

Tondabayashi City Ordinance on the Rights of Children

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Preamble

(Children's Thoughts)

We children feel happy when our opinions and feelings are heard and accepted.

We want to build a city where these dreams can come true.

- We want our lives to be protected and to be encouraged to grow in our own way.
- Consider our opinions and feelings and think about them seriously. Even if we are wrong, we do not want to be simply denied; we want our reasons to be properly listened to. We want to share our opinions with one another and listen carefully to adults' opinions.
- We want to learn at our own pace.
- We want to spend our time comfortably at school and in the community.

- We want to be able to play, enjoy ourselves, rest, feel joy, learn, and gain experiences safely and with peace of mind.
- We hope for a society that is easy for us to live in, without bullying, violence, discrimination, abuse, favoritism, or disparities in living conditions.
- We want safe and secure places where we can use our strengths, relax, and be together with friends.

(Message to Adults)

To all adults, thank you for always watching over us.

For us to live happily, we would like you to promise us the following:

- Each child is unique. Please accept and acknowledge every one of us.
- Just like adults, we can think for ourselves and express our opinions. However, we still need time to think. And when you listen to our opinions, please receive them with a gentle smile. You do not have to agree with everything, but please listen to what matters to us. And when something is not acceptable, please explain the reasons.
- Please create environments where we can enjoy learning in ways that are easy to understand, and live our lives comfortably. We would like learning environments that are easy to reach, even outside of school.
- Please understand that we need time to do the things we like and time to be alone and relax. We think this applies to everyone, not only adults but children as well.
- No matter which path we choose, please acknowledge us, and support each of us in a way that fits our individual needs. Even failures are important experiences to us.
- Please do not bully, discriminate against, or abuse us. And when we are struggling or in trouble, please do not overlook the signs and help us.
- Please explain to us, in a way we can understand, the things you have thought about and done for us.
- We want everyone to understand that all of us have the rights of children. They are important matters that concern not only children but adults as well.
- Adults and children experience time differently. Please do not impose your views on us. Instead, think about what is best for children.

(Commitments by the City and Adults)

This Ordinance was created together with children through initiatives to listen to children's voices.

The thoughts and wishes expressed by children are irreplaceable treasures. We, the City, and adults, engrave these precious voices in our hearts and commit ourselves to walking together with children.

All children are subjects of rights living in the present and members of the local community. Each child is an important presence who can live as their true self and in their own way.

In order to ensure the rights of children, we, the City, and adults, promise the following:

- We will create environments in which children can live and grow with peace of mind, without discrimination for any reason.
- We will sincerely listen to and respect children's opinions, thoughts, and feelings.
- We will understand the rights of children and place the best interests of children first.
- We will make sure that children feel safe and comfortable reaching out for help whenever they are facing difficulties.
- We will cherish the individuality of each child.
- We will watch over and support children as an entire community.

This Ordinance is enacted together with children and is based on the Constitution of Japan, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Basic Act on Children. It aims to promote community development throughout the entire city to ensure the rights of children. Through this Ordinance, the City seeks to realize a community in which all children — now and in the future — are respected as subjects of rights and can live in their own way, with peace of mind and happiness.

Chapter I General Provisions

(Purpose)

Article 1 For all children, both present and future, the purpose of this Ordinance is to create a city where all children are respected as holders of rights. It ensures they can live freely, with peace of mind and happiness. To achieve this, the Ordinance promotes citywide community development with children and fosters a community where everyone respects and protects children's rights.

(Definitions)

Article 2 In this Ordinance, the meanings of the terms listed in the following items shall be as prescribed respectively in those items:

- (1) Children: Persons under 18 years of age who reside in, attend school in, or commute to work in the city, or who engage in activities in the city, or others who are appropriately recognized as having equivalent rights.
- (2) Guardians: Parents, foster parents, or other persons who raise and care for children in place of parents.
- (3) Citizens, etc.:
 - (a) Persons who reside in, attend school in, or commute to work in the city;
 - (b) Individuals, corporations, or organizations that conduct business in the city (hereinafter referred to as “Business Operators”);
 - (c) Individuals, corporations, or organizations that conduct activities in the city.
- (4) Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc.: Individuals, corporations, or organizations that operate facilities within the city—such as nursery schools, kindergartens, certified childcare centers, or schools—that are used by children for growth, learning, and activities, or that conduct activities for children’s growth and learning within the city.

(Basic Principles)

Article 3 The assurance of the rights of children shall be based on the following principles:

- (1) Children have rights and shall be able to live as they are and in their own way, without discrimination for any reason.
- (2) Children shall be able to live and grow with peace of mind.
- (3) Children shall have their opinions, thoughts, and feelings (hereinafter referred to as “opinions, etc.”) listened to and be able to express them, and such opinions, etc. shall be respected.
- (4) Children shall have their rights understood and respected, and the best interests of children shall be given priority.

Chapter II Rights of Children

(Assurance of the Rights of Children)

Article 4 Children, as subjects of rights, shall have all rights of children ensured in accordance with the Constitution of Japan, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Treaty No. 2 of 1994; hereinafter referred to as the “Convention on the Rights of the Child”), and the Basic Act on Children (Act No. 77 of 2022).

2. The City shall make citywide, focused efforts to ensure the following rights of children:
 - (1) The right not to be discriminated against for any reason
 - (2) The right to be protected from all forms of violence
 - (3) The right to have one’s opinions, etc. listened to, to express them, and to have them respected
 - (4) The right to participate in matters that concern oneself
 - (5) The right to live and grow with peace of mind
 - (6) The right to live as one’s true self
 - (7) The right to connect with society and live together with others
 - (8) The right to rest and play
 - (9) The right to learn
 - (10) The right to consult others
 - (11) The right to receive necessary support.

Chapter III Responsibilities and Roles for Ensuring the Rights of Children

(Common Responsibilities)

Article 5 The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall know, understand, respect, and ensure the rights of children.

2. The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall listen to children’s opinions, etc., with respect to their age, development, and circumstances, and place the best interests of children first.
3. No person shall commit bullying, discrimination, abuse, corporal punishment, inappropriate guidance, sexual violence, economic exploitation, or any other

infringement of the rights of children (hereinafter referred to as “Infringement of the Rights of Children”) against children.

4. The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall watch over and support children throughout the entire community so that children can live and grow with peace of mind.

(Responsibilities of the City)

Article 6 The City shall be responsible for comprehensively implementing measures concerning children and for promoting community development to ensure the rights of children, in cooperation and collaboration with Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc.

2. The City shall cooperate with relevant organizations to prevent and remedy Infringement of the Rights of Children.
3. The City shall provide necessary support so that Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. can fulfill their respective roles.

(Roles of Guardians)

Article 7 Guardians, recognizing that they bear primary responsibility for the upbringing of children, shall understand and respect the rights of children, place the best interests of children first, and, together with children, foster environments in which children can live with peace of mind.

2. Guardians may consult with or seek support from the City, Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc., and relevant organizations regarding concerns or difficulties related to child-rearing, parenting, or family matters.
3. Guardians shall cooperate with the City, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. and work together to consider and promote community development that ensures the rights of children.

(Roles of Citizens, etc.)

Article 8 Citizens, etc. shall work together to promote community development that ensures the rights of children.

2. Business Operators shall strive to provide environments in which their employees can balance work and child-rearing and ensure the rights of children.

(Roles of Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc.)

Article 9 Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall secure environments and opportunities through learning, experiences, play, and other activities in which children can live and grow in their own way and with peace of mind.

2. Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall cooperate and collaborate with the City, Guardians, and Citizens, etc. to promote community development that ensures the rights of children.
3. Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall cooperate with relevant organizations to prevent and remedy Infringement of the Rights of Children.

Chapter IV Promotion of Community Development to Ensure the Rights of Children

(Dissemination and Awareness-Raising of the Rights of Children)

Article 10 Children shall be able to know about the Convention on the Rights of the Child and this Ordinance.

2. The City shall actively disseminate and raise awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and this Ordinance so that children, Guardians, Citizens, etc., Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc., and City employees can deepen their understanding of and interest in the rights of children.
3. The City shall provide diverse opportunities for children to learn about the rights of children.
4. The City shall provide distinct opportunities for Guardians, Citizens, etc., Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc., and City employees to learn about the rights of children.
5. The City shall designate Tondabayashi City Day of the Rights of Children so that children, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. can deepen their understanding of and interest in the rights of children.
6. Tondabayashi City Day of the Rights of Children shall be November 20.

(Prevention and Remedies for Infringement of the Rights of Children)

Article 11 When children have suffered or are at risk of suffering Infringement of the Rights of Children, they shall be able to receive necessary support.

2. The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall endeavor to prevent and detect Infringement of the Rights of Children at an early stage.
3. The City and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall, in cooperation with relevant organizations, provide necessary support to appropriately and promptly remedy children who have suffered Infringement of the Rights of Children.
4. The City and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall provide opportunities for their staff, etc. to acquire the knowledge necessary to provide the support set forth in the preceding paragraph.

(Expression of Opinions and Participation by Children)

Article 12 Children shall be able to freely express their opinions, etc. and participate in matters that concern themselves.

2. Children shall be able to obtain necessary information and receive support for forming their opinions, etc. in order to express them.
3. The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall not compel children to express their opinions, etc., nor treat children disadvantageously for having expressed them.
4. The City shall provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, etc. regarding matters concerning children.
5. When formulating measures concerning children or evaluating implementation results, the City shall listen to children's opinions, etc. and provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, etc. or participate.
6. In providing the opportunities set forth in the preceding paragraph, the City shall use diverse methods that consider children's age, development, and circumstances.
7. The City shall respect children's opinions, etc. and endeavor to reflect them in measures concerning children.
8. The City shall provide opportunities to give feedback to children regarding their opinions, etc.

9. Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall endeavor to provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, etc. regarding matters concerning children.

(Consultation for Children)

Article 13 Children may freely talk about and seek advice on their worries, difficulties, opinions, etc.

2. The City shall provide opportunities where children can seek consultation easily and with peace of mind.
3. The City, Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall endeavor to create an environment where children can seek consultation easily and with peace of mind.
4. Any person who receives a consultation from a child shall maintain the confidentiality of the consultation, except when necessary for the protection or remedy of the rights of children.

(Promotion of Measures to Ensure the Rights of Children)

Article 14 The City shall promote initiatives to prevent and eliminate child poverty so that all children, without leaving anyone behind, have their rights protected and are not isolated from society.

2. The City shall promote the creation of diverse places where children can play joyfully, rest, study, and feel at ease being themselves.
3. The City shall promote the creation of diverse environments in which children can learn in ways they desire, according to each child's physical and mental condition and surrounding circumstances.
4. The City shall provide support tailored to each individual child according to the circumstances in which the child is placed.
5. The City shall provide support according to the circumstances of each household so that Guardians can ensure the rights of children.
6. The City shall cooperate with Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. regarding the assurance of the rights of children and support activities to ensure the rights of children.

Chapter V Advocacy and Remedies for the Rights of Children

(Establishment of the Tondabayashi City Committee for the Advocacy of the Rights of Children)

Article 15 For the advocacy of the rights of children, the prevention of infringement, and remedies for infringement, the City shall establish, as an auxiliary organ of the Mayor, the Tondabayashi City Committee for the Advocacy of the Rights of Children (hereinafter referred to as the “Advocacy Committee”).

2. Based on Article 3, the Advocacy Committee shall perform the following duties concerning the advocacy of the rights of children, prevention of infringement, and remedies for infringement:
 - (1) Responding to consultations and providing necessary support
 - (2) Conducting investigations or mediation upon petition or on its own initiative
 - (3) When deemed necessary by the Advocacy Committee as a result of the investigations or mediation set forth in the preceding item, issuing recommendations, expressing opinions, or making requests to relevant persons
 - (4) Expressing opinions to the City regarding improvements to systems, etc.
 - (5) Disseminating and raising awareness of the rights of children and the Advocacy Committee.
3. The Advocacy Committee shall consist of not more than three members.
4. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor from among persons who meet the following requirements:
 - (1) Having knowledge and experience regarding the rights of children
 - (2) Having no conflict of interest in performing the duties of the Advocacy Committee set forth in paragraph 2.
5. The term of office shall be three years from the date of appointment, and reappointment shall not be precluded; provided, however, that the term of office of a substitute member shall be the remaining term of the predecessor.

6. The Mayor may dismiss a member when the member is deemed unable to perform duties due to mental or physical disorder, or when the member is deemed to have committed a violation of official duties or other misconduct inappropriate for a member.
7. In performing the duties of the Advocacy Committee, members shall comply with the following matters:
 - (1) As advocates of the rights of children, endeavoring to listen to children's opinions, etc. and to promote the best interests of children
 - (2) Endeavoring to collaborate with relevant organizations and persons to ensure the smooth performance of duties
 - (3) Not disclosing any confidential information obtained in the course of duties; this obligation shall continue even after leaving office.
8. The Advocacy Committee shall have a Chairperson, who shall be elected from among the members.
9. The Chairperson shall preside over the affairs of the Advocacy Committee and represent it.
10. When the Chairperson is unable to perform duties or the position is vacant, a member designated in advance by the Chairperson shall act on behalf of the Chairperson.
11. The City shall respect the independence of the Advocacy Committee.
12. The City shall actively cooperate in the performance of the duties of the Advocacy Committee.
13. Guardians, Citizens, etc., and Facilities for Growth and Learning, etc. shall endeavor to actively cooperate in the performance of the duties of the Advocacy Committee.
14. When the City receives recommendations, etc. under paragraph 2, item (3) or (4) from the Advocacy Committee, it shall respect them and take necessary measures.
15. The Advocacy Committee shall report annually on its activities, etc. to Citizens, etc. and the Mayor, and the Mayor shall make such reports public.

(Consultation and Investigation Specialists)

Article 16 For the smooth performance of the duties of the Advocacy Committee, the Mayor shall appoint consultation and investigation specialists concerning the rights of children (hereinafter referred to as "Consultation and Investigation Specialists").

2. Consultation and Investigation Specialists shall work in close cooperation with the Advocacy Committee and support the performance of its duties.

Chapter VI Promotion of the Ordinance

(Plan)

Article 17 The City shall formulate a plan to comprehensively promote measures concerning children (hereinafter referred to as the “Children’s Plan”).

2. The Children’s Plan shall be a plan for measures concerning children formulated pursuant to the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 2 of the Basic Act on Children.
3. In formulating the Children’s Plan, the City shall, pursuant to Article 12, paragraph 5, listen to children’s opinions, etc. and provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, etc. or participate.
4. The City shall stipulate necessary matters in the Children’s Plan to promote this Ordinance.
5. In order to promote this Ordinance, the City shall periodically conduct surveys about children, etc. and make the results public.

(Evaluation and Verification)

Article 18 The City shall evaluate and verify the status of implementation of the Children’s Plan.

2. In conducting evaluation and verification, the City shall consult the Tondabayashi City Children and Child-Rearing Council established under the Tondabayashi City Children and Child-Rearing Council Ordinance (Tondabayashi City Ordinance No. 29 of 2013) and hear its opinions.
3. In conducting evaluation and verification, the City shall, pursuant to Article 12, paragraph 5, listen to children’s opinions, etc. and provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, etc. or participate.
4. The City shall make public the results of evaluation and verification and, when necessary, implement improvements.

(Coordination with Relevant Organizations and Consistency with Measures and Plans)

Article 19 The City shall cooperate with relevant organizations so that measures to ensure the rights of children are implemented appropriately and smoothly.

2. In promoting measures concerning children and formulating plans, the City shall ensure consistency with this Ordinance so that the rights of children are appropriately and smoothly ensured.

Chapter VII Miscellaneous Provisions

(Delegation)

Article 20 Matters necessary for the enforcement of this Ordinance, other than those prescribed herein, shall be prescribed separately by the Mayor.

Supplementary Provisions

This Ordinance shall come into effect on July 1, 2026; provided, however, that the provisions of Chapter V shall come into effect on a date prescribed by regulation within a period not exceeding two years from the date of promulgation.