

## Study of factors related to social and emotional skills in early childhood in Japan

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### Background:

There are numerous reports that social and emotional skills in early childhood have profound influence on lifelong health. The aim of this research is to determine the relation between the lifestyle and the social and emotional skills among children in present day Japan.

### Methods:

The object of analysis was a total of 110 parents of kindergarten students (56 boys, 48 girls, 6 gender unknown) from 3 kindergartens in central Okinawa Island. The survey was conducted in mid-December 2019. Regarding the content of the survey, parents were asked to answer on a five-point scale, based on their subjective opinion, how good is their child, as compared to other children, in each of the 9 sub-scales of the social and emotional skills proposed in the 2015 OECD report, namely “perseverance,” “self-control,” “passion for goals,” “sociability,” “respect,” “caring,” “self-esteem,” “optimism,” “confidence.” Additionally, other question items were set, mainly to ask about the child's own lifestyle.

### Results:

The results of multivariate logistic regression analysis are following. As for “achieving goals:” 3 items for perseverance - “there are few likes and dislikes about food (OR:2.67, 95 CI:1.03 6.94, p=.043),” “Time for playing games on smartphone is determined (OR:3.21, 95 CI:1.19 8.68, p=.021),” “Eat more fruits (OR:3.03, 95 CI:1.24 8.26, p=.016),” are statistically significant. [Other results are omitted in this abstract]

### Conclusions:

It became clear that the acquisition of social and emotional skills during early childhood generally involves regular lifestyle and “discipline” at home as a whole. Besides, it is important for parent and child to do various activities together, including those aiming to increase cognitive skills. This study is considered to be a powerful evidence for the development of future intervention programme, aimed at acquiring social and emotional skills in early childhood.

### Key messages:

- In early childhood family and kindergarten have to cooperate to foster social and emotional skills, important for lifelong health.
- This study is considered to be a powerful evidence for the development of future intervention programme, aimed at acquiring social and emotional skills in early childhood.