA volunteer center utilizing its campground.

Right after the earthquake, many local YMCAs have started to support the evacuees with Kumamoto YMCA by sending staff, experts and youth volunteers, and providing programs especially for children and seniors.

Now we ask you to support us so that YMCA could continue to be with the earthquake victims and rebuild the devastated communities with them.

https://srv.asp-bridge.net/ymca_km/index/

The Mission Statement of The Kumamoto YMCA

The Kumamoto YMCA is committed to working for the oneness of all people. Inheriting the spirit of the Kumamoto Band, we will endeavor in the work of love and ministry modeled by Jesus Christ with the desire to promote the wholesome growth of youth in spirit, mind and body.

We will endeavor to work towards a society in which we share in one another's suffering and live together in harmony.

We will strive for a global environment in which humans and nature can peacefully co-exist.

We will offer all people a place of growth through various meetings and learning opportunities.

We will promote the creation and maintenance of life-long health in mind and body.

We will promote volunteer activity by developing leaders who can contribute to the community and international society.

As a member of the community of nations in Asia, and in an endeavor to learn from history, we will strive together with people throughout the world for the formation of a world abounding in peace.



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たった一人のためにも、世界をつなごう。



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Scripture Verse for 2016

2 Corinthians 13:11

Be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.