



# Social Welfare Organization SUZURAN NO KAI

## Philosophy

Our wish is that everyone obtains a barrier-free life in the community. We believe in every person's unlimited potential, and therefore aim to create an environment where all can realize their full potential.

## First

Social welfare in Japan began after the war as a measure to alleviate poverty. The new constitution laid emphasis on respect for human rights and establishment of the social security system. Entrance into the period of rapid economic growth led to more advanced systems. Previously, social welfare activities had been limited to charitable organizations.

After the oil crisis of 1973, the "Full Participation and Equality" appeal of the 1981(International Year of Disabled Persons) Year of the Disabled highlighted the problems of the organizations of the disabled and led to working out policies to address the problems. During that period, the aging population and emergence of the nuclear family led to weakening reciprocal help in the regions. There was need for a welfare system for the stability of the people's livelihood. The welfare system was needed not only for the poor and disabled but also for the nation as a whole.

From the title "Protection", the era of separation from the region was replaced by the era of preserving a system of living independently within the region.

In 2006, JIRITSUSHIEN laws (Services and Supports for challenged persons Act) were enacted. The laws have parts that are contradictory but the disabled were considered as an independent structure of society, leading to the change of what was perceived as a medical model to be considered a social model , an epoch-making change in way of thinking.

## The role of the organization

The social welfare organization is a special organization established aiming to provide social welfare support as provided in the social welfare law. Social welfare was provided by private organizations, such as welfare foundations or corporations, managed under the civil law in old days.

The organizations operated as not-profit organizations and the services they provided were not sufficient.

The government established a special system besides the one under civil law, to provide systematic planning and development.

Social welfare organization activities can be classified into basically three sectors, **Social Work, Public Utilities, and Profit-Making Work**, with more specific sectors of child welfare and the welfare for the mentally-disabled.

The organization was equipped with public sector experts that compiled information but it was perceived to have a closed and self-righteous image.

Recently, there has been more information disclosure allowing the disabled to participate in decision-making and

development of programs that concern them.

## **History of the SUZURAN NO KAI**

The forerunner of SUZURAN NO KAI started as small workshop approved by Sagami-hara city in 1982. The aim was to help, through daytime activities, the local mentally-disabled who opted to stay indoors to adapt to society outside and gain economic independence when they become adults. The workshop started with some staffs and ten challenged persons, the minimum number necessary to get Sagami-hara city registration.

Though the income obtained from the work of the packing of kitchen tools etc. was little, it was the first step to help make good every day life rhythm and the start of a regular life.

After several years, the office got cooperation from a powerful local company which provided work to the disabled in the production process in its factory. Their income increased substantially increasing their orientation towards society.

The experience in the company prompted the organization to work in earnest to support the disabled to find work and led to establishment of a social welfare organization later. Besides, work places without the hiring of the challenged persons came to be recognized in the system later.

Professionals have been engaged focusing on early intervention to prepare the children for adulthood.

SUZURAN NO KAI was established in 1990, and "Workshop Friend" the vocational training center was born the following year in 1991.

Forty adults challenged persons were enrolled to undergo a five year training period to prepare them for jobs outside.

The five-year training period, enrolled 40 adults at that time, aiming to work for the company. It has a foothold in society every year at least 10 people challenged persons. Because of their degree of disability, some participants have had to stay for more than five years. As a results the "Greenhouse" and "Workshop SUN" programs which have no specific enrollment periods were established and are in operation to date.

Also, group homes were established in 1992 to give day-to-day living support for independent lives.

Since its foundation, the organization has supported many adults challenged persons. Also, since 2003, the organization has focused on providing children with developmental disorders, from 0 to 18 years old, with treatment and education by experts. Taking it, children can learn how to adapt to the society from their early stages.

■ Support aimed at providing basic needs such as living place, jobs and leisure.

### **(Living support) independent lives**

Active self-help groups are formed and the members live together in ordinary rental houses or specially designed houses. The houses exist as group homes or care homes.

### **(Starting work training) Support for jobs**

Importance is placed not only on income benefit but also on members' participation in society leading to their discovering themselves. Members can experience different jobs within the facility and learn manners and rules of the society. Also they get familiar with the pleasures and hardship associated with work and they learn to

appreciate the value of money. Apart from receiving offers of work as well as workshops from General Corporation, we also try to secure jobs at General Corporation.

### **(Support for daily living)**

No one is considered unable to do anything. We try to understand every member and give them necessary support. Besides, everyone is given a chance to try every activity and to learn from their mistakes. In so doing, we hope to widen the scope of their participation in activities. We also plan a wide range of leisure activities to give variety.

### **(Consultation)**

Before deciding to give individualized support, we have to go through the difficult procedure of determining the following:

1. What system is available?
2. Which organization provides the relevant support?
3. What procedures are necessary?
4. The differences in similar services available.
5. Whether or not the service is being provided presently are the best for the individual.

In order to overcome the difficulties, a wealth of information is required. Consultation is necessary in order to meet the various expectations and conditions.

### **(※Support of treatment and education for children with developmental disorders.)**

Though support of treatment and education for preschool children with developmental disorders is conducted by government, there is less support to be taken for school children with developmental disorders. The school children are to get educational support systematically as they are in compulsory education from elementary schools to junior high schools. However, as the effective support is not made sufficiently on the education side, we realize necessity of the support and develop child day service mainly for the school children.

### **■ Additional activities**

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| • Total support including private time. | Travel / Amusement                       |
| • Discover hidden talents.              | Art / Sports / Other talents             |
| • Sales of branded SUZURAN products.    | Café / Shop (Sweets, Vegetables, Bakery) |
| • Public relations.                     | Magazines / Website                      |

### **■ Results**

Starting with only ten challenged persons, SUZURAN NO KAI pioneered a system which has since been adopted as a model for work style for the disabled. Moreover, there has been increase in employment opportunities for the disabled through opening up of many subsidiaries.

The organization continues to evolve to be able to meet the growing needs for its services.

Twenty years after founding, SUZURAN NO KAI has been able to help many people and continues to aim to provide work with high wages. The organization has earned a top rank in Kanagawa Prefecture as a provider of high performance work. In the recent past, SUZURAN NO KAI has been able **migrate to the next stage** more than thirty people every year and has focused on them getting established at their work places.

We wish for society where everybody can realize to live together with challenged persons through everyday life.