



Let's fight, kids!

In this issue of Mimitaro, we interviewed Mr. Isamu Kondo and Ms. Rita,
of the "Shiga Kondo Taekwondo Academy."



6 years ago, my husband who was a dentist and I who worked as an architect in Brazil, took a break from our work to study in Kyoto and Nagoya. Together with our children who were 8 and 2 years old at that time, and my Japanese mother in law, we all came to Japan and now live in Hikone. After living a life as a student, going to university during the day, working part time at a factory during night, sleeping on the train, we decided to stay in this town where we could live in peace for our children who had grown to love Japan. Now my husband and I both work at a factory and teach taekwondo, while my husband continues his study for Japanese dentistry certification. Whenever we can find the time, we would travel together or enjoy a relaxing time by the lake.

Back in Brazil, we always enjoyed taekwondo as a family. We looked for a dojo (hall used for martial arts training) to continue after coming to Japan, but could not find one nearby, so we decided to start one of our own. My husband had a teaching certificate in Brazil, so we rewrote it to an international master's certificate, registered our classes with the Japan Taekwondo Federation, and we have competed in regional, national, and international tournaments. Currently in the three classes in Nagahama, Hikone, and Higashiomi, about 70 children between the ages of 2 to 15, mostly Brazilians are working hard at training.

We started the class as a hobby for ourselves, but after seeing the situation of foreign children, we are keenly sensing the importance of running this class. Many foreign children have difficulty adjusting to Japanese school because of the difference in the language and culture. Some are overly conscious of their differences

from other children, and they are lonely, always feeling as if they are outsiders. At home they spend hours using digital devices such as computers, cell phone, and games, and they do not engage in proper exercise. These habits have a negative effect on the body, mind, and emotions, leading to an emotionally unstable and unmotivated child, and it makes me worry about their future. Under these situations, it is our hope that children will stretch their arms and legs to the fullest at taekwondo classes and become physically and mentally healthy. Therefore, we hold classes at times and prices that are accessible to children, and we offer playtime before and after practice so that we can help children with any problems they may have at that time. "Interaction, Respect, Discipline" is our slogan. During breaks, children's cheerful voices echo, "It feels so good to move my arms and legs!" and we receive comments from school teachers and parents saying that their children have calmed down.

Living away from our home country, naturally there are many challenges, but in Japan schools and public administrations provide all kinds of support for foreigners. So, although it is not easy, we should all have a clear goal and a positive mindset, and we need to organize ourselves by making use of those support. For children, it is important to tell them that "Life is a battle, sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. If you are defeated, you must overcome it." Living inside a box, you can only see the scenery within it. That is why we must get past the box, come in contact with the outside world, acquire new knowledge, and set out on an exploration of the unknown. Therefore, let's raise our children to have healthy minds and bodies, which will be necessary in the future life's battles.

At taekwondo competitions, children sometimes hesitate, thinking they might lose. But just by participating and fighting in a competition, they have already won a gold medal in their hearts!



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Let's have a checkup once a year!



Are you receiving medical checkups? Medical checkup is a great opportunity to detect abnormalities inside your body at an early stage. Even an abnormal test results without any subjective symptoms may lead to a life-threatening disease if it is left unchecked. It is important to check and compare the annual test results and understand the changes in your body. Make sure to have a medical checkup at least once a year.

In Japan, “specific medical checkups” (*Tokutei Kenshin*) are available to those who are enrolled in health insurance from the age 40 to 74. The health insurance company you are enrolled in will subsidize the cost of a medical checkup once a year.

★ For those who are employed

It is mandatory for the employers to have the employees undergo a medical checkup once a year. If the company offers you a medical checkup, be sure to take it. The employer will be responsible for the cost of the examination items specified by the law.

★ Dependents who are enrolled in Kyokai Kenpo

Every April dependents over the age of 40 will receive a notice on specific medical checkup. Enclosed are medical checkup tickets and pamphlets. Please make an appointment in advance at the hospital or venue where you would like to receive a specific medical checkup. If you have a medical checkup ticket, 7,150 yen will be deducted from the total cost. There are also venues where you can receive medical checkups free of charge, so be sure to undergo a medical checkup when you receive a notice.

★ Those who are enrolled in National Health Insurance (*Kokumin Kenkou Hoken*)

National Health Insurance also promotes the specific medical checkups, and information will be sent to your home. For more information on the timing and contents, please contact the municipal office of where you live.

Notice to the members of Kyokai Kenpo (Japan Health Insurance Association)

The format of application and notification forms of the Kyokai Kenpo has been changed since January 2023.

New forms can be downloaded from the website.

If you have an old form, please do not use it and discard it.

Do you know the rules of bicycles and motorcycles?

On wearing a bicycle helmet

With the partial revision of the Road Traffic Law, wearing helmets have become a **duty to make efforts** for bicycle riders since April 1st 2023.

【Compliance for Bicycle Riders】

1. **Bicycle riders** must try to wear helmets.
2. When a bicycle rider puts a **child on a bicycle** or **lends the bicycle to another person**, he/she must try to have the other person wear a helmet.
3. Parents and guardians must try to have their **children** wear helmets when they ride bicycles.

※ In Shiga Prefecture, **bicycle insurance** has become mandatory as of February 1, 2016.



Procedures for purchasing a motorcycle

If you purchase a motorcycle from a dealer, they will take care of all the procedures for you. However, if you receive a used motorcycle from a friend, or purchase one on online auction, you will need to change the name of the owner and complete the necessary procedures by yourself.

Procedure for registering a change of name (Meigi Henkou)

How to register a change of name for motorcycle differs depending on the displacement of the motorcycle.

✧ For motorcycle (50cc to 125cc)

The procedure can be done at the city hall where the new owner is registered as a resident.

✧ For light motorcycles, medium-sized and large motorcycles (over 126cc)

The procedures will be done at the Road Transport Branch Office (*Unyushikyoku*) (Land Transport office (*Rikuunkyoku*)) that has jurisdiction over the new owner's address.

Shiga Road Transport Branch Office (*Shiga Unyukyoku*) : 2298-5 Konohama-cho, Moriyama-shi

Registration and Inspection Procedures Guide : Tel 050-5540-2064

- ✓ The basic rule for private sales is that the buyer takes care of the change of name procedure, but if you are buying from a friend, you can go with him/her to the Land Transport Bureau or city office for the procedure.

Enrollment in Compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance (Jibaiseki Hoken)

There are two types of motorcycle insurance, “Compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance” (*Jibaiseki Hoken*) and “Voluntary Insurance” (*Nin-i Hoken*).

When you purchase a motorcycle, you are required to enroll in compulsory automobile liability insurance. Liability insurance is compulsory and covers bodily injury, and there are penalties for uninsured drivers.

In addition, although it is not mandatory, it is a good idea to have a voluntary insurance, which can compensate both the victim and the offender.



Mimitaro Information

◆ Biwako Jazz Higashiomi

April 29th (holiday), 30th (Sun)

From Higashiomi City Hall to the area around Yokaichi Station (Omi Railway).

Street music event held every spring in Higashiomi City, celebrating its 15th anniversary this year.



◆ Hiei's cherry blossoms and green maple leaves

April 29th (holiday) to May 7th (Sun), 10am - 4pm

Okuhiei driveway (Saito (west tower) Parking Lot)

About 1,000 cherry trees of 40 varieties, including Yaezakura, are in full bloom, and beautiful maples (Momiji) with vivid green color will cover the mountain when the cherry blossoms are over.

◆ Shigaraki Sakkaichi (artist's fair) 2023

May 2nd (Tue) to 5th (holiday)

Shiga Prefectural Ceramic Cultural Park, Taiyo no Hiroba (2188-7 Chokushi Shigaraki-cho Koka-shi)

An event to exhibit and sell the works of ceramic artists from all over Japan.



◆ Seasonal Festival Yabusame

May 5th (holiday) from 3pm

Namura Shrine (467 Ayado Ryuo-cho Gamo-gun)

The festival celebrates the growth of children with the dedication of a children's Mikoshi (portable shrine) and seven sacred horses demonstrating horseback archery.



◆ Ao-Oni Festival

May 21st (Sun) 9:30am-10:30am

Daihonzan Ishiyamadera (1-1-1 Ishiyamadera Otsu-shi)

A five-meter statue of ao-oni (blue ogre) made of cedar leaves will welcome the worshippers.

◆ Hydrangea (Ajisai) are in full bloom from June to July

Moriyama Ashikarien (Sugie-cho Moriyama-shi)

Best time to see: Mid-June

Yogoko Ajisaen (Yogokohan Yogo-cho Nagahama-shi)

Best time to see: Late-June to early July

Miyashogawa no Ajisai dori (Miyasho-cho Higashiomi)

Best time to see: Mid-June to end of June



Mimitaro News



◆ The Support Benefits for the restriction leave to be taken under the COVID-19 outbreak Announcement for end of application

The deadline for applications for those who have been absent from work due to the effects of COVID-19 between February and March 2023, is May 31st. Please note that applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

◆ From May 8th, the placement of COVID-19 will be lowered

The alert level for infectious disease will be lowered. Please follow the rules of school and company regarding future infection control measures and the period of recuperation, in the event of infection.

※ It is still important to take precautions against infection in crowded places and public places, at hospitals and senior citizens facilities, since there are people more at risk of becoming seriously ill. Wear a mask depending on epidemic situation and occasions.

◆ Orizurukai Support for traffic accident orphans

Orizurukai provides scholarships, new enrollment benefits, etc., to children living in the prefecture who have lost their guardians in traffic accidents (from age 0 until March of the school year in which they reach 18), as well as recreational activities during the summer vacation.

 Orizurukai office

(within Shiga Prefecture Road Maintenance Division) Tel 077-528-3682



◆ It is time to apply for scholarships

In addition to Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), there are also scholarships offered by universities, private companies, foundations, and local governments. Please check their websites for information.



Shiga Foreign Residents Information Center
(within Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization)
Multilingual support available.

TEL: 077-523-5646 FAX : 077-510-0601

E-mail: mimitaro@s-i-a.or.jp

Next issue of Mimitaro is scheduled in July